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This Week

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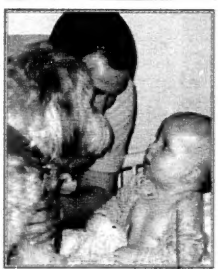
National

Jewish groups get new funding from Ottawa and Queen's Park. *Page 3*

Conservative shuls move to leave USCJ. *Page 6*

Parents work to keep She'arim open. *Page 12*

Health & Lifestyles



Mitzvah dog: Shaynee brings smile to kids. *Page 33*

Heebonics

Brooklyn clarinettist is a poster child for klezmer community. *Page 59*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
According to Reports 14
Jewish Life 20
Family Moments 29
What's New 30
Obituaries and Notices 32
Health 32
Passover Food Ideas 34
Israel & the Jewish World 55
Heebonics 59
CJN Profile 60
Books & Authors 61
Arts & Travel 62

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Montrealer finally freed, returns home

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Exactly one day shy of 10 months since being relegated to a squalid and violent Indian jail, businessman Saul Itzhayek returned to the loving embrace of his family in Montreal last Friday seeking only a shower, a good meal and some much-needed rest.

"Now, I'm just exhausted," he said before a phalanx of television cameras and media after emerging from a special exit at Trudeau International Airport at around 3 p.m. last Friday.

Dressed in a black leather jacket and blue jeans, the 42-year-old Itzhayek was accompanied by his chief champion, his sister Sylvia, his wife, Marina Novikov, and 20-year-old stepson Dmitri.

He looked weary and drawn following an 80-hour trip back home (his last leg was an Air Canada flight from Frankfurt, Germany).

But the lengthy return to Canada obviously paled next to the ordeal that had finally come to an end a few days earlier. An Indian appellate court ruled March 25 that Itzhayek would be set free "for time served" in a three-year jail sentence that began in October for crossing into India from neighbouring Nepal without a valid visa.

Vows to have conviction overturned

Itzhayek has maintained since his arrest last May 29 that he was detained despite assurances by Indian authorities that he could cross the border, and because he did not come up with enough money to pay off authorities.

He had been in Nepal seeking to purchase iridium, a metal used to make contacts for electronic components.

His riding MP, Irwin Cotler, as well as his family and other supporters, repeatedly referred to Itzhayek's ordeal as a case of "entrapment."

At the airport, Itzhayek vowed that he would seek to have his conviction quashed.

"I'm doing that now," he said. "It has to go to the high court [in India]. I'm waiting for that. I don't know the procedures yet."

Saul Itzhayek, right, makes a short statement to media upon arrival at Trudeau International Airport. With him are his wife, Marina Novikov, and stepson Dmitri. **[Howard Kay photo]**

Cotler told *The CJN* last week that "his name should be cleared. It's necessary to pursue vindication."

Itzhayek said he cried "for 10, 15 minutes," after CTV journalist Paul Workman, who had travelled to India to cover the story, informed him that his freedom was finally imminent.

Now, "it feels incredible to be home," he said.

Itzhayek reportedly lost close to 30 kilograms in Motihari Prison in the remote northeastern Indian state of Bihar. Over the months he was there, he became ill from the water, was at one point holed up with 130 prisoners, and most recently escaped injury after gang warfare erupted and two bombs went off. After the last incident, he refused to leave his jail cell.

Continued on page 51

U.K. chief rabbi issues celebratory Israel CD

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

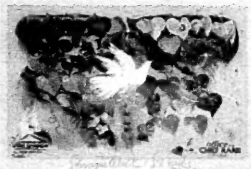
Last month, British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks marked his 60th birthday in Israel in the company of a choir of British schoolchildren who performed for victims of terror in Sderot, Ashdod and Ashkelon.

This month, he is celebrating another 60th birthday – the State of Israel's – in a way that is also music-related.

The chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks – to use his proper title – is launching a two-CD set that takes listeners through Israel's millennia-old history, with 24 tracks of music by Israeli, American and British artists interspersed with narrative by the rabbi.

Chief Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks

Three tracks were produced by award-winning British music producer Trevor Horn, who wrote, performed and produced *Video Killed the Radio Star* in 1979 and went on to work with several internationally known artists, including Cher, Paul McCartney and Seal.



Israel - Home of Hope

The project is the chief rabbi's gift to Israel on behalf of British Jewry a month in advance of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day.

His hope is that listeners will be "lifted by [Israel's] story, because it's an incredible story," said the rabbi in a phone interview from his office in London. "Somehow a project, the State of Israel, which is so implausible, happened.

"I find it remarkable," he said in a soft, compelling voice familiar to many in Britain through his frequent radio and television appearances, "that a mere three years after standing eyeball to eyeball with the Angel of Death at Auschwitz, the Jewish people got up and made its most powerful collective affirmation of life in 2,000 years of history."

Continued on page 24

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Bulgaria accepts blame for Shoah deaths – please ... 58

The News in Brief

CANADA

Revisionism Rapped

MONTREAL — Canadian Jewish Congress joined local Rwandan leaders to condemn a Montreal conference that questioned the accuracy of the 1994 genocide against Rwanda's Tutsis and moderate Hutus. Titled "The Media and Rwanda: The Difficult Search for Truth," last week's event featured panellists who have "used their voices in the media, politics and law to launch an unacceptable historical debate and framing the Tutsi victims as perpetrators," CJC said. It joined the groups PAGE-Rwanda and Humura to unveil a slate of events marking 14 years since the massacre of some 800,000 people. "The questioning of whether genocide actually took place in Rwanda is absurd, bordering on hateful," CJC executive member Adam Atlas said.

New Group Formed

TORONTO — More than 100 left-wing Jewish activists from 18 different groups met March 28 to 30 in Toronto to form a network of "anti-occupation groups" that say they're seeking "real peace and justice in the Middle East." Convened by the Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians, the meeting challenged the views of mainstream Jewish groups and the Harper government, who all "uncritically support the Israeli government's violations of international and humanitarian law," organizers said. Author Naomi Klein was keynote speaker.

WORLD

Reform Urges Pullout

WASHINGTON — The Reform movement last week marked the recent death of the 4,000th U.S. soldier in Iraq with a call to remove troops. "On this grim occasion, we say again: it is time to pursue a new strategy which better protects the troops who remain in Iraq and also begins to withdraw them in the most expeditious way possible," it said.

French Aliyah Slows

PARIS — French Jewish emigration to Israel has dropped since Nicolas Sarkozy took office, *Ma'ariv* reported. Figures from Israel's Immigration and Absorption Ministry show the French aliyah rate in 2008 is 42 per cent lower than in the same period last year. French Jews told *Ma'ariv* they feel more comfortable since Sarkozy, who is friendly to Israel and tough on crime, became president last year. Many had complained of a surge of anti-Semitic violence.

Kosher Papal Pastries

ROME — A kosher Italian bakery has a key local patron: Pope Benedict XVI. The owner of Pasticceria Boccione in Rome's ancient ghetto said she recently got a thank-you letter from the Vatican revealing the Pope's love of her biscotti and an almond-and-raisin creation called "Jewish pizza." A papal doctor, a Jew who stopped by the 453-year-old bakery en route to giving the Pope a checkup, introduced him to the pastries, *Yediot Achronot* reported.

Official Fired

PARIS — French Interior Minister Michele Alliot-Marie fired a top local official last month who said Israeli soldiers shoot little girls. Bruno Guigue, deputy prefect of the southwestern town of Saintes, described Israel in an online column as "the only state where snipers shoot down little girls outside their school gates."

BBC Apologizes For Errors In Israel News

LONDON — The BBC apologized for major inaccuracies in two recent reports about Israel.

The British public broadcaster reported March 7 that Israel bulldozed the home of the Mercaz HaRav yeshiva attacker while showing footage of a home being destroyed. In reality, the attacker's home wasn't demolished, as other news services showed. The BBC subsequently apologized and admitted using footage from the demolition of another home, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

In a March 14 online report, the BBC said Israel deliberately targeted Palestinian civilians in Gaza during an incursion to take out Qassam rocket launchers, and that the UN secretary general also called it an attack on civilians.

But Ban Ki-moon told the Security Council, "While recognizing Israel's right to defend itself, I condemn the disproportionate and excessive use of force that has killed and injured so many civilians, including children." He added later: "I condemn Palestinian rocket attacks and call for the immediate cessation of such acts of terrorism."

In its apology, the BBC said it "should have made reference" to Ban's comments about the rocket attacks as well as "'excessive use of force' by Israel." It said it amended the report, removing reference to attacks on civilians.

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Jewish groups get cash from province, Ottawa

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Jewish community leaders offered guarded praise for last week's Ontario budget.

In a joint statement, Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario region, and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto "commended" Premier Dalton McGuinty's Liberal government for "some of the steps taken to address the issue of poverty," and they urged the Liberals to pursue further "aggressive action" on affordable housing and social assistance programs.

"The Jewish community has long been committed to helping those in need. With today's budget, the provincial government has affirmed its commitment to this shared value, and we urge all Ontarians to join with us to take further steps to reducing poverty," said federation chair David Koschitzky.

Diane Finley

Frank Bialystock, chair of CJC Ontario region, echoed the sentiment.

"Poverty affects all Ontarians equally regardless of race, gender, disability or religious affiliation. All Ontarians share our community's commitment to ensuring a just and equitable society, and recognize that we need to help those who cannot help themselves. We look forward to working closely with the government towards achieving this goal," he said.

In addition to big-ticket spending such as $40.4 billion for health care in 2008–09, $18.8 billion for school boards and $970 million for post-secondary school infrastructure maintenance, the budget also allotted nearly $1.2 billion for needy families and seniors.

Among items of interest to Jewish groups that help alleviate poverty, the government pledged $135 million for dental services to low-income families; $32 million to a student nutrition program; $1 billion over five years for property tax grants to homeowning seniors with "low and moderate incomes" and $100 million to "rehabilitate social housing units."

The province will also spend $560 million to support career skills training, some of which will go towards integrating "newcomers in the job market" and to "help workers affected by job loss train for new careers," items that are likely to benefit community organizations such as JVS Toronto and Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS).

David Koschitzky

Other parts of the budget will help Jewish non-profits such as Jewish Family & Child and Reena.

Minnie Ross, manager of communications for Reena, said her organization is "hopeful" that the provincial funding is just a first step.

Though many details have yet to be hammered out, Ross said Reena would take part in ongoing discussions with the government to find out how much money would be available to the group.

"The government has increased the Ontario Disability Support Program [ODSP] funding by two per cent," she said, noting this could raise the average benefit for some Reena clients to abut $900 a month.

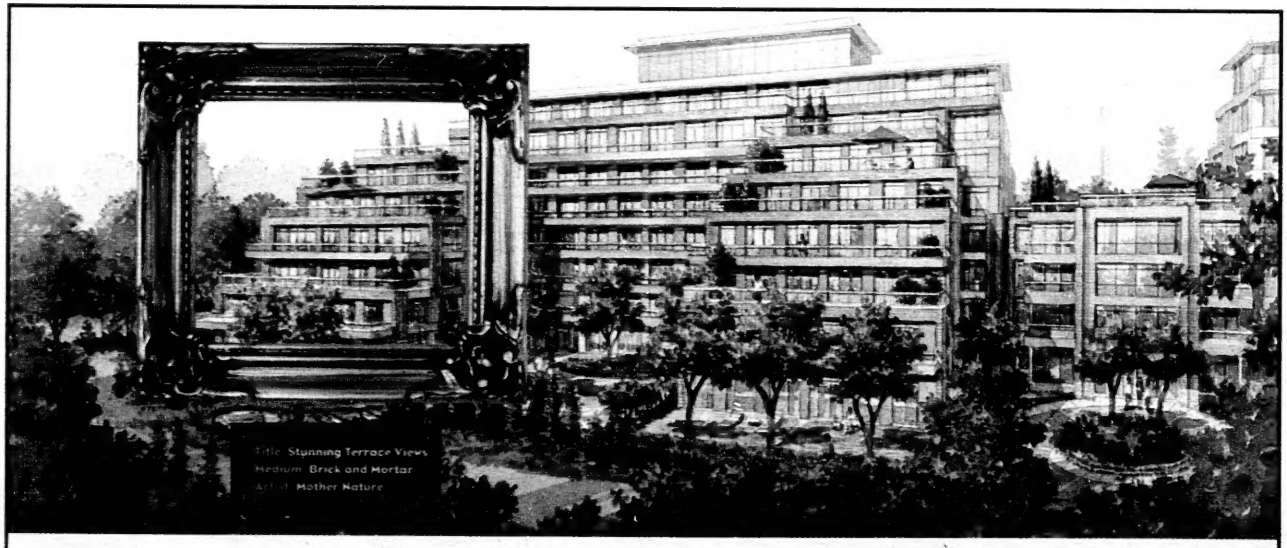
"Two per cent for ODSP is not tremendous, but we're pleased with it as a first step," Ross said.

And with the government's pledge to put more funding into infrastructure maintenance for social housing, Reena hopes to dip into that resource for the 135 residences it maintains for its clients, she said.

Karen Paikin, communications manager for Jewish Family and Child, also praised the budget, albeit tepidly.

"We applaud the government for coming through with some positive strategies in response to poverty.

Continued on page 22



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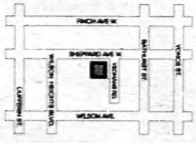

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We must protect our legacy

From the editor's desk

Early on in our childhood, most of us learned from the book of *Breishit* (Genesis), the first of the five books of Moses, that human beings were created *b'tselem Elokim* (often and very loosely translated as "in the image of God").

As busy, ball- and hockey-playing youngsters, we did not dwell too long or too deeply upon that inscrutable statement. In fact, most of the stories in the Bible were inscrutable to our barely comprehending minds.

That we were created "in the image of God" provided us a vague, undefined, non-specific measure of connection to and relationship with the Vast Invisible, much like the connection we might have felt to great-great-grandparents whom we also "knew" but only vaguely as ancestors we had never met. We assumed that, at least occasionally, the Vast Invisible observed us from high above since after all, we were a reflection of Him in our appearance, if not in our ball- and hockey-playing behaviour.

It was not until much later, as searching, inquisitive adults, that we came to know, without yet understanding its meaning, there were profound theological, sociological and even political implications to the phrase *"b'tselem Elokim."*

If all human beings are created in the image of God, all human beings are unique, of equal "worth" and each deserving of equal dignity and respect.

"B'tselem Elokim," of course, is the source of the modern notion of human rights and its necessary corollary that human rights are universal.

"B'tselem Elokim" leads us in a very direct and straight line to the seminal value of our civilization – that human life is sacrosanct. Knowing this, that the very concept of human rights springs from the fountain of Jewish history, we bridle and rage at its cynical, perverse distortion by, of all agencies, the United Nations Human Rights Council. The council, we all remember, is the two-year-old successor agency to United Nations Commission on Human Rights.

The commission was a transparently polemical organization whose mandate was abused, hijacked by gross violators of human rights and aimed like a stealthy stiletto at the heart of the State of Israel as an instrument of the Jewish state's ultimate delegitimization and destruction.

Embarrassed in the eyes of the western world by the commission's overt unseemly obsession with the State of Israel, then Secretary General Kofi Annan disbanded the commission and created, in its place, the council.

Almost two years later, it can be said of the new Human Rights Council that it, too, is a transparently polemical organization whose mandate is abused, hijacked by gross violators of human rights and aimed like a stealthy stiletto at the heart of the State of Israel as an instrument of the Jewish state's ultimate delegitimization and destruction. The council is overtly obsessed with the State of Israel.

Geneva-based UN Watch points out that the council "has criticized Israel on 19 separate occasions, in resolutions that grant effective impunity to Hamas, Hezbollah and their state sponsors."

Last year, its first in operation, the council condemned only Israel for alleged human rights violations. This year, the council continues to condemn the Jewish state but has managed also to "deplore" the human rights situation in Burma, but only after it removed the word "condemn" from the resolution.

Israel is the only country among the 192 comprising the General Assembly of the United Nations that occupies a permanent place on the council's human rights agenda. Further to this agenda, Israel is the only country subjected to "investigations" of its behaviour.

Last week, the council appointed Princeton University professor emeritus Richard Falk as its special adviser and monitor of Israel treatment of Palestinians. Falk's views on Israel are well-known. He has often compared Israel's treatment of Palestinians to the Nazis' treatment of the Jews. Of course, that is why he received the appointment. To its everlasting credit, the government of Canada publicly and in unambiguous terms refused to endorse Falk's appointment.

Earlier in the week, the council appointed Swiss writer Jean Ziegler to its advisory committee. Ziegler is widely known as a staunch supporter of shining human rights champions such as Zimbabwe's president, Robert Mugabe; Cuba's former president, Fidel Castro; and Libya's leader, Muammar Khadafy. He has also praised the work of French Holocaust denier Roger Garaudy.

Liberal MP Irwin Cotler and three other internationally renowned human rights advocates pleaded with the government of Switzerland to withdraw Ziegler's nomination. But to no avail.

Earlier in the month, the council's special rapporteur on Palestinian human rights in Gaza, John Dugard, wrote a 25-page report that exonerated Palestinian terrorism. "Common sense," Dugard wrote, "dictates that a distinction must be drawn between acts of mindless terror, such as acts committed by Al Qaeda, and acts committed in the course of a war of national liberation against colonialism, apartheid or military occupation."

We must not yield the last word on human rights to the UN Human Rights Council. It is our legacy they are abusing; it is our legacy we must protect. – ***MBD***

Correction

A brief in last week's paper ("Rabbi to get degree") incorrectly stated that Rabbi Elyse Goldstein was the first female rabbi in Toronto. In fact, Rabbi Joan Friedman was an assistant to Rabbi Harvey Fields at Holy Blossom Temple a few years before Rabbi Goldstein's arrival at the temple in 1983.

SeeJN

CLASS IN ISRAEL

Members of Holy Blossom Temple's confirmation class visited Israel over March break. Here they stand at Yad Vashem overlooking Jerusalem. Pictured, front row, from left, are guide Daniella Gefen, Rabbi Karen Thomashow, Andie Rosenbaum, Sammy Bayefsky, and Matthew Dicker; and, back row from left, Barnett Ludwig, Geoffrey Singer, Andrew Berinstein, Charles Ludwig, Aaron Cincinatus, Josh Alman, Holy Blossom education director Debbie Spiegel, Sam Heavenrich, chaperone Alan Heavenrich, and Ben the medic

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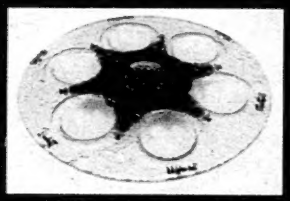
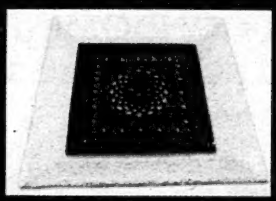

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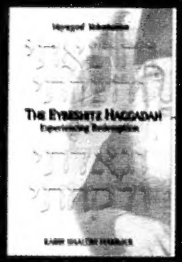

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Greater Toronto Area

Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

A number of Conservative congregations in Toronto and Montreal have recently voted or plan to vote to leave the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), the movement's umbrella body, over issues such as egalitarianism and gay clergy.

Rabbi Steven Saltzman, spiritual leader of Adath Israel Congregation, said last week that his shul's board of directors has voted "overwhelmingly to leave USCJ, effective immediately, because they feel it has not met even the bare minimum needs of our community here."

Ideologically, he said, "we find the chasm between Conservative Judaism in the United States and Conservative Judaism here to be growing larger and wider."

Canadians, he said, are much more traditional than communities across the border, and the egalitarian movement in the United States includes women being part of the services, the ordination of gay and lesbian rabbis, and patrilineal descent. "Frankly, [USCJ] no longer represents what and who we are."

He said Adath Israel's youth group will not be affected because only a handful of its members participate in international activities. "Kids participate actively, and our Hebrew school is treated as a functioning youth group."

At Beth Tikvah Congregation, the shul's board of governors sent a report to members that said it's recommending that the shul's membership in USCJ be ended by June 30, the end of its membership term.

"The board is of the opinion that the USCJ has no longer any relevance to our members... is philosophically different from the way in which we practice Conservative Judaism and does not provide value to our congregation," the report states.

In the USCJ's attempt to be all-inclusive, the report said, "it has made more traditional synagogues such as Beth Tikvah feel marginalized. We have been dissatisfied with its unwillingness to recognize the differences between Canadian and U.S. Jewry, its lack of responsiveness to our needs and its bureaucracy and centralized governance. Its leaders have quite simply not listened to our concerns and while much is made of a new deal, it provides little change from the status quo."

Efforts to reach shul president Jeffrey Jackson were unsuccessful, but in Beth Tikvah's March bulletin, he said the shul pays the USCJ $41,000 in membership dues, but the shul's board has been "concerned for several years about the value of belonging." As well, he said, Beth Tikvah's "more traditional observance of 'conservative' Judaism is in a minority compared to most of the other USCJ member congregations."

Founded in 1913, the USCJ has about 760 affiliated synagogues in North America. It offers services in areas such as education, youth activities, leadership development, social action and public policy, and Israel affairs.

Norman Kahn, a member of Beth Tzedec Congregation's board, said the issue of secession will be considered by the shul's executive committee and then by its board of governors. "The issue is a serious one, and we want to ensure that we give it sufficient thought."

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, spiritual leader of Beth Tzedec, Canada's largest Conservative shul, said, however, that he is a strong advocate of remaining in the USCJ. "I believe that the Conservative movement helps us define our congregational identity and connects us to other synagogues that share the same culture. We may have differing opinions as to exact religious practices, but the Conservative community is distinct from the Reform and Orthodox movements," he said.

"Although what we pay to the central organization far exceeds what we receive, not every relationship is simply transactional. We also have an important role to assist smaller congregations who share [common values]."

He said he is concerned that if Beth Tzedec leaves the USCJ, "we weaken the whole fabric of the Conservative movement. The Conservative movement is going through a process of regeneration. This separation would weaken that effort and our local Conservative community."

Rabbi Howard Morrison of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue said his shul has not yet voted on the issue, and Alex Roth, president of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, said his shul "has been in discussion with USCJ and other synagogues in the Toronto area. We will be bringing recent developments to the attention of our executive and board [this month]."

Paul Kochberg, president of the USCJ's Canadian region, declined to comment for this article. A USCJ representative in New York could not be reached for comment before *The CJN*'s deadline.

In Montreal, Rabbi Alan Bright, spiritual leader of Shaare Zedek, said his congregation doesn't see any benefit to remaining with the USCJ, "either ideologically, theologically or service-wise."

He said the board of the 600-family synagogue has voted on the issue, but that he is not at liberty to disclose the results.

Shaare Zedek is one of four Conservative synagogues in Montreal, and Rabbi Bright said there is a similar sense of dissatisfaction among the others. "For some years, the congregations in Montreal felt that they were getting little for the annual fees they pay to USCJ, and the issue of ordaining homosexuals brought to a head this long simmering discontent."

Even "more distressing" he said, is the push for same-sex marriage. While he has performed commitment ceremonies and brit milahs for children of same-sex parents, he is adamantly opposed to full sanctification of same-sex marriage.

With files from Janice Arnold in Montreal

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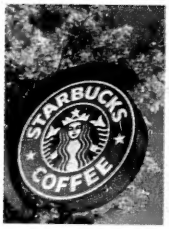

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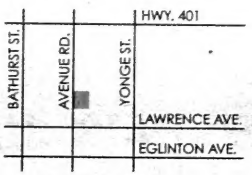

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One life, an entire world

Jewish tradition emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the goodness that others do for you. This pleasant obligation falls under the rabbinic injunction *hakarat hatov*, which means, literally, *recognizing the good*. The extended family of Saul Itzhayek of Montreal and all those – among whom this newspaper is counted – who celebrated the Montrealer's safe return last week from captivity in India, dutifully and thankfully embrace that wonderful obligation. We publicly acknowledge the good that so many others wrought on Itzhayek's behalf.

His story is an eerie tale of wariness, woe and disbelief.

The 42-year-old Montreal businessman spent nearly 10 harrowing and anguished months in a jail in Motihari, India, for allegedly running afoul of that country's visa regulations. He was arrested in May 2007 while crossing from Nepal into India. Indian authorities alleged that his entry papers were not proper. He was thrown into jail to await trial on charges that he said were orchestrated and trumped up.

An Indian court last week confirmed his earlier conviction, sentencing him to time already served and released him.

Eighty hours later, with Canadian diplomats at his side in a car delivering him from his jail in northern India to the airport in Nepal, the grateful Itzhayek was home in Montreal.

That the weary Montrealer finally made it home was due of course to the indomitability of his spirit and will. But it was also due to the goodness and persistence of a great many individuals – officials, advocates, lay and clerical leaders and just plain ordinary, decent folks – who refused to surrender their resolve to the frustrations of inexplicable injustice so far away. They simply would not let go of Itzhayek's cause:

• Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier, Secretary of State Helena Guergis and the Canadian consular officials in India intervened on Itzhayek's behalf.

• Human rights advocate and Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler relentlessly spearheaded the legal case from Canada. India's former solicitor general, Harish Salve, took up the case *pro bono* in India.

• A Montreal-based interfaith coalition of religious leaders kept the issue of Itzhayek's incarceration constantly alive in the minds of the public and the media.

• And Canadian Jewish Congress tirelessly advocated – both behind and in front of closed doors – for Itzhayek's release. Congress co-president Rabbi Reuven Bulka of Ottawa eloquently explained why: "Our advocacy on behalf of Saul was motivated by our sense of *pikuach nefesh*, the Jewish imperative of saving a soul in danger." Rabbi Bulka could have also explained as he has so often done, that to save one soul is to save an entire world.

Thus we happily acknowledge all those who were instrumental in saving Saul Itzhayek and his world. And we say thank you.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The International Red Cross confirmed Israeli findings that a mysterious illness that struck 800 West Bank Arabs and 10 Israeli border police officers was not caused by poison. Palestinian leaders had accused Israel of using chemical warfare.

Editorials & Letters

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Don't close She'arim!

A decision was recently made to close the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School ("She'arim to close its doors in June," *CJN*, March 20). We are witnesses to the amazing success of She'arim students. Once failing students, they have gone on to high school and to post-secondary studies.

The Mercaz (formerly the Board of Jewish Education) and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto put pressure on She'arim to close for financial reasons. It is their decision to transfer students to a day school. How can we expect remedial staff at mainstream schools, who have already failed to teach these students, to succeed in this endeavour? Money that federation will have to invest in other day schools would be better spent in helping She'arim.

There is also a danger that the day schools may not want to take some of these students back. The children would then have to go to public school, giving up their Jewish education.

There is still time to redress this less-than-wise decision. We believe our board can raise funds and that the community will help us raise them.

Rabbi Joseph Kelman
Co-founder of She'arim, with the late Rabbi Yitzchak Witty
David Diamond, Past President, She'arim
Murray Shore, Past President, She'arim

* * *

From a She'arim grad

Every Jewish child deserves a Jewish education, regardless of his or her learning abilities; I always believed that to be the premise. When I heard the news that She'arim was closing its doors, I was angry and disappointed ("She'arim to close its doors in June," *CJN*, March 20). As a graduate of She'arim (class of 1989), I feel very strongly that the doors should stay open.

She'arim gave me two solid years of intense, one-on-one attention using unique teaching techniques. When I moved into the mainstream system, I felt scared, intimidated and insecure, but I quickly realized my potential to learn and succeed was achievable because of what She'arim had taught me. What makes She'arim unique is that it provides the tools required for each and every student's learning styles.

My biggest concern now that She'arim is closing its doors is how the mainstream school system will guarantee that the style and format of She'arim is maintained.

Michael Weintraub
Toronto

From a She'arim grad's parent

I am a parent of a She'arim graduate ("She'arim to close its doors in June," *CJN*, March 20).

My son was diagnosed with attention deficit disorder while he was in Grade 2 at a day school. His teachers did nothing to help him. In fact, in many ways, they served to make the situation worse. Their attitudes gave his classmates license to taunt, harass and bully my son, and it took years for the wounds to heal.

She'arim's gifted and dedicated teachers worked with my son. The wounds healed and his confidence grew. He graduated from She'arim nearly four years ago and entered high school (not in the Jewish school system), where he excelled academically. His teachers could not believe he had been labelled "learning disabled."

Recently, my son was offered early acceptance to Ryerson University's radio and television arts program and a $1,000 scholarship. This achievement would not have been possible without She'arim.

Closing She'arim is only a financial bandage. We are mortgaging our future by not equipping those that need it with the tools to succeed. Better to build good students than new community centres. They are our future.

Stephen Tepperman
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Israel Apartheid Week at U of T

In February, the University of Toronto hosted Israeli Apartheid Week. During this event, university property was used to delegitimize the State of Israel.

On March 22, 125 U of T faculty members took a stand against the university administration by going public with their opposition to Israeli Apartheid Week being hosted on campus. They did so with a full-page advertisement in the *National Post*.

If 125 faculty members voice their opinion in this way, I would surely take notice. But I'm wondering whether the university's administration is even paying attention.

Without question, unless they take immediate action to end Israeli Apartheid Week, the fissures between the faculty, administration and student body are bound to widen as the issue continues to snowball.

Avi Benlolo
President and CEO
Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies

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With nothing pushing Jews to Israel, can it lure olim?

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — Founded with the express purpose of "ingathering of the exiles" – but with no more large groups of Jews to save – Israel is facing the end of the era of mass aliyah.

Recent reports that the Jewish Agency for Israel was considering shutting down its flagship aliyah department have prompted discussion about the future of immigration to Israel even as agency officials quickly denied the department was closing.

"Israel cannot throw away the idea of aliyah because it is one of basics of the ideology of having a Jewish state," said David Raz, a former Jewish Agency emissary abroad.

The crux of the matter is that immigration of necessity – also called "push aliyah" – is largely at its end, with few Jews left in the Diaspora who need the Jewish state as a haven from persecution or dire economic straits. The Jews of the Arab world fled to Israel in the 1950s, Russian-speaking Jews flocked here in the 1990s and Ethiopians came over the course of the past 25 years.

With nothing pushing mass immigration of Jews today, all that remains are the few immigrants of choice – also known as "pull" immigrants. Officials involved with aliyah say they expect no more than 15,000 or so new immigrants to Israel this year.

"You have Jews in the West who live very comfortably under pluralistic governments that give them unprecedented social and economic opportunities and let them live Jewish lives," said Uzi Rebhun, a demographer at Hebrew University's Institute of Contemporary Jewry. "In turn, aliyah to Israel has gone down."

With the pool of potential push immigrants drying up, officials like Oded Salomon, the director-general of aliyah and absorption for the Jewish Agency, are thinking about how to pull Jews to Israel in new and different ways.

Salomon says the focus now is on educational programs that bring young Jews to Israel in the hope of fostering lifelong connections to the Jewish state and creating new immigrants.

An arrival scene at Ben-Gurion Airport last year of immigration from Ethiopia to Israel which the author speculates is expected to end some time this year. [Isranet photo]

The Jewish Agency wants to create a special visa for visiting Diaspora Jews who want to explore the idea of aliyah by living in Israel for a few months. Such arrivals would be assisted with finding volunteer or work positions and Hebrew study.

Aliyah officials also are embracing the notion of "flexible aliyah" in which immigrants split their time between Israel and the Diaspora. About 10 per cent of immigrants who have made aliyah with the assistance of Nefesh B'Nefesh, which facilitates aliyah from North America and Britain with cash grants and assistance, divide their time between Israel and jobs abroad.

Other ideas to attract a new kind of aliyah being discussed include retirement communities near Eilat for American Jewish retirees the creation of an all-French-speaking town.

Israel has experienced other periods of sluggish immigration, such as the 1970s and 1980s, but in those eras there were large communities of Jews unable to emigrate and come to the Jewish state, such as those in the Soviet Union.

Today, however, the Jews who remain in the former Soviet Union are either too old to immigrate or prefer to stay put in countries where improved economies and more democratic freedoms have made life in the Diaspora more attractive.

Mass immigration from Ethiopia – where politics, economics and religious ideology sent tens of thousands of Jews to Israel over the past quarter century – is expected to end some time this summer. The Jewish Agency plans to shut its Ethiopian offices and bring home its staff when the last arrivals come.

Yuli Edelstein, the former Soviet refusnik and prisoner of Zion who later served as Israel's absorption minister, said Israel must make sure it can provide both meaningful professional opportunities and meaningful Jewish life if it wants to see significant immigration to the country.

"This is a period of rethinking," Edelstein told JTA "Without a Jewish motivation for being here, it will be much more difficult to attract people."

Among Israelis, too, the ethos of aliyah has dampened in recent years, a far cry from when it was described by the drafters of Israel's Declaration of Independence in 1948 as part of the vision of "the prophets of Israel."

"I don't think aliyah is on the agenda of Israeli society," Rebhun said.

Despite the country's founding mission, he said, "60 years after the State of Israel was established, most Jews still live outside of Israel." Sergio DellaPergola, a demographer from Hebrew University who also is associated with the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, a Jerusalem think tank, says many potential immigrants are put off by the bureaucracy and difficulties of Israeli life, not to mention Israel's security situation.

DellaPergola says major reforms are needed to help ease the path of immigrants, especially when it comes to accepting degrees and professional credentials earned abroad.

Despite plans for a new set of tax breaks for new immigrants and other ideas to help pave the way for potential immigrants, at the end of the day immigrants will come to Israel only if they see in the Jewish state the promise of a fulfilling Jewish life, DellaPergola said.

As the dollar falls against shekel, Jewish Agency considers change

By JACOB BERKMAN
JTA

NEW YORK — Facing a $20 million budget deficit for 2008, the Jewish Agency for Israel is considering some major organizational changes that could lead to a revamping of its aliyah operations.

Responding to criticism of its bureaucracy, the agency launched a multi-year strategic planning process in 2004 to streamline operations. The plan also called for diversifying the agency's revenue sources.

But the dollar's decline against the shekel has brought new urgency to the strategic changes, and this month agency officials proposed making major structural changes to the organization.

Last week, the agency's director-general, Moshe Vigdor, proposed splitting the organization into two operations: one in Israel and one in the Diaspora, with the aliyah department being folded into one or the other or both of the new departments.

Vigdor also spoke of changing the agency's focus to encouraging aliyah of choice, since aliyah of necessity practically has run its course, officials said.

"The dollar effect is like this: If you are moving toward structural changes and you realize you have serious budgetary concerns coming over the next one, two or three years, you don't want to make smaller, piecemeal cuts," the Jewish Agency's North American spokesman, Jacob Dallal, told JTA. "You want to do it more holistically. It is a good time to look at structural changes."

When parts of Vigdor's plan were portrayed in the Israeli media last week as a step toward reducing the agency's focus on aliyah, Jewish Agency leaders rushed to issue a letter to their board of governors assuring them that immigration would remain one of the Jewish Agency's core principles.

Ze'ev Bielski

"We would like to emphasize that the Aliyah department will not be closed," agency chairman Ze'ev Bielski and president Richie Pearlstone wrote. "The Department's mission, which is no less relevant today than it was in the past, will continue to be the spearhead of our actions."

Rather, the leaders explained, the changing nature of aliyah and the growing shekel-dollar gap were forcing the agency to explore new ways to position itself to promote immigration effectively and efficiently.

Vigdor's suggestion constituted only one proposal, officials stressed, with others to follow.

"Frankly, the professionals are still trying to come up with other options," said the co-chairman of the Jewish Agency's aliyah and absorption department, Jay Sarver.

Since last April the dollar has dropped to 3.5 shekels from 4.2 shekels. The Jewish Agency raises most of its $314 million budget in dollars but spends mostly in shekels or Russian rubles, so the agency estimates it will face a $20 million shortfall this year.

The Jewish Agency is funded primarily by the North American Jewish federation system, Keren Hayesod in Europe and grants in excess of $40 million per year from the U.S. government.

Though there has been no significant change in the amount the agency spends on aliyah – this year, $109 million is allocated to aliyah, compared to $113 million in 2007 – agency officials have suggested that the shifting nature of aliyah from immigration of necessity to immigration of choice could prompt the agency to make some changes in the near future to how it encourages aliyah.

Currently the aliyah department spends money on recruiting immigrants, finding them jobs and assisting in their absorption.

In their letter, Bielski and Pearlstone reiterated the agency's goals of "increasing the number of olim from Western countries, increasing the number of students from the Diaspora who come to Israel and strengthening partnership relationships between Israel and the Diaspora."

In any case, Dallal said, significant budget cuts to traditional aliyah and absorption will not happen until mass immigration from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia have ended.

From victims to villains

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

My parents and I arrived in Sweden 60 years ago almost to the day. The country gave shelter to Jewish refugees before, during and after World War II. As a child, my wife, together with her mother, was taken to Sweden by the Swedish Red Cross from a concentration camp a couple of weeks before Germany's final surrender in May 1945. My mother's two surviving sisters were rescued at the same time. The Swedes cared very well for the refugees and did their best to bring them back to normality.

Though not always with enthusiasm, they acted in a similar fashion toward the Jews who got there from Germany before the war and from Denmark during the war. When, thanks to the efforts of my aunts, we came from war-ravaged Poland, we received similarly good treatment.

I believe that the Swedes acted not out of love for Jews, but out of a sense of secularized Protestant duty. They recognized the Jews as the underdog and saw it as their responsibility to provide shelter for them. Even now, when I know how shallow Sweden's ostensible neutrality was during World War II and how many Swedes were Nazi sympathizers throughout, I remain deeply grateful for what the country did for me and my family.

But things are very different now. Attitudes changed once Jews ceased to be the underdog. Nowadays, when Jews are at ease and the Jewish state is strong, Palestinians have been identified as victims and Jews as villains.

Moreover, in recent years, Sweden has received many immigrants from Muslim countries who have actively stimulated anti-Israel attitudes and further contributed to Sweden's change of heart and mind. Our friends in need became adversaries once – and perhaps because – we now can look after ourselves.

In view of the anti-Semitism that has always been there and is very much in evidence today – usually disguised as attacks on the Jewish state – it's understandable that many Jews suspect that more than politically motivated criticism of Israel is at stake. Perhaps the humanitarian actions from which we once benefited were the exception and the present stance is the rule.

But as Jews, we are now infinitely better off than we were then, when we depended on the kindness of strangers. Thanks to the existence of Israel, no Jew need be a refugee now. As despicable as anti-Semitism is and as essential as it is to fight it, the survival of our people is no longer contingent upon the goodwill of others.

Therefore, our indignation about how little may have changed in the way others treat us must be tempered by celebration of how much the Jewish people has progressed in the last six decades.

Recreating an authentic Friday-night experience

Mark Masters in Ottawa

It's 5 p.m. on a Friday night and I have ruined my mom's perfectly good brisket dinner.

Somewhere along the line, the instructions from my parents in Toronto to me in Ottawa about how to properly defrost the meal got mixed up.

My friends will be arriving within the hour, expecting a nice Shabbat dinner to be waiting.

I call and order some takeout chicken. The cans of soup that I've had in my apartment since I moved in have been emptied into a pot on my stove.

A novice chef to say the least, I stand frazzled, looking at my kitchen like it's a place I've never been before.

Yet, somehow this is one of the proudest moments of my university life.

The events leading up to my kitchen meltdown started back in September. A friend of mine in the Jewish fraternity suggested that a group of us – four guys in Ottawa for school and away from home – take turns hosting Shabbat dinners. The goal was to congregate every couple weeks at someone's apartment, eat a quality meal and catch up.

University life can sometimes be a giant paradox. One moment you have tons of free time, and one hour later you feel like you're drowning in a sea of essays, exams and social events. The average university student enjoys a lifestyle that's far removed from the comforts of home, and in all the hoopla, there's little time for reflection.

When I lived at home before moving away for university, my family went to my grandparents' house for Friday night Shabbat dinners almost every week. It was a constant. We sat, we ate and we talked. Then we watched television and laughed, and talked some more. It was the perfect end to a week spent trying to keep up with the trials and tribulations of life.

When I arrived at Carleton University several years ago, I left behind these weekly rituals.

But it wasn't until this year that I realized what made those Shabbat dinners so special.

One of the most beautiful things about our religion is that wherever we go, we find each other and open our doors wide to both friends and strangers. Shabbat is central to this.

That is why I rolled up my sleeves and hosted a Shabbat dinner in my apartment this year. Granted, I can't cook, but in the end, that wasn't important.

This year, a trend has emerged in Ottawa in which older students have been hosting Shabbat dinners on an almost-weekly basis.

This network of dinners is aided by the Jewish Students' Association, which holds larger Shabbat dinners on campus sporadically throughout each semester. Meanwhile, a new initiative called Project Shabbat has been started by the North American Jewish Student Alliance, which seeks to help subsidize students who put on their own Shabbat dinners. It's a worthwhile venture and one I hope students will take advantage of.

It seems so simple, but like most things in life, it's the simple things that mean the most.

Each Shabbat dinner is a celebration of our faith and at the same time a reminder of how quickly life passes by.

It's a lesson that's hard to grasp when you're going through university, and I admittedly didn't figure it out until the later years of my post-secondary experience. But I'm glad I did.

As my final semester at university winds down, I had one last Shabbat dinner to attend. A bunch of older guys in the Jewish fraternity decided to get together one final time before we all left for the summer and prepared to enter the work world.

It was a great night, and we reminisced about the times we shared during our years as university students in Ottawa.

I recall relating the story of this Shabbat dinner to my parents and basked in the pride emanating from both ends of the line.

Somehow, through all those Shabbat dinners when I was younger, I'd absorbed the importance of the message: to gather, talk and be together for no other reason than that we can.

Anti-Semitism isn't a problem at Dalhousie

Jesse Mintz in Halifax

Some fears are warranted. Others are not. In a society saturated with fear and inundated with images and soundbites that create this fear, it has become increasingly difficult to differentiate between the two.

I don't pretend to know how to do so. I don't have a golden rule or foolproof equation that I apply to discern what is genuinely fearsome and what is a media creation. I occasionally suffer from the same paralyzing fear that grips many others whenever there is the announcement of a red terror alert, an attack of African killer bees or the emergence of a new strand of the flu. But this temporary fear, and the immobility it creates, serves only to harden my resolve to understand and move past my fears.

Fear breeds anxiety, and when public discourse is overrun by disquiet and tension, prejudice often gets the better of people. In the face of such illogical and debilitating fear, it's impossible to live and learn.

So, in response to what I perceive as unwarranted fear, I have dedicated this column to shedding new light on the pervasive fear of anti-Semitism on campus. I would not presume to try to alleviate all of your concerns about the trend. If students at Carleton and York universities and the University of Western Ontario are concerned about it, it's with good reason. I'm merely going to share with you my modest experiences so far in Halifax in the hope they will provide a new perspective on the issue and let you decide for yourself.

I am a Jewish student on a university campus and I have never been the target of anti-Semitism – shocking, I know. I have never been shouted down in class for my political or religious beliefs. A professor has never belittled my opinions. I've never been called racist, colonialist or fascist. And I've never seen or heard Judaism, or any religion for that matter, seriously defamed in an academic setting.

To be fair, Dalhousie University is not the University of California at Berkeley or Columbia University. It's not even McGill University or the University of Toronto. Dalhousie seems palpably apathetic toward politics in general and contentious issues in particular (voter turnout for our student elections is even lower than for federal votes).

Dalhousie's Jewish students haven't been afflicted by what historian Irving Abella – who specializes in the history of Jews in Canada – has described as a traumatizing anti-Semitism on campus that intimidates students from speaking up in support of Israel or Judaism.

Contrary to what many may think is possible, I've had a university experience in which not only have my religious, political and cultural opinions been aired, they have been fostered and encouraged to grow and diversify as well.

There are near-weekly Shabbat dinners hosted by either the local Chabad or the Jewish Student Association, and on the off week, if a student is really in need of a home-cooked Shabbat meal, the rabbi can usually set them up with a welcoming family. There are theme parties and events, such Purim Palooza and challah baking. And to show that we Jews aren't all about having a good time, there are charity events to raise money for deserving causes.

But more important than the dinners, parties and events is the open dialogue on campus that's fostered by scholars, journalists and historians. This past month alone, the Dalhousie's Israel Action Committee hosted Noam Bedein, a photojournalist and director of the Sderot Media Centre, and Dalhousie's debating society held an open forum on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Granted, there have been a few instances of heated friction, most notably when I was in first year, when the Palestinian Solidarity Society erected an apartheid wall in the student union building. But despite differing opinions, the Palestinian demonstrators and the pro-Israel activists who questioned them found enough common ground to discuss the Mideast situation and possible resolutions without resorting to altercations and arguments.

Far from being in an atmosphere of virulent anti-Semitism couched in anti-Zionist terms – as some Jewish groups warn that university campuses are fast becoming – I have found my university experience to be one in which a multitude of opinions are encouraged and fostered.

The Kirshner File

Serious doubts surface about U.S. report on Iran

Sixteen U.S. intelligence agencies, in a vaunted report issued last December, claimed that Iran had frozen its covert nuclear weapons program. But today, the Americans are biting their lips, torn by second thoughts. In what passed for a frank and painful reappraisal, the director of U.S. national intelligence, Mike McConnell, recently suggested that the report clouded rather than clarified the issue. Zalmay Khalilzad, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, agreed, likening the report to an errant soccer player who scores a goal against his own team.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Four months ago, in a politically charged bombshell whose repercussions rippled across the Middle East, American spy organizations released a startling report – the National Intelligence Estimate – that dismayed the Bush administration, shocked and puzzled Israel, and heartened Iran.

Only two years after it had concluded that Iran was "determined to develop nuclear weapons," possibly within a decade, it backtracked, claiming that the Iranian government had halted that program in the autumn of 2003 because of international scrutiny and pressure. But in an important and somewhat overlooked caveat, it noted that Iran was still producing enriched uranium – the key ingredient of a nuclear bomb – and that Iran was likely to keep its options open with respect to building such a device.

Ehud Barak

From a practical point of view, the report was devastating in its impact. It undermined President George W. Bush's resolve to confront and isolate Iran by diplomatic or military means, a cornerstone of his foreign policy in the Mideast. It weakened support for tougher United Nations sanctions against Iran. It left Israel with the sinking feeling that it might have to face the looming Iranian threat without the active support of its chief ally, the United States. It emboldened Iran, already cocky and on a roll since President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad assumed power in 2005, and it bolstered Iran's claim that its nuclear program is intended for civilian purposes.

Bush, having branded Iran as a terrorist state that threatens the stability of the Middle East and having menacingly warned that he would not tolerate an Iranian nuclear arsenal, was none too pleased with the National Intelligence Estimate. It was as if a Persian carpet had been pulled from under his feet. To underscore the Bush administration's official view of Iran, U.S. Secretary of Defence Robert Gates observed that Washington continues to regard Iran as a threat to regional security.

Israel, an undeclared nuclear power, was unhappy with the National Intelligence Estimate, too, saying it had opened the way for Iran to achieve its nuclear objectives without external interference. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert claimed he had evidence that Iran is "moving forward with plans to create a capacity for non-conventional weapons," though he has said that Iran's acquisition of a nuclear stockpile is not inevitable. Defence Minister Ehud Barak acknowledged that Iran had indeed stopped its nuclear program after the American invasion of Iraq, but that it has since been renewed and is quite advanced. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, speaking more generally, described Iran as a threat to peace.

Shortly after the controversial report was released, Admiral Mike Mullen, the chair of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, visited Israel. He was told in no uncertain terms that the National Intelligence Estimate was unduly optimistic and focused too narrowly on the easiest stage of nuclear weapon development, the building of a warhead with highly enriched uranium. As the Israeli analyst Chuck Freilich has observed, the primary obstacle to constructing a nuclear weapon lies not in weaponization, a program that Iran may have temporarily suspended, but in the enrichment of uranium, which Iran is pursuing openly and aggressively.

Aharon Ze'evi Farkash, the former director of Israeli military intelligence, believes that Iran is working actively on all three fronts of a nuclear weapons program.

Iran is accumulating fissile material through uranium enrichment and plutonium production, which explains why the UN Security Council recently passed a third set of sanctions aimed at the Iranian government. Iran is proceeding with weaponization in an attempt to fit fissile material into the warhead of a missile. Iran is also developing a delivery system in the form of the surface-to-surface Shihab missile, which apparently can reach any place in Israel.

Mike McConnell and President George W. Bush

Two months ago, the director of the Pentagon's Missile Defence Agency, Gen. Henry Obering, said that Iran has accelerated the development of long-range missiles. In a recent announcement, Iran acknowledged having built a new missile, the Ashoura, with a range of 2,000 kilometres. Alluding to these developments, Russia's deputy foreign minister, Alexsandr Losyukov, said two months ago that Iran's activities have raised "suspicions." It was a revealing comment, given Russia's role in building Iran's Bushehr nuclear reactor and supplying it with shipments of nuclear fuel.

Iran's quest for nuclear arms has set off alarm bells outside Israel as well. Roger Smith, the British representative at the International Atomic Energy Agency, has speculated that Iran may have continued work on nuclear weapons past 2003, contrary to the National Intelligence Estimate. The organization that originally exposed Iran's covert nuclear program back in 2002, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, is positive that the Iranian government restarted it in 2004. Even the International Atomic Energy Agency, which seems to have coddled Iran at times, has accused Iran of having conducted experiments to acquire a nuclear weapon.

In light of these assertions, observers were not entirely surprised that McConnell began distancing himself from the National Intelligence Estimate. Appearing before a U.S. Senate committee in February, he asserted that Iran's refusal to halt uranium enrichment – the most difficult task in manufacturing an atomic bomb – meant that Iran is dead serious about acquiring a nuclear capability. In an ominous disclosure, he added that Iran has started to deploy a new generation of machines to produce nuclear fuel.

Gregory Schulte, the U.S. ambassador to the International Atomic Energy Agency, has been just as emphatic. As he pointed out, Iran's determination to master the enrichment process – which is not necessary for a peaceful nuclear program – is indicative of its real desires.

Judging by official Iranian pronouncements, Iran has no intention of scrapping its nuclear program. "The Iranian nation will not retreat one iota from its nuclear rights," Ahmadinejad said late last year after disclosing that Iran's enrichment program is well under way. More recently, the deputy secretary of Iran's National Security Council, Javad Valdi, said that Iran has begun using new centrifuges that can enrich uranium at more than twice the speed of the machines currently at its disposal.

Given Iran's blatant rejection of Israel's existence and legitimacy, and the harsh language its leaders regularly use to demonize the Jewish state, Israel has reason to fear Iranian intentions. According to Israel, Iran may well develop an atomic bomb by 2010. Israel, having launched a new spy satellite in January to monitor Iran, has made it clear that it cannot reconcile itself to a nuclear-armed Iran and that no options will be ruled out in confronting Iran. The question that concentrates minds today is whether Israel, in self-defence and in defiance of the National Intelligence Estimate, would resort to military force to cripple or destroy Iran's nuclear facilities.

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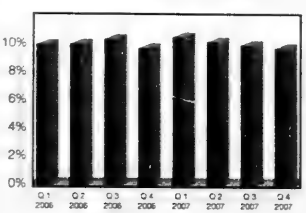

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She'arim parents work to keep school open

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Negotiations are still going on between an unnamed Jewish day school and a small committee of high-level lay leaders and staff of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and its Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (formerly the Board of Jewish Education, now known informally as the Mercaz) to determine the fate of students at She'arim.

The 27-year-old school – formally known as the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, Sara and Sam Hennick Education Centre – is housed at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and serves 75 students from Grade 1 through Grade 8 with learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and mild forms of autism.

Twenty-five students will graduate this year, leaving 50 who are not yet sure where they will be in September, after a March 12 meeting when school co-president Sidney Braun announced that the school was no longer financially viable in its current format.

Under the new arrangements, students would be in a separate program that would address their special needs under the auspices of an existing school.

"We're in the midst of very sensitive negotiations," said Howard English, the federation's spokesperson and vice-president of corporate communications.

"We hope they'll conclude very shortly," he said, adding that both parties understand the need to come to terms soon.

However, a small group of parents is still trying to turn things around, and an open meeting – to let the community know "what the school is about" and that there's a "severe need" for it – has been planned for this Thursday, April 3, at 7:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, said organizer Ellen Frischman-Snyder.

Rabbi Joseph Kelman, a She'arim founder who will speak at the meeting, told *The CJN* that keeping the school open for another year would "at least give the other [Jewish] schools a chance to develop a program" for current She'arim students.

In the event the plans with an existing day school don't work out, Frischman-Snyder said she and other parents have started to make inquiries about enrolling their children individually at other schools.

"Parents are being turned down," she said. "Everyone is looking at our children as a group."

"It is a horrible, disastrous situation that the school is closing," Frischman-Snyder added. "If there is no plan in place, these are kids that are going to be lost into the public school system and denied a Jewish education."

Eric Golombek, principal of Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Education Centre on Neptune Drive, said that "no one has really been told yes or no" about being accepted at the school.

"We'd be happy to meet with [anyone applying to Associated] to consider what the child's learning needs are."

However, Golombek said that any new students, regardless of whether or not they come from She'arim would be accepted "if [they fit] within the services we can provide… We're not going to shortchange any children."

Eric Golombek

Merle Langbord Levine – a former Jewish day school teacher, and the founder and educational director of the Merle Levine Academy, a private special education school serving students from Grade 2 through high school – is adamant that the federation's plan to accommodate She'arim students in a separate program within an existing school won't work.

"Absolutely not," she said. "Socially, the child is considered different."

Langbord Levine, who has no affiliation with She'arim, said she felt "very badly" when she heard about its imminent closing. "It does do a service for the community. However, it's a business, and it has to be run that way."

Annual tuition at her school is in the $22,000 range, about $4,000 more than at She'arim, and Langbord Levine said she "barely break[s] even."

Sam Hennick, a major funder of She'arim for the past eight years, said he was upset but not surprised to hear the school would be closing.

Hennick said he has a fund at the federation's Jewish Foundation, whose proceeds help She'arim. "I made it clear to UJA that only I can direct that fund… If the school closes, and another one isn't started up, I would look around for a worthwhile charity, probably in the same area of school funding and maybe direct some of the money there, or maybe keep some back and hope that somebody starts a She'arim."

She'arim, however, is his first choice, he said. "If it continues," he added.

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'Closure will rob many children of golden opportunity'

By AVI DEUTSCH
Special to The CJN

I recently heard the shocking news of how the Toronto Jewish community has turned its back on a vitally integral organization.

The leaders of the Jewish community have decided that She'arim Hebrew Day School is no longer needed.

One can only conclude that the 75 children who require the most educational help are unimportant to our community. I don't understand how any reasonable, intelligent person cannot see the importance of a school like She'arim, both to its students and the community as a whole.

Guest Voice

How can anyone decide which children are more important than others? How can anyone say that higher costs of educating learning-disabled children justify closing the school? We in Toronto are privileged to live in a community possessing wealth and resources that most don't have.

However, when I scrutinize our community, I see ludicrous priorities. Lavishing millions of dollars on the building of community centres and the like is ridiculous, considering the financial state of our schools and other charities.

She'arim has been a valuable community asset for more than 25 years. The program it offers is tailor-made for children with educational, behavioural and emotional needs that are beyond the scope of a regular school. These children require focused, specialized attention in an environment of acceptance to help them succeed.

The void left by She'arim's closure will rob many children of a golden opportunity to achieve their potential. Is it not our responsibility to ensure that every child is equipped with the tools and skills necessary to achieve success in life?

I am not an educational specialist, nor do I have a child attending She'arim. My perspective on the need for a school such as She'arim comes from being an alumnus.

I attended She'arim for 2½ years, graduating in the class of 1990. I started at She'arim because I was out of options: the day school system had failed me miserably, having done nothing to help me deal with my learning disabilities and the behavioural issues that resulted from them.

Eighteen years after graduation, I am happily married with four young children, three of whom are enrolled in the Jewish day school system. I own a house and two cars, and I hold an upper management position at a large construction company. I actively volunteer in various community charities and am an elected member of the board of governors at my synagogue. In fact, all 10 students from my graduating class are productive members of the Jewish community and society.

I know that had I never switched to She'arim in Grade 6, I would not be where I am today. Every day, I utilize skills and techniques that I learned at She'arim to help me overcome the severe learning disabilities in written communication and comprehension that God gave me.

Thanks to my time at She'arim, I acquired skills to surpass every low expectation I was faced with in the regular day school system.

Without a school to teach children with learning issues how to exist in today's demanding world, I fear many of them will be lost.

People assume we can integrate the specialized curriculum into current school systems as a supplement or secondary learning stream, but that is just wishful thinking.

Children with learning disabilities need specialized attention: small class sizes, caring staff, and programs to give them confidence in their own abilities.

These needs will not be met properly in a regular school.

Additionally, putting children with learning issues on the same campus with children who learn in the standard way is simply a mistake.

Children can be mean, and they belittle and ridicule anyone who does not fit the mould. How does a child whom the school itself labels as different even have a shot?

These students need a place like She'arim to instil self-confidence and self worth.

How can we sleep at night knowing that we are throwing away the best chance these kids have to succeed?

In addition, the consequences of She'arim's closure will not be felt by its students alone. When one child in a family needs more attention than the others and there is no outside source to lean on, the family as a unit suffers. She'arim offers assistance for the entire family.

It saddens me that we have essentially abandoned some of the most needing and deserving members of our community.

Avi Deutsch lives in Toronto.

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Analyst draws faulty analogy with Tibet

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

It wasn't surprising that when Eric Margolis was interviewed recently about the situation in Tibet, he took the opportunity to unfairly compare the plight of the Tibetans to that of the Palestinians. As a foreign affairs analyst, Margolis is well known for singling out Israel for gratuitous and misleading criticism.

Margolis, who appeared on TVO's *The Agenda* on March 21, is quite well informed about Tibet, China and the region at large. His book *War at The Top of The World*, subtitled *The Struggle for Afghanistan, Kashmir, and Tibet*, was recently updated in a third edition.

He dedicated the book to the Dalai Lama, whom he claims as an inspiration. Nonetheless, Margolis also recognized that China has historical claims to Tibet, going back to the 14th century.

He explained that through the centuries, Tibet maintained its "spiritual" autonomy within Chinese "temporal" political rule. That arrangement lasted until Tibet declared independence in 1913.

Still, in the interview with *The Agenda*'s Steve Paikin, Margolis came across as an apologist for China: "The Chinese have done many good things in Tibet, too. We don't hear that too much. In all these news reports, our sympathies are with the Tibetans. The Tibetans have done some bad things to local Chinese in Tibet."

Margolis explained that China's invasion of Tibet in 1950 was prompted by a desire to assert not only its historical claims, but also its strategic interests on its western frontier, including against possible threats from India.

He added that China's invasion helped modernize a backward country by building hospitals, schools, roads and, most recently, a rail line connecting the two countries.

Margolis refused to depict the China-Tibet situation in black-and-white terms, saying it's "very complicated."

But his analysis of the Israeli-Arab conflict was simplistic and one-sided, with Israel invariably cast as the villain and the Palestinians as helpless victims.

Thus, Margolis described China's moving settlers into Tibet "just the way the Israelis have been doing on the West Bank."

But according to Margolis, the Chinese in Tibet now outnumber Tibetans. By contrast, Israelis remain a small fraction of the population in the West Bank.

Margolis ignored Jewish religious and historical claims to that area, where Jews lived before being evicted by Jordanian forces in 1948. Even many Israelis on the left who oppose settlement activity for the sake of a political settlement with the Palestinians don't deny the validity of these claims.

There are other significant differences that Margolis ignored in his faulty analogy. Unlike China in Tibet, Israel did not invade the West Bank in 1967, but rather, came into possession of the territory in a war of self defence.

As well, Tibetan leaders have never declared China illegitimate or carried out violence and terrorism against that country.

Eric Margolis

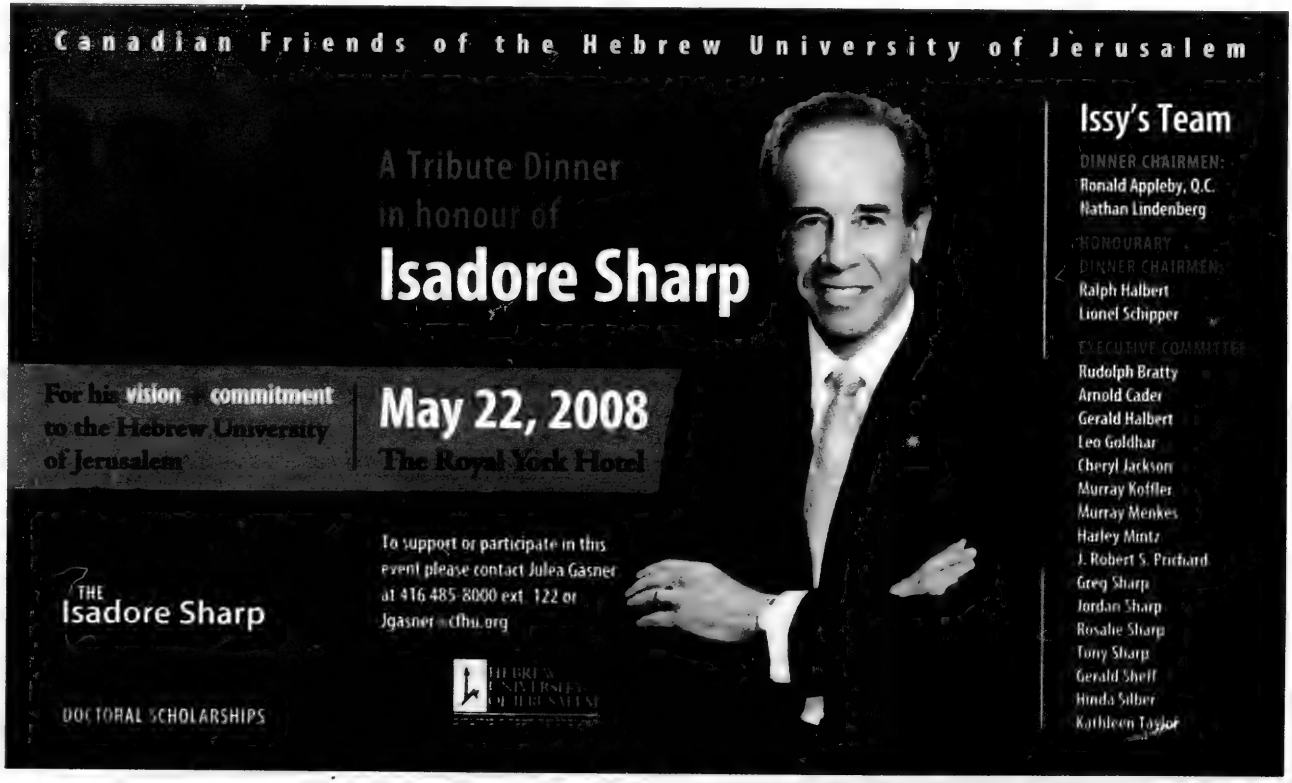
By contrast, Palestinian organizations, Hamas foremost, insist that Israel itself must be destroyed, not just that its control over the West Bank be ended. It has not been lost on Israelis that when Israel withdrew unilaterally from Gaza in 2005, the Palestinians responded with more rocket fire.

Margolis endorsed the Dalai Lama-backed plan that would like to see a return to "autonomy" – not independence – for Tibet. But he refused to credit Israel with accepting the need for an independent Palestinian state, and actively trying to achieve it during the Camp David and Taba negotiations of 2000-2001.

When asked what sort of international pressure can be applied against China, Margolis' response was typical of his anti-Israel obsession: "Of course the Chinese are going to turn right around and say 'What about the West Bank? Why don't you do something? While telling us that we have to be nice to the Tibetans, you do something for the Palestinians.'"

As in granting the Palestinians mere "autonomy"? There's no way Margolis would accept that in Israel's case – which reveals the speciousness of his comparison.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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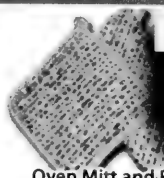

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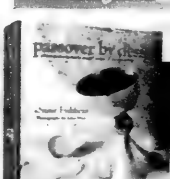

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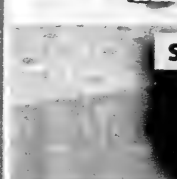

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Greater Toronto Area

Pay Gazans to leave, right-wing MK says

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert wants citizens of Sderot and Ashkelon to get used to constant rocket barrages from Gaza, but the problem could be solved by paying Palestinians to leave the territory, a prominent right-wing MK said in Toronto last week.

"Every year Israel spends 10 per cent of their national income on the concept of [the Oslo accords] – on building fences, on destroying Jewish villages, on putting guards at each coffee shop or store. It's crazy," Moshe Feiglin, leader of the Manhigut Yehudit (Jewish Leadership) faction of Israel's Likud Party, told some 200 people at Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue, after a March 27 speech sponsored by the Jewish Defence League of Canada.

"We're talking about more than 60,000 people on the payroll. We're talking about $150 billion that Israel spends every 10 years," the former Likud leadership candidate said, noting that a survey done recently at a Palestinian university found that most of the students want to leave Gaza.

"That money is enough to give every Arab family in Yesha $250,000… They want to leave, we have the money. We're spending it anyhow… We have the money to help them, encourage them to have a future somewhere else."

According to Ynetnews, Olmert recently told board members of the Barzilai Medical Center in Ashkelon that living with rocket attacks has been Israel's reality for the past 60 years, and that he has "no way of preventing these things from recurring."

"Basically, he said, 'Get used to it. I have no solutions. Get used to it,'" said Feiglin, who co-founded the group Zo Artzeinu (This is our Land) to protest the Oslo accords in 1993.

"That means that 63 years after the gates of Auschwitz opened, they are supposed to get used to the fact that every once in a while, a Jew is going to get killed because he is a Jew… He has an army, a president, the most modern, strong army in the Middle East, Knesset, Parliament – why did we do all that? Why did we even establish the State of Israel to begin with? Because we agreed that we would not get used to that."

Feiglin admitted that his Gaza solution would likely not come to pass, and he ventured another approach that he said could improve security in Israel.

He said the best way to remedy the problem in Gaza is to consider the case of the Golan Heights.

"The border of Ramat Hagolan between Israel and Syria is the quietest border and the safest and most peaceful border," Feiglin said.

He argued that Israel achieved peace on the Syrian border by following five rules: the Syrian Arabs who lived there were evacuated and "encouraged to leave." As well, the land was occupied, it was annexed, Jewish settlements were established, and Israel and Syria never signed a peace treaty.

"And look what we have: a great peace in Ramat Hagolan."

Feiglin said the biggest obstacles Israel must overcome are within its own borders, adding that from the moment the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin shook hands with the late Palestinian Authority president Yassir Arafat, Israel started playing a completely different game, one that gave the advantage to the Arabs.

Moshe Feiglin

"Let's assume someone comes to your house and tells you, 'Your house is mine…' And you shake his hand and you tell him, 'You know what, let's compromise…' What will people… think? Who will they think the house really belongs to?" Feiglin asked.

He said most homeowners would do whatever it takes to kick that person out of their house.

"You would do everything you can so people would understand that you don't accept this claim. The minute you shake his hand, you lost the match," Feiglin said.

He said when Israel pulled out of Gaza in 2005, media from around the world flocked to witness the event.

"There was no one in the world who did not see what the Jews were doing to themselves… The Jews showed the entire world that the land of Israel does not belong to them, but that it belongs to the Arabs. And from now on, we are the bad guys and the good guys are the Arabs."

He said part of the overall solution to Israel's problems is to seek leadership that works in the name of God.

"Israel needs leadership that leads the State of Israel [based] upon Jewish values, leadership that knows where he comes from, knows where he is going."

In last August's primaries, Feiglin who ran for the Likud party leadership with the tagline, "Feiglin, because he has a God," received about 24 per cent of the votes against Likud party leader Benjamin Netanyahu's 73 per cent.

Feiglin said that a few years ago, no one would have believed that he would garner a quarter of the votes against Netanyahu.

"But I'm telling you that, *be'ezrat Hashem*, next primary, I'm going to win."

York pro-Israel groups cry foul over table ban

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Coalition of Zionists at York University was denied permission to set up an information table about the Israel Defence Forces in Vari Link, one of the school's central thoroughfares.

Jonathan Roth, a 20-year-old economics student and the president of CCZ, sent a request last month to York's Centre for Student Community & Leadership Development (SC&LD) – the arm of York's administration that considers requests to hold events on campus – to set up an information table about the work the IDF does in Israel and abroad.

Although CCZ was given permission to apply to use a less public venue, such as a lecture hall or classroom, Roth said he thinks his group is being singled out.

"We're trying to disseminate information to people who pass by. To do it in a lecture hall is not really the type of event that we want," he said.

"The bottom line is that there are anti-Israel groups that are holding very controversial tabling events all the time in the same space. [The SC&LD] may argue that those events aren't sanctioned by the university, but at the same time, they aren't taking any action, despite complaints to remove those events."

He said the CCZ tabling event was meant to present information about the IDF's history and the humanitarian aid it provides.

"What is the strangest to me is that this is exactly the same event that we held last year. We had IDF Appreciation Day last year, and all I did [this year] was update the brochure. The display boards are the exact same. It is obvious that it is not a question of the event being a problem, because they were willing to do it last year," Roth said.

He added that although there have been confrontations with students who oppose the CCZ's messages, it's unfair to penalize his group for the outbursts of protesters.

"There are protesters that come to our events, and I've been verbally harassed and threatened, and they destroy our materials and cause problems… I've filed complaints at York against one individual who is often behind them, and nothing has been done," he said.

"This is a heckler's veto, because they are rewarding their behaviour by telling the victim that I can no longer have events."

But Frank Cappadocia of SC&LD said he tries not to allow tabling that may lead to a blockage of pedestrian traffic in Vari Link, which connects York's Vari Hall rotunda and classrooms with the university's Central Square complex.

"One of our most significant traffic arteries for pedestrian walk-through is Vari Link. It is a critical space… For us, we always look for opportunities to redirect tabling… We tend to avoid the link where possible," Cappadocia said.

He said the CCZ has been granted space in Vari Link in the past for events that "resulted in a very strong response from a group of students."

He added that since a CCZ tabling event in 2007 that presented information about the Iranian threat to Israel and the West, SC&LD has established stricter tabling policies.

Cappadocia said tabling is meant to promote a club or an event being held elsewhere on campus, rather than make the tabling session itself an event.

When determining whether a student group will be granted space in Vari Link, Cappadocia said he takes a number of factors into consideration.

"One is, if I were to put this event in Vari Link, would it generate a strong response from other members of the community and would it entail a blockage of a main pedestrian artery? I have no doubt that if I were to put this [CCZ] event in the Vari Link, it would result in a very significant student response."

Regarding anti-Israel groups that have set up in Vari Link without permission, Cappadocia said he can understand why Roth is annoyed.

"He is very upset that these guys are here and they set up and he wants to do the exact same thing. What I've said to him is that we have a complaint protocol in place that he and any member of the community can file a complaint through the office of student conduct."

More campus news on pages 26, 28

But Orna Hollander, executive director of Betar Canada, said pro-Israel groups on campus are also being treated unfairly when it comes to how SC&LD handles complaints.

As an example, she cited a fine that Cappadocia issued last week to two members of the Hasbara Fellowship at York.

She said they incurred a $250 fine for violating York's code of student conduct after Hasbara and Betar erected a mock Israeli security fence without the university's permission and displayed graphic images of Israeli terror victims.

Hollander said she was upset the pair were fined within two days of the complaint being filed, while complaints that Hasbara and Betar filed against anti-Israel groups in February are still being processed.

Cappadocia said all the complaints he receives are investigated, but some are easier to process that others.

He said if a complaint has a hate-based component to it, it gets sent to York's Centre for Human Rights, which has its own protocols.

"But if a complaint includes a detailed list of infractions that a group committed, such as violating the temporary university space policy, and the material is hateful, it is handled differently," he said.

"There are no favourites being played. Groups are being treated equally, so with all due respect to people's perceptions that one group isn't being treated fairly, I think what is ironic in this is that I'm hearing the exact same thing from both sides."

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Israeli yeshiva a hit on the Internet

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It is a measure of the pervasiveness of the Internet that the dean of an Orthodox religious school measures the school's influence and success – at least in part – by the number of page downloads from its website recorded every day.

Rabbi Yosef Carmel smiles when he says that 1,000 people visit the Eretz Hemdah website (www.eretzhemdah.
org) daily to retrieve a document to help them lead a more traditional lifestyle. They're not just casual visitors, he explains, but people who navigate the site in search of a weekly dvar Torah, advice on Halachah, information about the school's philosophy or any of its dozens of rabbinic courts' decisions on matters of Jewish law.

The material is available in Hebrew, with much of it translated into English, said Rabbi Carmel, who was in Toronto last week to promote the school's good works. He met supporters of the yeshiva at a private home in an event sponsored by Mizrachi Canada.

Eretz Hemdah is an educational institution based in Jerusalem that offers a highly intensive program of Torah study for rabbinic students and those who already possess smichah (rabbinic ordination). It offers a PhD-level program of study for post-smichah students leading to the advanced *yadin yadin* certification.

"This is the highest level of Torah learning in Israel and abroad," said Rabbi Carmel, one of the school's founders.

Eretz Hemdah also operates an Orthodox beit din (rabbinic court) with 18 branches across Israel. In addition to batei din in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Haifa, 15 other courts have adopted Eretz Hemdah's system of dispute resolution and are called upon by Israelis to arbitrates all manners of disputes, such as business conflicts, he said.

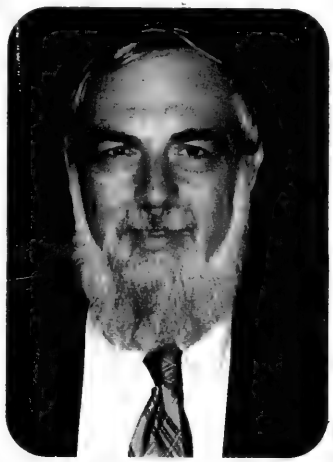
Eretz Hemdah's court system operates in parallel to one offered within the haredi community and the country's civil courts. Participants volunteer to be bound by the court's decisions, which are enforceable by secular authorities, he said.

The two-year-old batei din hear about 250 cases per year and apply not just halachic principals but those of Israeli and international law, Rabbi Carmel said.

In rendering its decisions and in training its students, Eretz Hemdah operates under a principle of making Jewish law as accessible to as many Jews as possible.

"We want to bring Torah with love," he said.

Rabbi Carmel distinguished the approach of Eretz Hemdah-trained rabbis from other halachic judges: "Sometimes the atmosphere is to go all the way to the right. We are trying to say that if you want to give halachic decision to the majority of the nation, you must take halachic decisions all the way to the middle. We want to bridge the gaps between the Jewish people and use Halachah to do it."



Rabbi Yosef Carmel

He said he disagreed with a decision of the Orthodox rabbinate in Israel, and applied in North America, that ruled adopted children could be converted only if their parents are Torah-observant Jews.

His institute favours a more liberal policy that would permit conversions if parents agreed to bring up their children as Jews and there was a good chance the child would observe mitzvot when he or she grows up, he said.

Too many faiths are opting for "harsh interpretations. It's a big mistake," he said

They are doing so "to defend themselves."

But, "if you have self confidence, knowledge, you don't need to protect yourself in such a way of building walls around you," he added.

As for the Jewish people, "It's a pity so many in Judaism are too far from our tradition. They see Judaism as making life tough. But the truth is, you enjoy life more when you are connected to your roots," Rabbi Carmel said.

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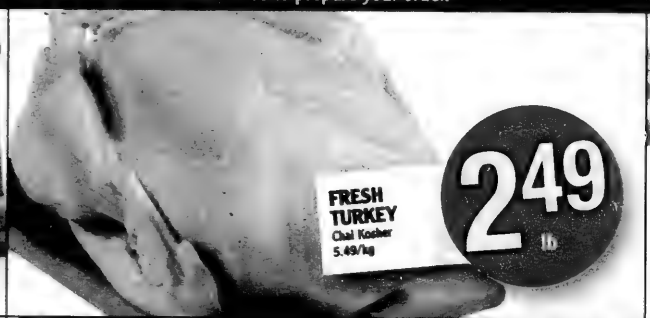
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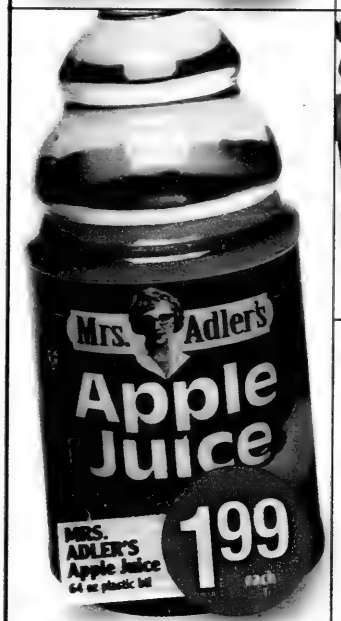

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Jewish Life

Israel is struggling to be free

Guest Voice

By JOSH SCHEINERT

All over the world, people are struggling to be free. In Tibet and Burma, courageous monks stand in defiance of authoritarian military brutality. In Pakistan, judges, lawyers and other moderates have come together against tyranny to attempt to exercise their rights to democratic freedoms. In the Darfur region of Sudan, ethnic Africans have, for the past five years, been deprived of their rights to life and liberty. And in Sderot, Dimona and, most recently, Jerusalem, Israelis sitting in their homes, shopping or studying in a library have come face to face with sinister attempts to deny them their freedom.

The global movement for freedom – which links the above scenarios – poses a challenge for those of us who support Israel. It's a challenge to illustrate that daily rocket barrages, suicide bombings and the pervasiveness of an ideology that's premised on intolerance and perverse and inhuman notions of martyrdom are powerful weapons in the suppression of freedom.

But they are indeed as powerful as Chinese and Burmese tanks, Pervez Musharraf's Pakistan and Darfur's Janjaweed militia.

Yet, supporting Israel has somehow morphed into the anathema of liberalism and its global movement for freedom. It has become so associated with conservatism and other right-wing ideologies that it's hard to imagine we are speaking about the region's only true liberal democracy. But we are, and the arguments in support of Israel, much like those in support of other groups that are reaching for freedom, are rooted in core liberal values.

In his classic work *On Liberty*, John Stuart Mill states that only for self-protection can individuals interfere with the liberty of others. "His own good, either physical or moral, is not sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise, or even right."

Thus, under the calculus of Mill's "harm principle," terror – meaning indiscriminate violence against innocent civilians – is not justified. The actions of Hamas and Hezbollah are not acts of self-protection. They are cold-blooded, deliberate murder. Yet, one would be hard pressed to deny that calculated measures aimed directly at preventing terror, such as a security barrier or targeted military incursions, are not allowed under the principle.

This, then, is where confusion has set in, and it's where the record must be set straight. In the global movement to deny Israel its right to be free – free from terror's tyranny and hatred's reach – liberalism has been perverted. And this is not meant to be an attempt to argue that all Israeli military action is premised on fundamental notions of liberalism and thus can be justified and defended accordingly. That would be naive.

Instead, take this as an attempt to begin to re-phrase the debate such that those who oppose Israel's right to defend itself in a responsible and proportionate manner will recognize that their arguments are in fact contrary to the liberalism they claim to be defending. For unless this debate is re-shaped and reasoned in such a way that there is an honest acknowledgement of the circumstances surrounding it, it can never be resolved.

Palestinian nationalism – in its truest sense, one that seldom makes an appearance these days, devoid of Hamas' hatred, suicide bombers and distorted school textbooks – is, at its core, about a quest for freedom. Its hijacking by radical ideologues and the vicious methods they employ have distanced it from the core liberal principles that Israel's critics claim to be safeguarding.

But those critics must be willing to accept that just because one side is grounded in liberal values does not mean the other cannot be as well. And their refusal to see this and our failure to articulate it this way is damaging and dangerous. It's what is allowing the world to continue to cast Israel as a menacing villain suppressing freedom instead of a country caught between its focus on its own freedom and that of its neighbours.

So as the world rallies around the monks in Burma and Tibet, the moderates in Pakistan and the victims in Darfur, those of us who support Israel must remind the world that the residents of Sderot, Dimona and Jerusalem have also been denied their liberty, and that if liberalism cannot come to the defence of those who have been unjustly robbed, in the purest form, of the very liberty it is meant to defend, it has ceased to be the liberalism that gave birth to the freedom it claims to fight for.

Josh Scheinert is a student at Osgoode Hall Law School in Toronto.

Debunking a specious theory

Through A Sephardi Window

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

The notion of the Jews as a people – exiled from their homeland, wandering across continents and seas, settling in far-flung destinations for 2,000 years, and finally returning to their homeland – is being challenged.

In a new book titled *When and How the Jewish People Was Invented*, Tel Aviv historian Prof. Shlomo Sand proposes that the Jews of Spain could not have been descendants of the exiled Israelites. Instead, he claims they are of Berber origin, stemming from the realm of the fabled Dahia al Kahina, the fearless seventh-century warrior queen of the Berbers. She was a Jewish woman who succeeded not only in resisting the Muslim invasion of North Africa but also in convincing a good part of the Berber population to convert to Judaism.

But lest anyone think that Sand is being anti-Sephardi in claiming that Sephardim are not true descendants of the Israelites, his theory extends to Ashkenazim as well. They, too, he contends, are not descendants of the Israelites, but refugees from the kingdom of the Khazars, who also converted to Judaism in the eighth century.

As well, he contends that the Jews of Yemen are of pagan descent, remnants of the Himyar kingdom who converted in the fourth century.

According to Sand, the bulk of today's Jewish population, both in the Diaspora and in Israel, have no ancestral connection either to the Jewish People or to the Land of Israel.

The professor's theory contains more holes than Swiss cheese. Essentially, he is saying that Jews could not possibly have travelled and settled the world as they did, but that Judaism somehow could. He also conveniently dismisses the fact that the Jewish religion neither missionizes nor proselytizes as being a relatively recent development.

But the fact of the matter is that the notion of a Jewish race has never been our claim. The Jews are essentially a group that began in the Middle East and travelled extensively from there. That they collected and incorporated a rather rich and colourful mix of the world's cultural heritage – and that along the way, people of the world joined them, as they continue to do today – is obvious. It's also true that many Jews opted out of Judaism, something that also continues to be true.

To say that Jewish people today bear little direct relation to the Jews who were exiled from their land after the Temple's destruction is simply wrong.

Through DNA technology, we have been able to show that there is a definite genetic similarity, and hence lineage, between Jews of otherwise varying origins, and almost all of these can be traced back to the Middle East. The genetic connection of Kohanim, for instance, has been well documented.

In any case, God relates to individual humans not on the basis of race, but on the basis of faith. And Judaism has never been a nation/race, but rather a faith-based religion.

Jewish Life

Learning about ourselves in New Orleans

Class Act
By Daniel Held

I recently returned from my third trip to New Orleans. Each year since Hurricane Katrina, I have seen gradual progress as homes are repaired and residents return. The pace, however, is painfully slow. Two-and-a-half years after the storm, more than 4,000 homes remain to be gutted, only 50 per cent of residents have returned, and the day-to-day life of the city still harks back to the events of Aug. 29, 2005.

For me, this trip was different. While in the past I have travelled with friends, this time I led a group of senior high school students.

During the day, we worked gutting homes, clearing debris and tearing down sheds that had been flooded. The work was both physically and emotionally challenging. In between swings of sledgehammers, we found photographs of families who once lived in the homes, and personal heirlooms that had been destroyed in the hurricane.

At night, we had time to reflect on the work we had done. We spoke about the power of the storm that destroyed a city and about the hope to rebuild. We pondered the decisions involved in choosing what objects to take when fleeing one's home, and how a family decides if they should return.

Students spoke about their difficulty in balancing the excitement of wielding a hammer for the first time with recognizing that it was someone's home that they were tearing down.

Most meaningful were the conversations with local residents.

One group worked beside Betty, a 53-year-old woman who was gutting her own home. As a 50th birthday present, Betty had undertaken major renovations on her house that were finished just in time to be destroyed by Katrina. Since returning to New Orleans, she has been slowly trying to gut the home in order to rebuild it. As our students helped her remove drywall, insulation and nails, Betty tearfully retold her story.

Beyond the lessons of destruction and rebuilding, our students were challenged by other new experiences.

While we were working on one house, a little boy named Brandon came into the street to play. Our students quickly went to join. They heard Brandon's story of fleeing New Orleans before the storm and returning more than a year later. Brandon's schooling had been disrupted, he was left back a grade, and when he returned to New Orleans, he found that most of his friends had not come back.

One of our students asked Brandon what he knew about Jews. His answer was honest in its ignorance, as only a child's can be: "Jews are bad people. They killed God. They killed Jesus."

Shocked by the candour of Brandon's response, a number of our students froze, not knowing how to respond. This belief, after all, was meant to be something they would find in their Jewish history textbook, not while playing catch in the streets of the southern United States.

The group quickly recovered from the shock of their first experience with anti-Semitism. One student retorted, "I'm Jewish. Do you think that I killed Jesus?" As the dialogue continued and our students began to educate Brandon, it occurred to me that this conversation is one that most Jews of my generation will never have. For these students, however, Brandon had a profound impact on how they understand anti-Semitism and how they view themselves as Jews. It seems the experience of New Orleans was not only about witnessing devastation, hearing stories and helping people out.

We challenge our students in many ways. We push them to learn, grow and think. We encourage them to formulate questions and develop theories. In New Orleans, however, the experience of being confronted with new situations – pulling down a shed, empathizing with a woman who had lost everything or confronting a child who knew no better than the anti-Semitic rhetoric he had been taught – challenged our students to consider their personal identity and their place in the world. Often, stepping out into a world that's foreign to us is how we learn the most about ourselves.

Israeli kosher wine today

By MARK METKIEWICZ

Do a search or two about Israeli wine, and you are bound to trip over phrases about how it is "neglected" or "underrated," or "finally coming into its own." But to tell you the truth, I found the same phrases years ago when I first wrote about Israeli wines and the Internet. The question is whether anything has really changed. Today, a virtual tasting of today's Israeli wines.

Most of the big, medium and boutique brands have informative websites extolling the virtues of their vines and winemaking. For a bit of perspective, I recommend a different approach. When you read HaKerem: The Israeli Wine Blog, you feel like you are getting an insider's taste of the industry from knowledgeable and critical writers. The tone is upbeat, but they aren't afraid to be critical, too. An added bonus: you can't beat the extensive list of links to Israeli wineries and related sites. **[israelwine.wordpress.com]**

What are the experts outside of Israel saying? Writing in Business Week, influential wine guru Robert Parker and his colleague Mark Squires tasted some Heavenly Wines from the Holy Land. Squires rated four wines 90 points or higher (excellent), including Domaine du Castel 2004 Grand Vin (92 points). "This unrefined and unfiltered cab, merlot and petit verdot blend is beautiful. Aged for 24 months in new French oak, it is bursting with flavour and simply delicious." **[tinyurl.com/2k92bb]**

And then there's Gary Vaynerchuk. Or as he pronounces it: VAY-NER-CHUK! Vaynerchuk is the host of Wine Library TV, a daily Internet webcast on wine, and has been justly described as "hyperkinetic" by the online magazine Slate and "totally uncorked" by *Time* magazine. Here's his setup: "Kosher wines! Are these the most overlooked wines in the world? Maybe, maybe not. But what has happened in the last 36 months has erased decades and years and centuries of atrocious, crapass, disgusting, awful, dirty, unacceptable, undrinkable, pitiful, efforts in the kosher wine section." Forget everything you thought you knew about precious and effete wine tastings and watch Gary go through the paces as he sips, spits, mulls and pronounces his verdict on five Israeli and one California wine. **[tinyurl.com/2v8au6]** and **[tinyurl.com/2orcvm]**

Wine lovers worldwide wouldn't miss a chance to take in the sights and latest vintages as they roam Tuscany or Napa or Bordeaux. But what about Zichron Yaacov? Earlier this year, plans were announced for the creation of the 150-acre Israel Wine Park that will encompass Carmel Winery, Binyamina Wines, Tishbi Estate Winery and a number of boutique wineries in the area. **[tinyurl.com/37cpo8]** If you'd prefer to join an organized tour, check out The Kerem – Wine Tours of Israel. **[thekerem.com/]** And if you'd like to explore on your own, the Route 89 Wine Tour of the Upper Galilee will have you winding through the picturesque northern countryside and eight delightful wineries. **[tinyurl.com/ 26wrwc]**

As you drive around the Galilee or push your cart down the wine-store aisle, you may be surprised to learn that not all Israeli wines produced today are kosher. As Daniel Rogov, wine and restaurant critic for *Ha'aretz*, points out: "While every large Israeli winery and the majority of medium-sized wineries produce only kosher wines, the smaller wineries often produce non-kosher offerings." Many of Israel's boutique wineries have chosen to manufacture upper-end non-kosher wines for "discerning and not necessarily kashrut-observant wine consumers both in Israel and abroad." **[tinyurl.com/2wtlhz]**

If you're still looking for more Israeli wine community chat, I recommend the Facebook site, Israeli Wine Society **[tinyurl.com/3383br]**, Strat's Place **[tinyurl.com/2v9t88]** and Israel Wines. **[tinyurl.com/2dla8p]**

So how good are Israeli wines? I'll leave the last word to Rogov. "Tel Aviv cannot boast that its restaurants rival the best of Paris or Lyon, and the region surrounding the Sea of Galilee is not producing wines to rival those of the great chateaux of Bordeaux. That is not the issue. What is important is that a group of highly talented chefs and winemakers are moving in all of the right directions, and whether one lives in or pays a visit to Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa or any of the more provincial cities or towns of Israel, no-one will suffer from a lack of excellent food and fine wine." **[tinyurl.com/yv99bz]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Jewish groups get $2.4M in new grants from Ottawa

Continued from page 3

"Some of these long-term, job training initiatives are going to help our clients directly. It's not huge, but at least it's something," she said.

Paikin added that despite the new budget initiatives, one major area that was not addressed was funding for Ontario's children's aid societies, including Jewish Family & Child.

"We represent children's aid for the Jewish community and we're running a deficit [in the children's aid budget]. There's nothing in this new budget that addresses this need," she said, adding that her organization plans to continue talks with Queen's Park about the issue.

In related news, the federal government also announced $2.4 million in new grants to three local Jewish organizations to help immigrants "settle and integrate" into the Toronto area.

Citizenship and Immigration Minister Diane Finley made the announcement on March 26, a day after the Ontario budget was released.

Jewish Family & Child will receive $1,658,148, JIAS will receive $570,162 and JVS will receive $226,549.

The funding is meant to help the organizations provide "settling services" in the form of language training, counselling and "help finding a job," the government said in a release.

The funding will also place 12 "settlement workers" in Toronto District School Board schools.

"The government… is committed to helping newcomers succeed," Finley said. "With this support, we can count on a dynamic community that is strengthened by its immigrants."

JIAS executive director Janis Roth said the funding will allow her organization to "provide newcomers with a comprehensive continuum of essential settlement and integration services."

The federal funding to Jewish Family & Child marks a renewal of its participation in the Settlement and Education Partnership Toronto program, which it has been part of for "a number of years," Paikin said.

A spokesperson for Citizenship and Immigration Canada said the funding to the organizations actually began flowing late last year. The JVS portion covers the period from October 2007 to September 2008, while both JIAS and Jewish Family and Child will receive their funding until March 2010.

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Change the world as a 'supporting actor,' rabbi advises

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Every person is motivated by two drives, says Rabbi Harold Kushner, bestselling author of *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*.

"We all need to know that we have made a difference, and that we are good people," he said last week in a lecture at Adath Israel Congregation based on his six-year-old book titled *Living a Life that Matters*.

He said that these two drives, being significant and being a good person, are often in conflict with each other.

"If every person has [both] the innate drive for success and for goodness, why do ordinary people do bad things?"

Sometimes people do bad things because they are afraid they will be hurt, he said, but "there is another fascinating reason why people do unspeakable things – because someone in authority tells them to, and they were raised to listen to authority."

During World War II, he said, many Germans and Poles were told to hurt people, and they enjoyed it because they felt powerless themselves. It made them feel good to have power over other people.

"The real lesson here is to make sure there are no people who feel powerless."

Rabbi Kushner, rabbi laureate of Temple Israel in Natick, Mass., and author of 11 books, including *Living a Life that Matters: Resolving the Conflict Between Conscience and Success*, was honoured in 1995 by the Christophers, a Roman Catholic organization, as one of 50 people who have made the world a better place in the last 50 years.

He was scheduled to speak here about *Living a Life that Matters* on Sept. 11, 2001, when the book first came out, but his visit was cancelled due to the terror attacks on New York City.

Translating *yetzer hara* as "the egotistical principle," Rabbi Kushner said that people sometimes compromise themselves because of their egos. "It takes a big ego to believe that you can be the president of the United States or the CEO of a large company, and sometimes an ego that big leads you astray."

Rabbi Harold Kushner

He said that one way to change the world in a good way is to be "a supporting actor."

We would all like to be stars, he said, "but we need people in supporting roles. If you have a sick neighbour, [you should be there] to cook for her and shovel her drive. Be the best actor in a supporting role."

People should also band together and try to change things that one person alone cannot change, he said. "People coming together can make a difference."

Rabbi Kushner said that we should practise changing the world on those closest to us. "That is what will matter the most. If you practise your love and kindness, people will bless your name for the kind of person you are, and you will be able to look back with satisfaction."

the 60's

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An attempt to reach out to younger generation

Continued from page 1

Of the initial 200,000 copies of the CD set, 30,000 are being distributed in Canada through selected synagogues in Montreal and Jewish schools in Toronto free of charge. Likewise, 30,000 will be distributed in South Africa; 20,000 in Australia; and 30,000 in Israel.

The double CD was funded by individual donors and the United Jewish Israel Appeal (UJIA). Most of it can be downloaded at www.homeofhope.co.uk.

It is aimed at "all Jews, but not least young Jews," said Rabbi Sacks, who has been chief rabbi since 1991 and was in Canada most recently in October, when he spoke at Montreal's Congregation Shaar Hashomayim.

The project, which was nine months in the making, resulted from the rabbi's concern about negative media coverage of Israel over the past half-dozen years, he said.

"Obviously, I wanted to redress that – not as hasbarah, but as a spiritual act. I wanted to tell the story again in words and music in a way that tried to lift people's sights and spirits.

"A lot of this music was written by secular people, but it is so spiritual – so religious, deep down – it's extraordinary," said the rabbi.

On the opening track of the first CD, Rabbi Sacks – who picked all the music as well as the cover artwork by Israeli artist Shraga Weil – says, "I've chosen some music that moves me. I hope some of it speaks to you."

The track also features the voice of Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, proclaiming the State of Israel, over an orchestral version of *Hatikvah*.

But in an attempt to reach out to younger generations, the selections – particularly on the second CD, which encompasses post-1948 history – lean more to Israeli pop than traditional or liturgical pieces, "a bit of a new departure" for the rabbi, whose personal tastes run to classical music.

Listening to modern Israeli pop music was an eye-opener for Rabbi Sacks, a former philosophy professor who was educated at Cambridge and Oxford universities.

"What I discovered was extraordinary," he said. "There are some singers in Israel right now, and some music in Israel produced over the last few years, that have come out of much pain and much grief, that is so profound and so moving, I found myself astonished by it."

Although he had considered producing a film instead of a CD, the rabbi's recent involvement with two holiday-related CDs, also produced by his office, made him realize that the music CD "is a very powerful medium" because of "the one-to-one relationship between you and somebody who's using a car stereo or an iPod."

Rabbi Sacks said he has many favourite pieces on the CD set, including "an *Im Eshkachech* that will blow you away" and the Oscar-winning *When You Believe* from the *Prince of Egypt*, which he first heard as a consultant for the 1998 movie.

He said he tried to keep the narrative tracks "as short as possible."

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Toronto woman celebrates her 100th birthday

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When wishing someone a happy birthday, it's a Jewish custom to add, "Until 120."

Rose Lefko is well on her way to achieving that remarkable milestone.

On March 19, Lefko turned 100 years old.

Lefko was born in Toronto in 1908, six years before World War I and 10 years before Canadian women had the same voting rights as men.

Rose Lefko

She has lived in Toronto all of her life, and has outlived three husbands.

"I've had three marriages. My first marriage, I had two lovely children, and God unfortunately took my daughter at the age of 60. I still have my son, and I have a wonderful daughter-in-law, Helen. And I have wonderful grandchildren, and now I have wonderful great-grandchildren."

Lefko has five grandchildren, and eight great-grandchildren, aged eight to 21 years old.

"My Grandma Rose to this day never ceases to amaze me," said Tammy Daiter, her granddaughter. "Not only is she extremely active and still lives on her own, she also runs around by herself by TTC and walking without walkers or canes."

Her day starts the same way each morning. Lefko, who grew up in the Bloor Street and Lansdowne Avenue area, meets with her son, David Gould, for breakfast. She also likes to go for walks as often as she can.

She now resides in the Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue area, but trekking downtown for long walks is something that has been an important part of her life for 50 years.

"Years ago I was in the hospital for 10 weeks," she said, explaining that she'd suffered a minor heart attack when she was 50.

"When I got out of the hospital, I did nothing but walk. Until this winter, I've gone walking, mostly downtown… I take the bus to Bloor and Yonge. I walk from Bloor and Yonge, I walk down to Dundas Square, and then I go down to Queen Street, and I take in the stores of course, and… I go home tired," Lefko said.

In the summer, Daiter often accompanies her grandmother on her walks.

"I don't drive a car, I just drive everyone else crazy," Lefko said, showing that her sense of humour is still intact.

Although Lefko still has her sense of humour, she says her memory isn't as sharp.

"There are a lot of things I can't remember, being 100 years old, but you know, when I remember mostly is when I lie in bed and I start thinking and I start going back and it's wonderful."

She was able to reminisce about the different jobs she held in Toronto.

"I used to work in a hair dressing salon," she said.

"I took the money," she added with a laugh.

The salon was originally owned by her first husband, but was later run by her son.

Her second husband was a partner at the United Bakers restaurant when it was located on Spadina Avenue, before it moved to its current location at Lawrence Avenue and Bathurst Street.

"That was a lovely job I had. A good number of years ago, people would stop me and say, 'Oh you're the one that used to take our money!' That's the way I've been known a lot in Toronto."

As much as she has enjoyed working and shmoozing with her fellow Torontonians, Lefko said she has also loved to give in to her two vices: shopping and gambling.

"I really and truly have always loved going shopping, to see the stores," she said.

Daiter said that when her grandmother goes shopping, she always knows the bargains.

"You don't get to 100 by spending all your money at one time," Lefko said.

"I used to get those bargains if it was possible. Even if it took me all day to get there, that is where I went. As long as I got the bargain."

She said her other weakness was betting on the horses at the track.

"I went with my son-in-law and I always had a good time. My daughter didn't like the races, but… Tammy also loved the races, like her dad, and we had a wonderful time when we were there."

To celebrate Lefko's 100 years, her family held a big birthday party in her honour on March 30, where they gave her a cake and flowers, and made a special presentation.

Although hitting the century mark is a special milestone, Lefko's family makes sure that each of her birthdays are celebrated in style.

"Last year, she celebrated her 99th birthday by going on a cruise for the first time with her son's family," Daiter said.

"She had never been on a cruise before, because she was scared. She was around for the Titanic, so she was a little scared… But she got off at every stop."

Speaking a couple of weeks before the party, Lefko said she was looking forward to the celebration, but that she is most thankful for having such a tight-knit family.

"I've always had a great relationship with all the children. I've never seen a family any better than this one," Lefko said.

"I'm not lacking in friends and family, and it's wonderful."

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On Campus

UWO president asked to reject JNF honour

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The president of the University of Western Ontario (UWO) is facing pressure from faculty and students on his own campus to reject an honour from the London, Ont., branch of the Jewish National Fund.

Paul Davenport said he received a letter signed by 35 UWO faculty members who voiced their concern about his acceptance of the honour, which will be presented at the annual JNF Negev Dinner, to be held June 1 in London.

"I met with five of the signatories and had a one-hour meeting where we discussed the issues and I listened very carefully to their point of view," he told *The CJN*. "I also made a statement in our academic senate on March 14 when I set out my reasons for accepting the award, and there were several statements by senators who have felt that I was making a mistake in doing so."

Paul Davenport

Despite receiving letters from people who have criticized his acceptance of the honour, Davenport said he stands by his decision.

"I have responded that I am being honoured for my commitment to diversity, tolerance and defending human rights. Those are values that are important to me and are important to Western," he said.

On March 19, the Palestinian human rights committee of the student-based Public Interest Research Group (PIRG-PHR) held a public meeting titled "Complicity or Objectivity? Paul Davenport and the Jewish National Fund," to protest his decision, because it says the JNF's land management policies in Israel promote "exclusion, dispossession and institutionalized discrimination."

In a Feb. 27 open letter to Davenport, PIRG, along with the student groups London Project for a Participatory Society, Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights and the Anti-War Organization of London, wrote that his acceptance of the honour would stand "in contrast to the values that our group, the UWO community, and the president of the university actively support."

The letter said JNF is "a tool of discrimination and dispossession used by the Israeli government against the Palestinian occupants of Israel and against the millions of Palestinian refugees dispossessed from their land in 1948 and 1967."

Both Davenport and Frank Simkevitz, executive director of JNF Ontario region, were invited to be panelists at the public meeting, but both declined.

"I have made a statement to the university senate and listened to concerns there, and it struck me as a much more appropriate forum… I didn't feel [the public meeting] was the right setting for me," Davenport said.

Simkevitz said the Negev dinner is not a political event and that he doesn't want to be part of the political debate.

"That is not what this dinner is about, and I really don't feel that it is important to get involved in that discussion. It is an issue of facts that are interpreted by JNF, and the way this group interprets them is completely different, and I don't think it makes any sense or benefits anyone to get involved in that debate," Simkevitz said.

Speaking from his office in Hamilton, Ont., Simkevitz said he was "very surprised" by the reaction from the faculty response at UWO.

"We honoured, here in Hamilton, the president of McMaster University in 2003, I believe, and nothing happened that year. There was not one mention of protest at all, and the whole community knew quite well that he was being recognized," Simkevitz said.

But Davenport said he anticipated the response from the London community.

"Issues involving land in Israel are always controversial, so I certainly anticipated that I would have some negative feedback," he said.

"It is normal on a university campus that issues like this be debated openly and forcefully. This is what we would expect at a university that honours free speech and diversity of opinion."

Simkevitz said it's important for the Jewish community to support Davenport for his commitment to the community and for standing his ground.

"This man is in the face of some adversity for standing behind his principles. He is to be admired for doing so. He is a very principled man… He believes, as we do, that the funds [from the dinner] should go to an environmental and ecological project in the northern part of Israel."

At the request of Davenport and his wife, who visited Israel last November, the proceeds from the dinner will fund an environmental project in Israel called the En Ro'im Spring Development.

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Jewish Toronto loses a community pioneer

Sam Sable signs his Book of Life story for the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto in 2007

Sam Sable, z"l, helped shape today's Jewish community

By Daniel Horowitz

Although I had never met him before, when Sam Sable greeted me at the front door of his Toronto home in November, he welcomed me in as if I was an old friend. After taking my coat and offering me tea, the 95-year-old Sable immediately began to recount colourful anecdotes far faster than I was able to write them down.

Sam Sable (l) enjoys a moment with legendary comedian Jack Benny in 1954.

As we sat in his home office, I was struck by his tales as much as the framed black and white photos which proudly adorned his walls, each one capturing an important time in his life. Many of those photographs included his beloved late wife of sixty years, Jean, and other members of his close family.

Never before had I seen a man of 95 so articulate, intelligent and generous, but then again, Sam Sable, who passed away on March 14, was no ordinary man.

A true pioneer within Toronto's Jewish community, Sable, a Winnipeg native and a father of three, grandfather of five, and great grandfather of eight, was the president and chair of "too many organizations to count" - including the chair of UJA Federation's annual campaign in 1956.

Just before his death, Sable once again gave back to the community by transferring his private foundation to the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto – UJA Federation's planned giving and endowment arm.

The Samuel & Jean Sable Family Endowment Fund will support UJA Federation's annual campaign and other Toronto charities.

"Sam Sable personified community leadership and tzedakah in Toronto's Jewish community," said Honey Sherman, chair of the Jewish Foundation. "He loved being an important part of our community, especially in the early days, and being able to see so many of his dreams and visions come to life. He played an important role in shaping what today's Jewish community has evolved into. Sam's vision, compassion and generosity have left an indelible stamp on Jewish Toronto and he will be sorely missed."

Among other things, Sable is credited with being the first to put the idea of creating a community high school on the agenda of a 1962 meeting he was attending at UJA Federation, then housed at 150 Beverley Street.

For Sable, who was so proud that two of his grandsons are teachers at TanenbaumCHAT on Wilmington Avenue, Jewish education was always a passion.

"When I was a boy, there was no such thing as Jewish day school in Toronto, let alone options in Jewish education, while today the options are vast, both formally and informally," he told me. "Today, Toronto has the reputation of being the best educational system anywhere in North America, as well as one of the best Jewish communities anywhere in the world. But we must never rest on our laurels, there's never a limit to being better at something."

"I'd known Sam for about 63 years, probably longer than anyone else," said Dr. Gerry Halbert, a long-time UJA Federation and community leader in his own right. "The best way to illustrate Sam's commitment to our community is that he was active right up to the end. I saw him at a meeting at the Wolfond Centre in November, and at the closing event for UJA Federation's campaign in December. But, he wasn't just some guy trying to keep busy; he was still sharp as a tack and was still making valuable contributions to our community at these meetings. Sam was a small guy with a big voice."

And, speaking of Sam's voice, few knew it better than Halbert.

"Believe it or not, Sam sang at my bar mitzvah almost sixty-one years ago," said Halbert, a smile evident in his voice. "I'm proud to say that he was one of my idols and, according to his son Martin, I was his protégée. He was such a *mensch*, such a great leader who always had time for you. It was always about encouraging the young people for Sam; and, that's what he did to me when I was a kid, and I'm so grateful to have had that opportunity. I will miss Sam Sable so very much."

"Pioneers such as Sam Sable have left giant shoes to fill," said UJA Federation President and CEO Ted Sokolsky. "Sam set the standard of caring and vision towards which community leadership must constantly aspire."

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On Campus

U of Toronto faculty ad calls for Israeli Apartheid Week ban

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

One hundred and twenty-five University of Toronto faculty members placed a full-page ad in the *National Post* late last month to exert pressure on the school to ban Israeli Apartheid Week events from being held on campus.

The signers' names, titles and departments were listed under a heading that stated: "We… oppose the hosting of the Israel Apartheid Week at our institution, and request that the administration stop this hateful and divisive event from returning to our university in future years."

Dr. Sergio Grinstein, a biochemistry professor at U of T and one of the faculty members who led the initiative to run the petition in the *Post*, said they chose to run it because talks with the administration were unproductive.

Decision made after talks with administration falter

"When a group of 70 of us, last year, before the last event, sent a letter to the president [David Naylor] and tried to meet personally with him, he declined to meet us, and instead preferred us to deal with his underlings… Several groups of people had talked to the administration in the past to no avail," Grinstein said.

He said he hopes the ad, which was paid for by some of the faculty members who signed the petition, will increase awareness and put pressure on the administration to ban Israeli Apartheid Week events from campus.

"It is not just a small cabal of us scheming behind their backs. There are a lot of us who are unhappy with the asymmetrical application of freedom of speech," Grinstein said.

Frank Dimant, B'nai Brith Canada's executive vice-president released a statement that urged the university "to heed the voices of these renowned professors… who refused to be complicit in their university's de facto endorsement of a divisive event that offers nothing of constructive value, but only serves to vilify Israel, its Jewish citizens and supporters here in Canada."

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, said in a statement that he hopes "faculty at other universities across Canada and around the world [will] follow in their footsteps and present a united front in opposing the hatred being fuelled against Israel and the Jewish community."

Robert Steiner, a U of T spokesperson, said the administration has responded to each of the 125 faculty members with an e-mailed letter that outlines the university's reasons for allowing events such as Israeli Apartheid Week to take place on campus.

"The university believes that free speech is a fundamental role of any university in a free society. But allowing for free speech doesn't mean that we turn a blind eye to whatever is being said," Steiner said.

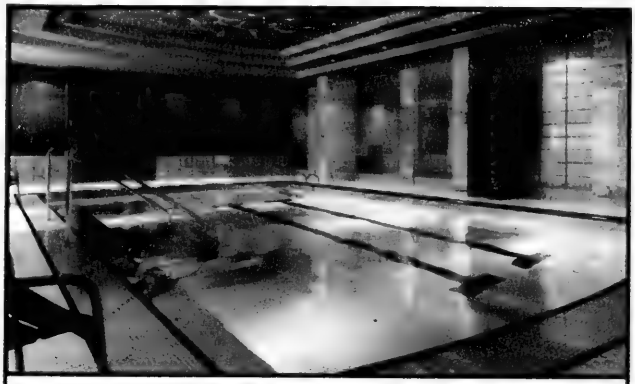
He said if an event doesn't present hate speech or pose a safety threat to individuals or groups on campus – although it may be offensive – the university will provide the space for it.

"A couple of year ago, we sent the words 'Israeli Apartheid' to the Toronto police, to the hate crimes unit, for their assessment and investigation because we were ready to do whatever we needed to do if they assessed that it crossed the line [into hate speech], and they came back and said they had no basis on which to see this as hate speech," Steiner said.

Grinstein said that when it comes to Islamophobia on campus, the administration sets limits on freedom of speech.

"But Israelphobia is a different thing."

He said the administration tries to prevent the expression of what they find offensive, "but when 125 of us take offence at the use of the word 'apartheid,' the use of speakers that are anti-Semitic or Holocaust deniers or academic fraudsters, the university invokes freedom of speech. That, to me, sounds asymmetric and unfair."



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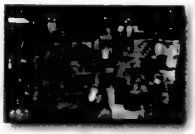

Visit the Amica at Thornhill Presentation Centre with a friend or family member, and join us for our upcoming events.

Local Artisans Display - *Sat., April 5, 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm*
Come and see some local artisans display their paintings, jewelry, pottery and other handy work when you visit our presentation centre. Please RSVP by April 2nd.

Wine and Cheese Open House - *Thurs., April 10, 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm*
Join us in the Presentation Centre for a Wine and Cheese tasting, and see our amenities and model suite.

April Showers... Bring May Flowers - *Wed., April 16, 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm*
Come listen to a professional florist speak about floral arranging and planting tips for the spring. Please RSVP by April 14th.

Afternoon Tea - *Tue., April 22, 2:00 to 4:00 pm*
Visit the presentation centre and enjoy afternoon tea and light refreshments while visiting our model suite.

Please RSVP for attendance by calling 905-886-3400

We look forward to welcoming our Jewish friends to our new community.

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

The children, grandchildren and great-granddaughter of Helen & Aron Anklewicz, wish them a healthy and happy 70th wedding anniversary.

Mazel tov Bill & Gert Nyman on your 60th anniversary March 20. Love from your children and grandchildren.

Happy 90th birthday to Josie Sidenberg! With much love from your family, Lorne, Diane, Adam, Courtney, Abby, Jonah, Marni, Robbie and Noah.

Arik & Marilyn Gur-esh and Moshe & Frimmi Keter are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Talia & Mike. An August wedding is planned.

Happy second birthday to Phoebe, daughter of Marla & Ronald Struminger. Grandaughter and great-grandaughter of Betsy & Lou Fruitman and Mary Dale. Forever missed, David Dale.

Happy fourth birthday to Jarod, son of Marla & Ronald Struminger. Grandson and great-grandson of Betsy & Lou Fruitman and Mary Dale. Forever missed, David Dale.

Mazel tov to Marjorie & Lorne Gula and big brother Jared on the birth of Oliver Darren, March 8.

Happy second birthday Simone! We love you. Julie, Robert and baby Emily Merrick.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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NOTE PASSOVER DEADLINES: Monday, April 7, is the deadline for the April 24 issue, and Monday, April 28, is the deadline for the May 1 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, April 3

THE ART OF OUTRAGE

Hillel of Greater Toronto presents the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *Maus* and *Maus II*, **Art Spiegelman** on "Comix 101: Forbidden Images and the Art of Outrage." 7:30 p.m. at the Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W. Tickets, 416-913-2424, or at www.uofttix.ca. $40, students $25.

CELEBRATE ISRAEL @ 60

Join Solel Congregation celebrating Israel at 60 with the Jerusalem Lyric Trio, dinner and auction at the Burlington Culturai Centre, 6:30 p.m. Tickets, 905-820-5915. info@solel.ca

Saturday, April 5

IRWIN COTLER SPEAKS

Beth Tzedec Men's Club presents **Irwin Cotler**, human rights activist and former minister of justice, speaking from the pulpit on "The Gathering Storm: Israel at 60 and Beyond." Service 8:45 a.m. 416-781-3511

STUDENT MEET & GREET

Beth Emeth Synagogue hosts Shabbat services, beginning at 8:45 a.m., and a kiddush Meet & Greet geared to university students. Info, **Sharon**, 416-633-3838, ext. 234.

SHIR LIBEYNU'S SERVICE

Congregation Shir Libeynu holds its monthly Shabbat service at 10:30 a.m. at the MNjcc. Read and discuss the weekly Torah portion followed by kiddush lunch. Free child care. 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

Sunday, April 6

JUDAICA SHOP SALE

Beth David Synagogue Judaica Shop sale offers up to 50 per cent off selected items, including seder plates, holiday items, candlesticks and hostess gifts. 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

SENSE OF SPADINA

Take a walking tour of historic Jewish Toronto with the Ontario Jewish Archives. 11 a.m. Register, 416-635-2883, ext. 170, or ojal@ujafed.org.

JEWISH WOMEN & TEXTS

The Centre for Jewish Studies at York University presents **Prof. Judith Hauptman**, of Jewish Theological Seminary, on "Re-Appraising Women's Role in Rabbinic Judaism," and **Prof. Tamar Ross**, of Bar-Ilan University, on "A Bet Midrash of her Own: Women's Contribution to the Traditional Study and Knowledge of Torah." 2 p.m. at the Schulich School of Business. Free. 416-736-5823

JEWISH STORIES

Ventriloquist storyteller **Yehudit Shier Weisberg** performs Jewish stories together with her "Aunt Hannah" as part of the 30th annual Festival of Storytelling. 4:15-5:15 p.m. at Harbourfront Centre, Brigantine Room. Free.

THE MUSICAL MAGIC

Beth Tzedec Congregation Concert Series presents **Bruce Adler**, star of Yiddish theatre and Broadway, and **Simon Spiro**. 5 p.m. Tickets, $18. 416-781-3514, ext. 218

CARMELIM IN CONCERT

The Toronto Israeli Dance Community and Save A Child's Heart present **Carmelim**, Israel's teen sensations, performing new and old Israeli songs. 7:30 p.m. at York University. Tickets, $40, $100 for VIP seats, 416-221-6280, sofsof@sympatico.ca or at Matana Judaica.

PLAY BALL!

Join **Charlie Novgrodsky** for

Continued on page 31

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What's New

Continued from page 30

"More Than a Game: Jews and Baseball," a presentation about Jews and baseball. 7:30 p.m. at Darchei Noam Congregation. www.darcheinoam.on.ca or 416-638-4783

TARAGIN: PESACH CLASS

Torah in Motion hosts **Rabbi Moshe Taragin**, of Yeshivat Har Etzion, speaking on "Prayer and Redemption: The Twin Pillars of Pesach." 8 p.m. (Minchah at 7:45 p.m.) at Or Chaim Yeshiva, 159 Almore Ave. www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770

Monday, April 7

EMUNAH LUNCH & LEARN

Join Emunah Women for a Lunch and Learn with **Rebbetzin Sarah Stern**. 12 p.m. at 4300 Bathurst St. $10, non-members $18. Reserve in advance, 416-636-0036.

YESHIVA U DINNER

Join Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University dinner launching the Yeshiva University Toronto Partnership Project with honorees **Doctors Cheryl** and **Joseph Greenbaum**, **John** and **Lori Ulmer** and in memory of **Bill Rubinstein**. 6 p.m. at the Copper Creek Golf Club. 416-783-6960

STEPHEN LEWIS SPEAKS

Temple Emanu-El presents **Stephen Lewis**, former United Nations special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa, on "When Politicians Fail to Lead, Can Civil Society Fill the Gap?" 7 p.m. Free. RSVP, 416-449-3880.

ENHANCE YOUR SEDER

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "The 2008 Pesach Experience," an evening of songs, ideas and explanations to make your seder meaningful with **Cantor Simon Spiro** and **Aliza Spiro**. 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511

HERZL RELEVANT

Westmount Shul and Learning Centre presents **Rabbi Yitzchak Feigenbaum** on "The Zionist Ideal vs. The Ideal Zionist: Is Herzl Relevant to Today's Diaspora?" 8:30 p.m. www.westmountshul.com

Tuesday, April 8

BOOK CLUB

Join the Library Book Club of Holy Blossom Temple for a discussion of *David Golder* by **Irène Némirovsky**. 9:30 a.m. Free. Info, **Anne**, 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

THE YOUNGEST SURVIVOR

Beth David Sisterhood presents **Faigie Libman**, the youngest Holocaust survivor, telling her personal story. 7:30 p.m. Non members $5. 416-633-5500

Wednesday, April 9

JEWISH MUSIC IN COMEDY

Beth Shalom Music Series presents "A Night of Jewish Music in Comedy" with **Cantors Herschel** and **Judy Fox** bringing Yiddish music to life. 8 p.m. Tickets, $18. 416-783-6103

FAMILY LAW FORUM

B'nai Brith presents the **Attorney General of Ontario, Chris Bentley**; **John Syrtash**; **Dr. Graham Berman**; **David Colodny**; and **Yvonne Bricks** discussing issues of family law. 7 p.m. 15 Hove St. 416-633-6224, ext. 130

SHOMREI ADAMAH

Join Darchei Noam Congregation's Shomrei Adamah environment committee and explore the concept of community-supported agriculture. 7:30 p.m. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

Other News

A WOMEN'S COMMENTARY

Temple Kol Ami presents **Rabbi Andrea Weiss**, of Hebrew Union College, as scholar-in-residence. Friday, April 4, 7:45 p.m., on "The Torah: A Women's Commentary: How Is the Commentary Different From All Others?"; Saturday, April 5, 9:30 a.m., "The Torah: A Women's Commentary." At Leo Baeck School, 36 Atkinson Ave.

DENNIS ROSS

Shaarei Shomayim Israel Action presents **Ambassador Dennis Ross**, director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and former special Middle East co-ordinator in the Clinton Administration, on "Israel @ 60: The Players, the Process and the Promise." Thursday, April 10. Sponsor dinner 6 p.m. Lecture 8 p.m. Tickets, $36. 416-789-3213

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

Rabbi Michael Skobac speaks on the topic "Jewish Home Improvement: Learn How to Create a Solid Spiritual Foundation." Thursday, April 10, 8 p.m. at the Lodzer Centre Congregation. Free. Info, 905-761-0040.

PASSOVER FOOD DRIVE

Help those less fortunate in the community with Passover provisions by supporting the National Council of Jewish Women's Passover Food Drive. Donate at 416-633-5100 or drop off a food item at 4700 Bathurst St.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 54

SEDER HOSTS NEEDED

If you would like to welcome a family new to Toronto to your seder table, contact Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

LEAD A SEDER

The Reena Foundation is looking for individuals to lead a seder, Saturday, April 19, or Sunday, April 20, at a group home for individuals with developmental disabilities or invite a Reena client to your home. Call, 905-889-2690, ext. 2111.

LONDON SEDER

Temple Israel second-night community seder takes place Sunday, April 20, 6 p.m. Reserve by April 13. 519-858-4400

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell The Kids, a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Tuesday, April 8, 9:30 a.m.-noon at Promenade Mall, #313.

Will This Feeling Ever End?: An eight-week group for those having trouble moving on after experiencing a loss through death or divorce. Begins Tuesday, April 8, 7:30-9 p.m. at Promenade Mall, #313.

Birthdays, Hockey Games and Holidays: Making It Work After Divorce: A parents' workshop. Monday, April 14, 7 to 9 p.m. at Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Shalom Singers at the Bathurst BJCC is looking for seniors who enjoy singing and would like to join a choir that rehearses every Thursday at 10 a.m. Info, 416-781-6066

Holy Blossom Lunch and Learn presents **Barbara Rush** on "Notorious Women of the 19th Century." Wednesday, April 9, 12:30 p.m. $1. Bring a dairy lunch. Coffee and tea served. 416-789-3291, ext. 233

Beth Tzedec Haverim Program hosts Act II Studio presenting "A Showcase of Moving Scenes." Monday, April 7, 1:30 p.m. $2. 416-789-3511

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts Jewish Community Seniors Camp on the Pocono Mountains information session. Thursday, April 10, 1:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, April 9, 30. Sunday dance, April 13; bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Info, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

The Association of Jewish Seniors' second seder, Sunday, April 20, 7 p.m., at the Bernard Betel Centre. Reserve by April 14. Tickets $20. Call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458, or at 530 Wilson Ave, 4th floor.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Wellness lecture, "Pain and Aging," with **Marjorie Hammond**, Wednesday, April 9, 1:30 p.m. guests, $2.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Is There Life after **George Bush**?" with **Hugh Innis**. Tuesday, April 8, 10 a.m. $3, $6.

Literary Luncheon with **Anne Balaban**, "*12 Angry Men* and the Art of Persuasion." Wednesday, April 9, 12-2 p.m. $13, non-members $16.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St. 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca

Support the BJCC's Centre Camp. See *Jersey Boys*, the first night of the show in Toronto, on Thursday, Aug. 21, at the Toronto Centre of the Arts. Tickets, ext. 240.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Film talk with **Shlomo Schwartzberg**, "Fantasy and Reality: The 1990s" Sunday, April 6, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. $9, includes bagels, coffee and film clips. Info, ext. 606.

"Cooking with **Itka**," Basic Passover preparations and some great recipes. Sunday, April 6, 1-3 p.m. $18/$36 per family. Register ext. 0. Info randis@mnjcc.org.

Literary Voices presents **Charles Halpern** reading from his new book, *Making Waves and Riding the Currents: Activism and the Practice of Wisdom*. Tuesday, April 8, 7:30 p.m. Info, harrietw@mnjcc.org or ext. 133.

Stars on Spadina, a musical gala celebrating the MNjcc, includes **Daniel Barnes, Andrew Craig, Ron Davis, Mary Lou Fallis, Jacques Israelievitch, Amanda Martinez, Adrianne Pieczonka, Jackie Richardson, Theresa Tova, Bora Kim, Laura Tucker** and **Bruce Dow**. Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m. $180, includes post-show dessert reception. Tickets, ext. 0.

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BRIDAL REGISTRY

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Miklos, Elizabeth	Mar. 16/08	3560 Bathurst St
Goldhar, Helen (Hanna)	Mar. 17/08	47 Dell Park Ave
Mahl, Gerald	Mar. 16/08	152 Rivermill Cr
Miller, Miriam	Mar. 17/08	Private
Parmid, Dimitri	Mar. 17/08	3 Goldfinch Cr
Raiman, Morris	Mar. 17/08	2075 Bayview Ave
Chown, Edward John	Mar. 17/08	2 Alamosa Dr
Snitman, Celia	Mar. 17/08	7601 Bathurst St
Garber, Gershon	Mar. 18/08	1121 Steeles Av W
Silver, Polly	Mar. 18/08	2140 Baronwood

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Cecille Schipper	Mar 12/08	London, England
Samuel J. Sable	Mar 14/08	1 Ava Rd
Dora Lerner	Mar 15/08	1112 Steeles Ave W
Rita Goldstein	Mar 15/08	65 Skymark Dr
Haim Leizerovici	Mar 17/08	640 Sheppard Ave E
Jack Newman	Mar 17/08	19 Lower Village Gt
Bessie Adelman	Mar 18/08	10 Wasdale Cr
Thelma Myers	Mar 16/08	33 Orchard View Bl
Sheila Blackstien	Mar 17/08	65 Skymark Dr
Dr. Marvin Langer	Mar 17/08	18 Ridge Hill Dr
Nomi Diamant	Mar 18/08	76 Blue Forest Dr
Stanley Albert	Mar 17/08	317 York Hill Bl
David Grossman	Mar 18/08	65 Skymark Dr
Louis Gordon	Mar 19/08	3174 Bathurst St
Betty Dobbs	Mar 21/08	35 Blue Forest Dr
Bayla Shaul	Mar 21/08	65 Spring Garden Av
Ossie Lusthouse	Mar 21/08	486 Steeles Ave W
Edith Strauss	Mar 20/08	111 Avenue Rd
Stan Share	Mar 22/08	65 Combe Ave
Catherine Taube	Mar 22/08	Kleinberg, Ontario
Jay Lieber	Mar 22/08	35 Boyton Rd

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We wish to express sincere and heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all relatives and friends for their many acts of kindness, expressions of sympathy and for the many generous, charitable donations made in his memory.

Your support brought us much needed comfort and gave us strength and courage in our bereavement.

Please accept this as our personal thank you.
Sydney and Dianne and family. Linda and family.

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For all other notices, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date

Dealing with jet lag

Lisa Weinberg
About Nutrition

Q. Are there any foods that can help ease jet lag?
A. There is one, and only one that I know of – tart cherries. Tart cherries possess a unique compound called melatonin, which can help to regulate your sleep cycle. Melatonin can be effective at improving or lessening your suffering from jet lag. Next time you travel, pack a handful of dried tart cherries in your carry-on bag to ease jet lag. You'll also benefit from their high level of antioxidants.

Q. What is the difference between soy sauce and tamari sauce, and is one healthier?
A. There is a difference in taste and preparation. Soy sauce tends to be processed and often contains preservatives such as sodium benzoate, while tamari is a natural product. They both possess a similar flavour, although tamari is usually richer in flavour than soy sauce. Tamari is a slightly healthier and more flavourful alternative for stir-fries, marinades and sushi. Note though that both sauces do contain a high amount of sodium and should be added sparingly. For a delicious treat, pick up some tamari almonds at a health food store. They are fantastically flavourful and good for your heart.

Q. We are hearing so much about the health benefits of dark chocolate. Is it really better?
A. There are a few answers to this question, and the obvious one, speaking as a layperson, is that chocolate seems to make us happy, and what makes us happy is good for us.

The dietitian in me says dark chocolate is better than milk chocolate. Dark chocolate has fewer calories – usually about 40 per cent less than milk chocolate – because it has less sugar. I also find most people tend to eat smaller portions of dark chocolate. Chocolate that has high percentages of cocoa contains antioxidants, which are good for us.

Choose a dark variety with at least 60 per cent cocoa, but remember, the higher the cocoa content, the more bitter the chocolate is. I find chocolate with 80 to 90 per cent cocoa too bitter.

Enjoy small portions of dark chocolate occasionally. I like buying individually wrapped pieces for portion control. Each of these one-ounce portions has only about 40 calories, a very reasonable indulgence.

* * *

Please note: Canadian adults should get approximately 1,000 IU of vitamin D3 daily in their diets. There was incorrect information in my previous column.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

Shaynee the mitzvah dog cheers people up

By RACHEL BARSKY
Special to The CJN

At the Hospital for Sick Children, Shaynee attracts attention everywhere she goes.

People smile and wave at her. Children call, "I love you, Shaynee!" down the hallways. She may not know why she's so popular, but Shaynee laps it all up, her tail wagging furiously. Yes – her tail.

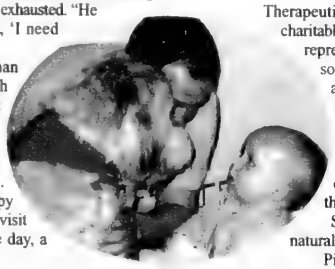
Shaynee is one of two therapy dogs – the other is Digby – currently in the hospital's PAWS (Pets at Work) program, which has been running at SickKids for about 15 years, says Susan Bresler, the program's team leader. There were 11 dogs at one point, she adds, but they have retired or their owners have become ill or died.

Michelle Pincus, Shaynee's owner, has been taking her "Shaynee maydele" to volunteer at SickKids for the past two years. Every Wednesday morning, the two, along with fellow volunteer Simone Bronfman, visit children on the fifth floor, which primarily houses general surgery, neurology and orthopedics. Most of the children are in short-term care, but Pincus and Bronfman know kids who have been in the hospital for years. They've developed relationships with those kids and their parents, and Bronfman even takes Polaroids of each child with Shaynee every week. This way, she says, "they have a wall of Shaynee" to look at.

Some people view Shaynee, a six-year-old soft-coated wheaten terrier, as a kind of miracle, Pincus says. Physiotherapists have asked her to bring Shaynee to visit kids they have not been able to get to move or do exercises. When Shaynee arrives, the kids reach over to pet her.

The dog brings light to everyone who sees her, Pincus says, and not only the young patients. She recalls one time when a doctor was sitting on the floor, completely exhausted. "He saw Shaynee and said, 'I need therapy too!'"

Pincus and Bronfman say their goal each Wednesday is to visit at least eight kids. This morning is a bit quieter than most, but it doesn't matter to Shaynee. Wearing her red therapy dog vest, she's eager to visit her first patient of the day, a little girl who can't sit up to greet her visitor, but who is very excited to see her. She buries her face in Shaynee's fur, scratching under her furry chin.



Caden, a patient at SickKids Hospital is seen with his dad and Shaynee, a dog who visits the hospital weekly as part of the PAWS program.

"How do you do?" She shakes Shaynee's paw. "Good puppy."

Pincus hands the girl treats to feed Shaynee, who takes them carefully from the small hand.

As we move from room to room – visiting only children whose guardians are present – Shaynee never pulls away, never grows restless or misbehaves in any way.

People always assume Shaynee has been extremely well trained, Pincus says, and therapy dogs do have to be certified by Therapeutic PAWS of Canada, first to work with adults, and then, after at least a year's experience, with children.

Therapeutic PAWS of Canada, a charitable organization that has representatives throughout southern Ontario as well as in Montreal and the Atlantic provinces, uses a rigorous evaluation procedure for each animal before designating it as a therapy dog.

Still, it is the dog's natural personality that's key, Pincus says.

Shaynee visits other patients – one little girl, Kandis, who shyly hugs the dog and invites her into the hospital bed; a tiny girl with hot pink casts on both her legs; a baby boy, Caden, who reaches out to Shaynee as soon as Pincus places her in his crib (all the adults in the room scare him, but he clearly feels safe with the 35-pound dog sitting across from him).

One woman kneels down to pet Shaynee in the hallway. She's visiting a one-year-old boy who is quarantined because of a blood infection. "It's too bad he can't see the dog," she says. "He's been in here his whole life and has never seen one."

Pincus and Shaynee also volunteer at a nursing home every week to visit a man dying of cancer who is in palliative care. Last summer, they participated in a North York library's reading program where kids read to Shaynee.

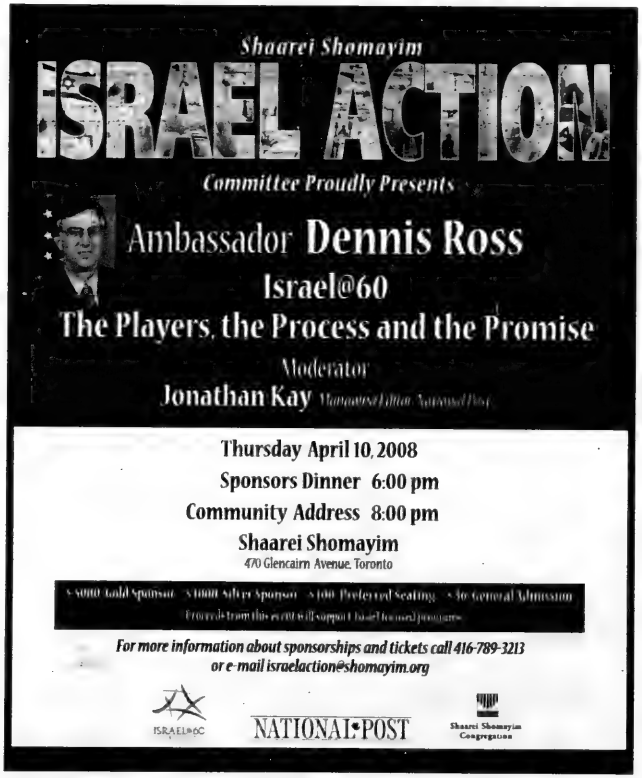
"If kids read to a dog, their reading improves exponentially," Pincus says, referring to studies she's read from the United States. "They don't feel judged."

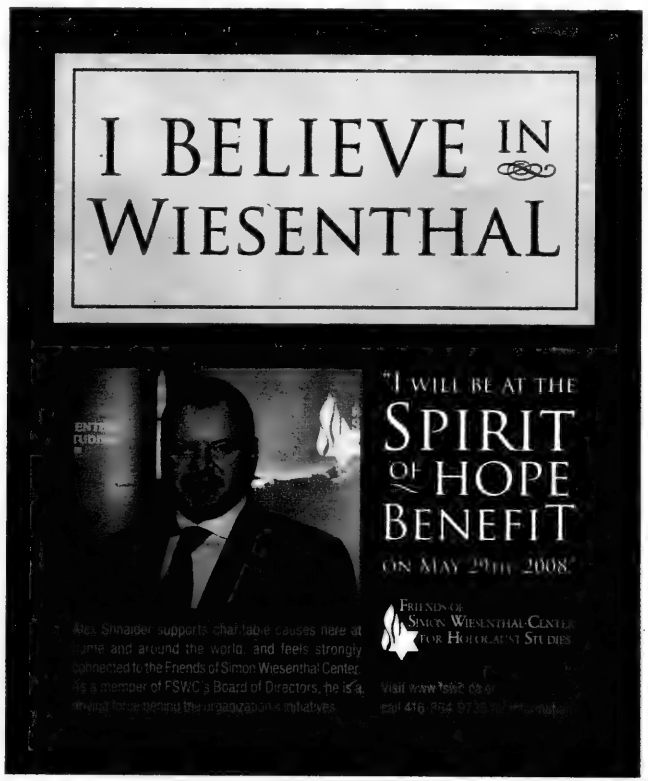
This winter, Shaynee couldn't get to SickKids for a couple weeks because of Toronto's storms. "When we got back, she was so happy to be here," Pincus says. And SickKids was happy to have her.

But the hospital staff wish there were more dogs like Shaynee, and more volunteers like Pincus and Bronfman at the hospital. Bresler receives five phone calls a week about the program, which runs Monday through Friday. But, in the majority of cases, people don't realize how patient they must be to begin the program, and they don't follow through. It takes about a year to get a dog into the program, Bresler says, and they need volunteers to team up with the dog and its owner as well.

But the wait is worth it. For Bronfman, who has been volunteering regularly for more than 20 years, SickKids' PAWS program is "a wonderful situation… it's a hands on, feel good program."

"It's extremely rewarding," Pincus says. "Shaynee helps me do bikur cholim, and without her, I would not have started this whole thing."





PASSOVER FOOD IDEAS

Sensational side salads with sweet fruit additions

By DAPHNA RABINOVICH
Special to The CJN

ARUGULA SALAD WITH FRESH RASPBERRIES AND RASPBERRY VINAIGRETTE

10 cups torn arugula
1 cup thinly sliced red onion
1 cup fresh raspberries

Vinaigrette
1 small shallot, minced
½ cup fresh raspberries
3 tbsp. raspberry vinegar
1 tsp. grated orange rind
1 tbsp. orange juice
⅓ cup olive oil
¼ tsp. each salt and pepper

In wet measure, stir together shallot, vinegar, orange rind and juice. Mash raspberries; add to shallot mixture. Slowly whisk in oil until emulsified. Whisk in salt and pepper. Dressing can be covered and refrigerated for up to 8 hours.

Before serving, combine arugula and onion in a large bowl. Pour vinaigrette over, tossing gently until well coated. Toss in raspberries. Makes 8 servings.

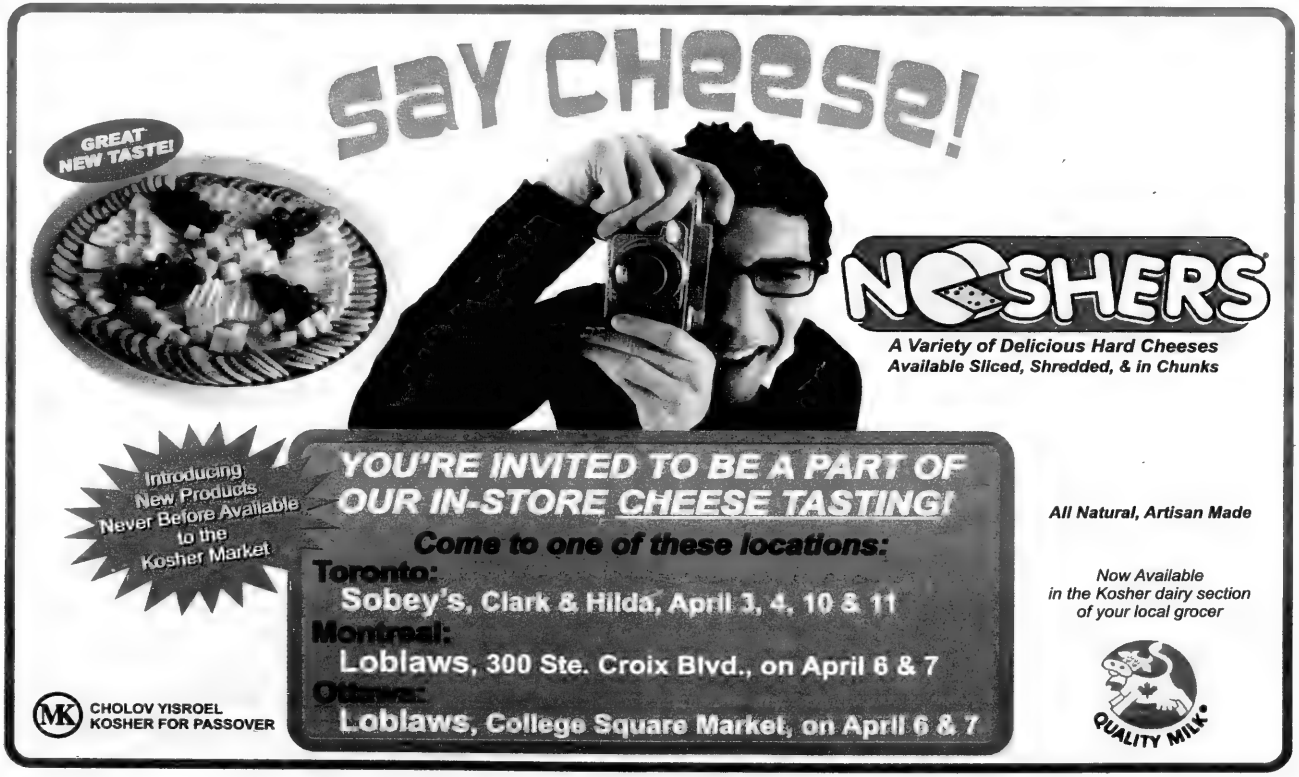
BABY SPINACH SALAD WITH BASIL, FRESH PEARS AND CANDIED WALNUTS

10 cups baby spinach leaves
1½ cups lightly packed basil leaves, torn
2 pears, cored and thinly sliced
1 cup each yellow and red grape tomatoes

Vinaigrette
2 tbsp. white wine vinegar
1 tbsp. Dijon style mustard
1 cloves garlic, minced
¼ tsp. each salt and pepper
⅓ cup olive oil
¼ cup pear juice
candied walnuts (recipe follows)

Continued on page 35

PARSNIP CARROT SOUP: as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.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Passover Food Ideas

Veggies add colour to any meal

Continued from page 34

In a bowl, combine spinach, basil, pear slices and tomatoes.

In separate wet measure, whisk together vinegar, mustard, garlic and salt and pepper. Very gradually, whisk in olive oil until well emulsified. Whisk in pear juice. Drizzle over salad, tossing gently until well coated. Sprinkle with walnuts. Makes 8 servings.

Candied Walnuts
1 egg white
3 tbsp. granulated sugar
pinch each salt and pepper
2 cups walnut halves

In a bowl, whisk together egg white, sugar, salt and pepper until well combined and just frothy. Stir in walnuts until well coated. Spread onto parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Bake in centre of preheated oven at 350 for 12 to 15 minutes or until browned. Cool.

GREEN SALAD WITH STRAWBERRIES AND MANGO DRESSING

10 cups torn bibb or Boston lettuce
2 cups torn endive
1 cup sliced strawberries
1cup sliced red onion

Dressing
1 ripe mango (or 1 cup chunks)
2 tbsp. sherry vinegar
1/4 tsp. each salt and pepper
1/3 cup olive oil
2 tbsp. water

In food processor, puree mango until very smooth. Add vinegar, salt and pepper; puree until combined. With machine running, pour in olive oil in thin steady stream until well emulsified. Stir in water. Dressing can be covered and refrigerated for up to 24 hours.

In large bowl, toss together bibb and endive lettuces, strawberries and red onion. Pour half of dressing over, tossing gently until well coated. Makes 8 servings.

SWEET AND SOUR SALAD WITH RAISINS AND PRESERVED LEMONS

10 cups torn red leaf lettuce
1 cup golden raisins
12 green onions, sliced (2 bunches)
1/4 cup chopped preserved lemons (recipe follows)

Vinaigrette
2 tbsp. lemon marmalade or jam
2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar
1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 tsp. each ground cumin and ground coriander
1/3 cup olive oil
1/4 tsp. pepper

In wet measure, whisk together marmalade, vinegar, garlic, cumin and coriander. In thin steady stream, whisk in oil until well emulsified. Whisk in pepper. Dressing can be covered and refrigerated for up to 24 hours.

In bowl, toss together lettuce, raisins, onions and preserved lemons. Pour in dressing, tossing gently until well coated. Makes 8 servings.

Preserved Lemons
1 large lemon, sliced
1 cup fresh lemon juice
1/2 cup coarse salt

Toss together lemon slices, juice and salt. Transfer to sterile jar with tight fitting lid. Seal and let stand at room temperature for 7 days, shaking jar every 24 hours. Store in refrigerator for up to 2 months, adding additional lemon juice to ensure slices are always immersed in juice. Makes about 2 cups.

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CHOOSE 1

Farm Fresh Baby Spinach, Oyster Mushroom, Mandarin Orange & Pecan Salad
~ or ~
Four Tomato Salad with Fresh Basil and Extra Virgin Olive Oil
~ or ~
Spinach, Jicama and Orange Salad with Ginger Dressing

CHOOSE 1

Lean Brisket with Braised Carrots, Sweet Potatoes, Onions, Apricots, Dates and Prunes
~ or ~
Slow Roasted Boneless Turkey Breast Stuffed with Sautéed Mushroom, Spinach and Onion Matzo Stuffing
~ or ~
Supreme of Chicken with an Apricot Glaze
~ or ~
Baked Salmon with Olive & Sun Dried Tomato Tapenade

CHOOSE 2

Roasted Peppers, Zucchini, Mushrooms, Sweet Potatoes, Roma Tomatoes, Vidalia Onion Wedges, Yukon Gold Potatoes with a Balsamic & Olive Oil Vinaigrette

Garlic Infused Yukon Gold Mashed Potatoes with Caramelized Onions

Yukon Gold and Sweet Potato Mashed Potatoes

Roasted New Potatoes with Kosher Salt

Roasted Asparagus, Sliced Brazil Nuts and Lemon

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SALMON TATAKI: as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.

passover by design: a new addition to your collection

By JUDY BART KANCIGOR
Special to The CJN

Happy new year! No, I haven't forgotten how to read a calendar. For Jews preparing for Passover (beginning Saturday evening, April 19 this year), the spring holiday is another way to mark the beginning of the Jewish year.

While Rosh Hashanah, literally translated "head of the year," is the spiritual new year, Nissan, the month of Passover, is sometimes considered the first month, because it denotes the beginning of our liberation from slavery and the exodus of our ancestors from Egypt.

And just in time for Passover, the culinary crescendo of the year for Jewish cooks, comes the long-awaited *passover by design* (Artscroll) from Susie Fishbein, with over 130 Passover-adjusted recipes, plus 30 brand new ones, and the leap-off-the-page, glorious photos and clever décor ideas we have come to expect from this wildly popular author of the *kosher by design* series.

Passover by design contains many of the recipes we love in Fishbein's previous books, conveniently reformulated for the holiday, plus some enticing additions, including Teriyaki Chicken Satés, Beef Roulade on Creamy Parsnips, Sliced Beef with Shiitakes and Cherry Brandy Sauce, Steamed Sea Bass in Savoy Cabbage, Cranberry Chicken, Quinoa Timbales with Grapefruit Vinaigrette and Chocolate Chip Cheesecake.

Celebrating Passover with her large, lively family brings back vivid memories, Fishbein said by phone from her home in New Jersey. "It was just a frenzy, people of all ages celebrating together. The women tended to live into their 90s. That was always so beautiful, so many generations sitting at the table. There were so many people, so much to do. It was just a really happy, busy time."

Fishbein was raised in an Orthodox family, so the Jewish holidays were "a very big deal," she said. "My father's sister and my mother are best friends. We always spent Pesach at her house in Queens or at my house in Oceanside [Long Island]. Her family would pull up, open up the trunk, and there would be this stack of aluminum foil tins, a sea of aluminum foil."

Everyone would join in the preparations. "My grandma would be standing there flipping out chremslach, because 10 minutes shouldn't go by without her feeding us something," she recalled. "The child in the least favour at the moment would be sent outside to scrape the maror. Someone at the table would be chopping apples or cracking walnuts for the charoset."

Fishbein honours these memories and traditions, what she calls the "organized chaos" of her family's celebrations. "That is the beautiful thing about making holidays at home – they become precious memories etched on us and our children."

Continued on page 40

Wishing you a Happy Passover

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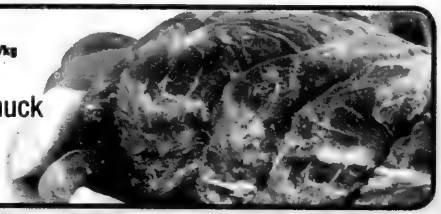

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Memories are an important part of Pesach

Continued from page 38

Yet preparing a seder, not to mention meals for the rest of the Passover week, may be time-consuming and overwhelming. Fishbein has eliminated much of the work by doing all the food substitutions for us, "giving you more time to focus on what you love about preparing for Passover," she said, "making delicious foods that bring family and friends together."

The dazzling photos by world-class photographer John Uher inspire rather than intimidate.

These are very showy menus, but everything in the book is doable. "The recipes and serving ideas require a minimum of fuss to achieve the maximum esthetic impact," Fishbein said.

"I don't aim for the level of chef. I'm not a chef myself. No one I know cooks like a chef. I'm aiming for the person who cooks on an everyday basis, every holiday basis, people who want things to look elegant and different, but don't want to spend seven hours in the kitchen."

Routinely dubbed the Jewish Martha Stewart, Fishbein squirms at the comparison. "I'm flattered, but it's not really accurate," she said. "Martha Stewart is all about a lifestyle. If you want beautiful flowers, you plant them and this is how you do it. We're busy. We have kids. We have jobs. We're in and out of the kitchen trying to make fabulous meals. I take shortcuts she would never take. I'm about cutting to the chase to accomplish our goals."

How does Fishbein herself explain the hoopla surrounding her books? Unpretentious despite her success, she observed, "I was at the right place at the right time. The kosher restaurants have been going up in quality, showing people what food can look and taste like. Good kosher ingredients were becoming more available, and the Orthodox community was poised for something new.

"I think I hit a nerve in the community. People clearly have had a creative passion in them that was waiting to be unleashed. I've unleashed their inner cook."

Judy Bart Kancigor is the author of Cooking Jewish: 532 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family *(Workman) and can be reached at www.cookingjewish.com.*

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Carrot Tzimmes
Broccoli & Mushrooms or
Green Beans Almandine
Cole Slaw, Dill Pickles
Matzo
Seder Plate Ingredients
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Sponge Cake or Marble Cake
Macaroons

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**Salmon Teriyaki instead of chicken or brisket, add $2.00 per person*

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STEAMED SEA BASS IN SAVOY CABBAGE

Looking for a light alternative to stuffed cabbage? This pretty Moshe David recipe looks like stuffed cabbage, but is a healthy, lovely fish dish that is mellow in flavour.

head savoy cabbage, cored and separated into leaves
3 (6-oz.) sea bass fillets
fine sea salt
freshly ground black pepper
1 (10-oz.) package sliced lox
6 tbsp. white wine, divided
½ cup cup heavy cream or nondairy creamer

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Drop the largest cabbage leaves into boiling water and blanch for 10 seconds, until they begin to wilt. Remove from the water.

Meanwhile, cut each sea bass fillet into 4 chunks. Season the sea bass with salt and pepper. Spread the lox out in pairs of overlapping slices on a piece of plastic wrap. Cover with another sheet of plastic wrap. Pound the lox with a meat pounder or the back of a knife to flatten and meld the pieces together. Wrap each sea bass chunk in a slice of the pounded lox. Depending on how wide the lox slices are, you may need to trim off excess lox to just cover the sea bass.

Wrap each lox-covered sea bass chunk in a cabbage leaf, rolling it like a burrito or stuffed cabbage. Trim the cabbage if it is too long. Reserve the scraps.

Pour ½-½ in. of water into a high-sided skillet or pot. Add 4 tbsp. of the wine. Bring to a gentle simmer. Add the sea bass rolls, making sure you are on a low enough heat that all you have are small bubbles. Cover the pot and steam the rolls for 15 minutes. Do this in batches if necessary. Reserve the fish broth.

In a small pot, heat remaining 2 tbsp. white wine. Add the cream and 1 cup of the fish broth. Add 2 tbsp. of the chopped dark green cabbage-leaf scraps.

Cut each cabbage roll in half on the diagonal. Lay one half on the other. Surround with the sauce. Makes 6 servings.

Continued on page 42

food Basics

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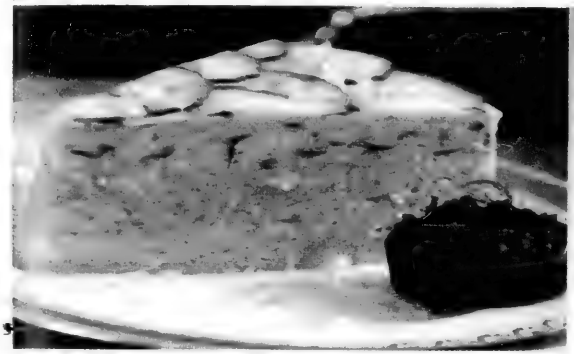
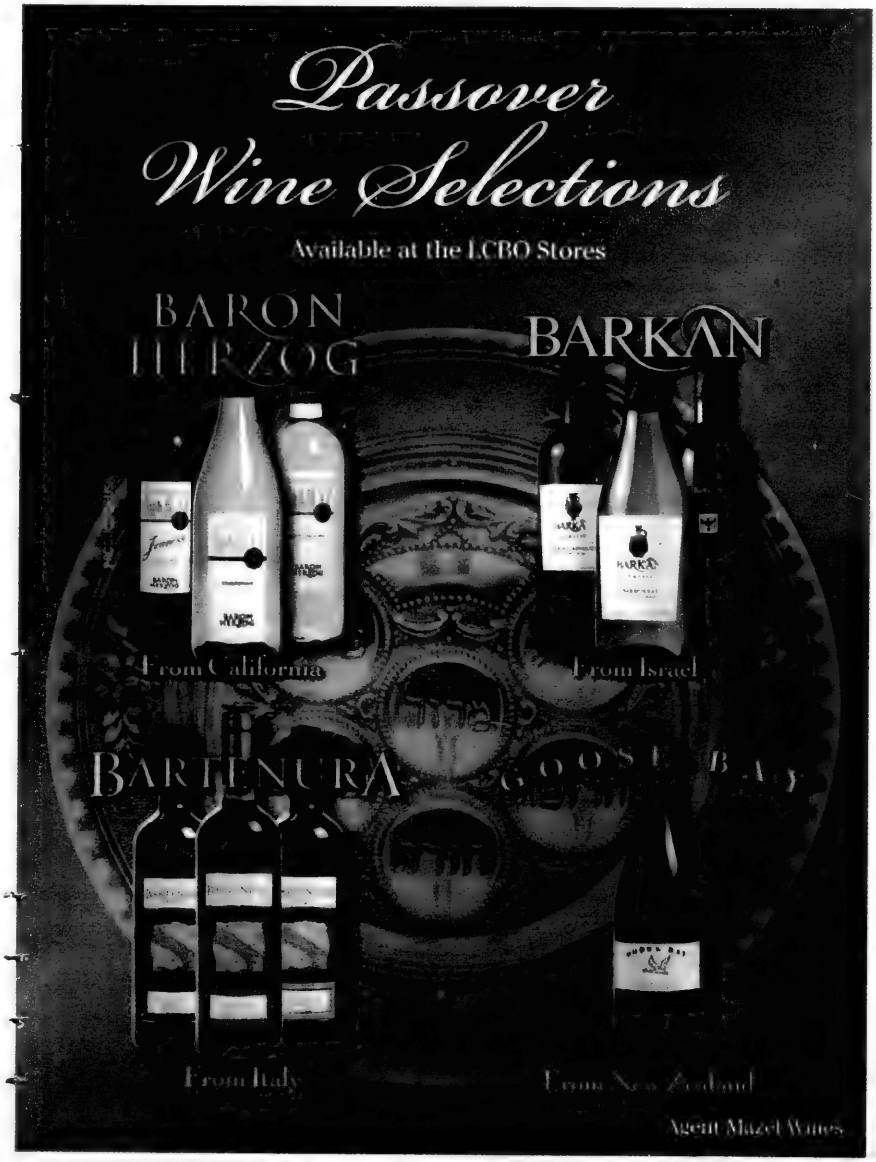


TRI COLOURED GEFILTE FISH

as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.



For chocolate lovers only

Continued from page 40

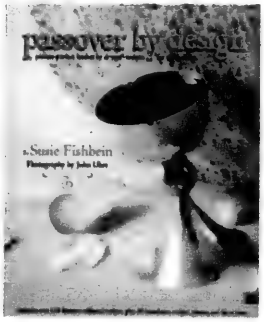
CHOCOLATE MOUSSE PIE

Chocoholics beware! This one is dangerous and will satisfy even the deepest cravings. This recipe starts with my mother-in-law's famous chocolate mousse and bakes some of it to form a dense, luscious cake base which falls and is then filled with the remaining velvety mousse.

As with any dish using raw eggs, this is not suitable for the very young or people with compromised immune systems, due to the risk of salmonella. If you are worried about this issue, since some of the mousse in this recipe does not get cooked, try to find pasteurized eggs.

nonstick cooking spray
6 tbsp. sugar, divided
12 oz. good-quality semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
1 cup unsalted butter or margarine
4 tsp. vanilla extract
¼ tsp. fine sea salt
6 large eggs, separated

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 9-in. springform pan with a heavy coating of nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle with 1 tbsp. sugar, tapping the sides to distribute it evenly over the bottom and a little bit on the sides. Set aside.



Set a metal bowl over a pot of barely simmering water to form a double boiler. Melt the chocolate, butter or margarine, and 3 tbsp. sugar in the bowl, stirring occasionally. When completely smooth, remove from heat and stir in vanilla and salt.

Meanwhile, beat the egg whites until soft peaks form, about 2 minutes on medium-high. Gradually add 2 tbsp. sugar and continue to beat until stiff peaks form, about 3–4 minutes. Set aside.

Beat the egg yolks until thick and lemon-coloured.

When the chocolate is ready, mix a large spoonful of the warm chocolate into the yolks to temper them and keep them from scrambling. Then, transfer all the yolks into the chocolate mixture, stirring until smooth.

Fold a large dollop of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture, then gently fold in the remaining egg whites.

Pour 3 cups of the mousse mixture into the prepared pan and bake for 25 minutes, until set. Store remaining mousse in refrigerator.

Place the cake immediately from the oven into the refrigerator for 20 minutes. Then, pour remaining mousse into the slightly fallen centre. Use a small metal offset spatula to spread it evenly over the cake. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Makes 10 servings.

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WHILE SUPPLIES LAST. NO RETURNS ON KOSHER FOR PASSOVER ITEMS.

Pan pals share favourite Passover vegetarian recipes

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

Did you know that nearly 100,000 Jews throughout the world close up their kitchens and go to a hotel for Passover? If you're not one of the lucky ones and have to cook and prepare for Passover, you're probably busy going through your cookbooks trying to decide on your menu, checking what the supermarkets are stocking on their shelves this year, and preparing your shopping list.

It's always fun to know what my foodie friends have on their menu for Passover, and this year is no exception. I always get requests from my readers for recipes that will be suitable for the vegetarians at their Passover table, and so I asked my "pan pals" to share some of their favourite recipes for your enjoyment. Here are some delicious Passover dishes to help you be well prepared so that when diners declare that they're vegetarian you can happily accommodate their needs.

Kugels are always a favourite dish for Passover, as they can be made in advance, reheat easily and can be multiplied to serve a crowd. I brought this yummy kugel (below) to a dinner party and never admitted that I made it with cauliflower and packaged products. The guests thought it was potato kugel that was made from scratch. It was devoured in moments.

While I was writing this article, I received an e-mail from Daniella Bitton of Toronto. She wrote, "I made the 'potato' kugel in your new book, *Norene's Healthy Kitchen*, the one with cauliflower, but I changed it a bit. I made the cauliflower one, the broccoli one and the spinach one and then I layered it. The only problem was that the mixture is very dense; so you didn't get three distinct layers. But it was devoured nonetheless."

So make this kugel my way, Daniella's way, or maybe you'll create your own version! If you make the three-layered version, increase the cooking time to about 1 hour, or until set and golden. Enjoy.

NORENE GILLETZ'S PRETEND POTATO KUGEL
Source: *Norene's Healthy Kitchen*

5 cups frozen chopped cauliflower or 1 small fresh cauliflower
3 large eggs (or 2 large eggs plus 2 egg whites)
1/4 cup light mayonnaise
3 tbsp. onion soup mix (about 1/2 of an envelope)
1 tbsp. potato starch (you can substitute all-purpose or whole wheat flour during the year)

Thaw the frozen cauliflower; drain thoroughly. (If using fresh cauliflower, steam until tender, about 12 to 15 minutes; drain well.) In a large bowl, mash the cauliflower well. Add the eggs, mayonnaise, onion soup mix and flour; mix until well combined. (The mashing and combining of ingredients can be done quickly in a food processor fitted with the steel blade.)

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 10-in. ceramic quiche dish or 7 1/2x11-in. oblong glass dish with cooking spray.

Spread the cauliflower mixture evenly in the prepared dish. Bake, uncovered, for 40 to 45 minutes or until firm and golden. Remove from the oven and let the kugel stand a few minutes to firm up before serving. Makes 8 servings. Keeps 2 days in the refrigerator; reheats well. Freezes well for up to 2 months.

93 calories per serving, 7.6 g carbohydrate, 3.2 g fibre, 5 g protein, 5.5 g fat (1.1 g saturated), 83 mg cholesterol, 355 mg sodium, 188 mg potassium, 1 mg iron, 35 mg calcium

Broccoli spinach kugel

Substitute 1 package (10 oz./300 g) frozen broccoli and 1 package (10 oz./300 g) frozen spinach for the cauliflower. (You can also make this kugel with 2 packages of either broccoli or spinach.) Defrost completely and squeeze well to remove any excess water before preparing as directed above.

Chef's Secret:

• Frozen Assets: To reheat the frozen kugel, remove it from the freezer, unwrap, and transfer it to a preheated 375-degree oven. Don't defrost it first or it will be too soft. Reheat, uncovered, for 20 to 25 minutes or until piping hot. If the kugel begins to brown too much, cover loosely with foil.

* * *

The following vegetarian main dish was developed by Amanda Lubin of Montreal. It makes a tasty vegan main dish or can be served as a side dish to the non-vegetarians at your Passover table – or all year round. Lubin is a holistic health counsellor who also has a diploma in hotel and restaurant management. For more information, visit her website at www.myhealthspot.ca, an on-line health and wellness directory for the city of Montreal, which includes articles, healthy recipes, upcoming events and more.

Continued on page 45

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Make your Passover roast vegetarian

Continued from page 44

AMANDA LUBIN'S COLLARD AND CARAMELIZED ONION LASAGNA

6 matzah boards
1 bunch collard greens, washed, remove stalks
3 tbsp. olive oil, divided use
1 red onion, sliced julienne style
1 yellow onion, sliced julienne style
sea salt and ground black pepper to taste
2 tsp. mixture of dried garlic, thyme, marjoram and rosemary (optional)
4 tbsp. matzah meal, divided use
½ cup vegetable stock

Preheat oven to 350. Take 6 boards of matzah and break each one into thirds. Place in hot water and let soak for a few minutes. Then drain the water. Set aside.

Boil 8 cups of water in a large saucepan. Layer several collard leaves one on top of the other and roll them width-wise. Slice them julienne style. Repeat with remaining collard leaves. Place them in the boiling water for about 5 minutes or until tender-crisp. Drain them and set aside.

Meanwhile, place 2 tbsp. of the olive oil in a medium saucepan. Add red and yellow onions and cook on medium heat for about 15 minutes, until onions are caramelized, stirring occasionally.

Add collard greens to the onions and mix until evenly distributed. Add salt, pepper and herb mixture. Add 2 tbsp. matzah meal and mix for about 1 minute. Once the mixture has thickened, add vegetable stock. You might need a bit more stock. Mix until desired thickness.

In a greased 9x13-in. oven-safe dish, layer half the matzah on the bottom. Pour half the mixture onto the matzah and spread evenly. Repeat one more time. Sprinkle remaining 2 tbsp. matzah meal over top and then drizzle with remaining olive oil. Bake in the oven for 30 to 45 minutes, until golden. Makes 8 servings.

* * *

My friend Cheryl Goldberg of Toronto makes this delicious vegetarian roast every year for Passover. Her vegetarian husband, Len, doesn't like eggplant, but you can't tell that there's any in the recipe, so there are no complaints from him. She adapted the recipe from Rose Friedman's cookbook, *Jewish Vegetarian Cooking*.

CHERYL GOLDBERG'S VEGETABLE ROAST

1 medium eggplant, peeled and sliced in rounds
salt
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic (optional)
3 carrots, chopped
2 medium zucchini, chopped
3 medium tomatoes, chopped
1½ to 2 cups thinly sliced mushrooms
¼ cup fresh dill, minced
water, if needed
3 potatoes, peeled (leave them whole)
4 to 6 tbsp. matzah meal (as needed)
salt and pepper to taste
1 egg, lightly beaten
paprika to taste

Place eggplant slices in a colander, salting each layer. Let stand for 30 minutes. (Goldberg prefers to let it stand for up to 2 hours.) Rinse, pat dry and chop in small pieces.

Heat oil in a large skillet or pot. Fry onions (and garlic, if using) in oil on medium heat until golden. Add carrots, zucchini, tomatoes, mushrooms, dill and chopped eggplant. Stir well. Cook over low heat for 15 minutes, until tender, stirring occasionally. Add a little water if mixture becomes too dry.

Meanwhile, cook potatoes in boiling salted water until nearly tender. Let them cool, then slice into rounds. Set aside.

Remove pot containing vegetable mixture from heat and mash briefly with a fork. Don't make the mixture too smooth – it should be somewhat chunky. Add matzah meal, salt and pepper. Add egg and stir well.

Preheat oven to 350. Spray a 2-quart round ovenproof casserole with nonstick spray. Spoon in vegetable mixture and spread evenly. Top with sliced potatoes and sprinkle with paprika.

Bake uncovered for 40 to 45 minutes, until golden. Makes 6 servings.

* * *

My friend Sue Epstein of Efrat, Israel, a cookbook author and food writer, shared this luscious vegetarian dish from her recipe files. This is delicious served as a side dish with either a meat or a dairy meal. It can be served warmed or at room temperature and can be enjoyed for Passover or any time of year.

SUE EPSTEIN'S PASSOVER ZUCCHINI PATE

2 tbsp. butter or margarine
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
1½ lbs. zucchini, ends trimmed and thinly sliced (do not peel)
1 tsp. sea salt
10 grinds black pepper
pinch of cayenne pepper or chili powder (omit for Passover)
1 heaping tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
3 hard-boiled eggs, cut into quarters
paprika

Melt the butter or margarine in a medium-sized pan over low heat and cook the onion, stirring frequently, until it has turned a rich gold, about 6 minutes. Add the zucchini and seasonings and toss well. Cook over medium heat, shaking the pan occasionally, until the zucchini feels tender when pierced with a sharp knife and is golden brown, about 5 minutes.

Put the parsley in a food processor with the eggs and the cooked vegetable mixture, together with any pan juices. Process until the mixture becomes a smooth pate, about 30 seconds. Check the seasoning, adding a little more salt or pepper to taste. Turn into a terrine or pottery serving dish, cover and chill for several hours.

To serve, leave at room temperature for half an hour, then lightly sprinkle the top with a little paprika. Makes 6 servings.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, cooking teacher and food consultant.

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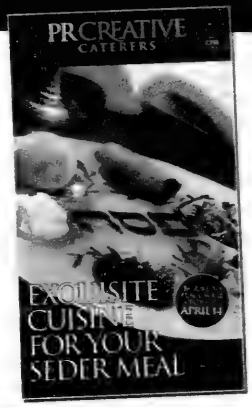

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An olive oil primer

By ROSIE SCHWARTZ
Special to The CJN

Throughout the ages, the olive tree has been valued – its branches considered a symbol of peace while its oil was used not only in food preparation but also in religious rituals.

The wisdom of using traditional foods containing olive oil as the predominant oil is now coming to light, as scientific research discovers the countless nutritional benefits of olive oil. At the same time, the oil is in vogue as never before. A fragrant, peppery extra virgin oil drizzled over sliced tomatoes and basil is now palate-pleasing to many who, years ago, would have considered the taste to be strong and undesirable.

Not too long ago, if you wanted to buy olive oil, the choice was extremely limited. But over the past few years, the marketplace has exploded with all manner of offerings with a wide range of taste and prices. Labels on bottles read: "Extra virgin olive oil," "Virgin olive oil," "Olive oil," "Light olive oil," and even "Extra light olive oil."

But not all olive oils are created equal, in terms of both health and taste.

Sorting through labels can be extremely confusing. What does extra light mean compared to extra virgin? What about the nutritional differences? Understanding the classifications of the various oils can help to clear up the confusion.

Virgin olive oil is simply what is pressed from the olive – the oily unrefined juice of the fruit. The acidity of the oil, which can be affected by both the quality of the olives and the harvesting techniques used, determines the classification and whether any refining is needed.

Extra virgin oils are the least acidic and vary in taste, depending on the variety and ripeness of the olive used to make them. The term virgin refers to oils that are slightly more acidic than the extra virgin ones.

As you peruse the Passover food selection, take note that it's usually the extra virgin varieties on store shelves.

Those oils that have high acidity levels or don't meet appearance, taste or aromatic criteria must be refined. And it's during the refining process that the various phytochemicals, or disease-fighting compounds, are lost. The term olive oil on a label means that the oil has been refined, but according to the International Olive Oil Council regulations, a small amount of virgin oil is added back.

Extra light and light olive oil are the most highly refined of all of the varieties. Despite their name, these are no lower in calories and fat than more colourful and fragrant varieties. Unlike the refined olive oil, extra light and light have no virgin olive oil added back to them. They are simply refined oils, without the taste or beneficial phytochemicals of the olive.

It's the extra virgin or virgin varieties – not regular olive oil – that are linked to a lower incidence of disease. While all olive oils contain heart healthy monounsaturated fats, the virgin oils also contain a wealth of phytochemicals.

According to scientist Dr. Antonia Trichopoulou of the University of Athens, virgin olive oils contain about 200 different micro-components or phytochemicals that are linked to protection against ailments like heart disease, stroke and certain cancers.

But even the most aromatic extra virgin olive oil containing plenty of disease-fighters won't continue to provide the health perks and taste if they are not stored and prepared properly. Light and heat are the enemies of olive oil. To preserve the fruity components and give your olive oil a longer shelf life, store it in the dark in a cupboard away from the stove.

Here are some Passover recipes to help you enjoy your olive oil.

Continued on page 47

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Passover Food Ideas

Quinoa adds an ancient touch

Continued from page 46

The first one is a real change of pace dish for Passover and a delicious and nutritious one at that! It's perfect for entertaining or for family fare. Quinoa (pronounced KEEN-wah) comes from an ancient Inca plant but has only been in North America for under two decades. According to www.kashruth.com, quinoa has been determined to be kosher for Passover as it is not related to the *chameishes minei dagan* – five types of grain products, nor to millet or rice. It's a member of the "goose foot" family, whose members include sugar beets and beet root. When tested to see if it would rise, the quinoa decayed. It is also not considered to be kitniyot. And at this time of year, it offers a host of health perks including more than 5 grams of fibre per cooked cup – a welcome addition for those whose suffer tummy troubles during Passover. It's also packed with protein, a plus for vegetarians whose options at this time of year are limited.

CITRUS QUINOA SALAD

1 cup quinoa
2 cups orange juice
1 cup diced cucumber
1 red pepper, diced
½ cup diced red onion
1 cup diced celery
½ cup diced carrot
¼ cup chopped fresh coriander
3 tbsp. chopped mint
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
salt and freshly ground pepper
1 tbsp. toasted slivered almonds

Using a sieve, rinse quinoa thoroughly with water. Combine quinoa and orange juice in a saucepan; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, for about 10 to 15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed; let cool.

Combine cooled quinoa with cucumber, red pepper, red onion, celery, carrot, coriander, mint and olive oil. Season with salt and freshly ground pepper. Garnish with slivered almonds. Makes 6-8 servings.

SWISS CHARD WITH RAISINS AND PINE NUTS

This Mediterranean dish, from my book, *The Enlightened Eater's Whole Foods Guide* (Viking Canada) shows a more traditional use of olive oil. If you prefer, you can substitute baby spinach for the chard. The recipe can easily be doubled.

3 tbsp. raisins
2 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 bunch Swiss chard (about 1¼ lb.), stems trimmed, leaves coarsely chopped
2 tbsp. pine nuts, toasted

Place raisins in small bowl. Pour enough warm water over to cover; let stand 20 minutes. Drain well.

Heat oil in heavy large pot over medium heat. Add garlic and sauté until fragrant, about 1 minute; do not let brown. Add Swiss chard; sauté until chard is wilted and tender, about 5 minutes. Mix in pine nuts and raisins. Season mixture to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat.

Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 4 servings.

Rosie Schwartz is a Toronto-based dietitian and author of The Enlightened Eater's Whole Foods Guide: Harvest the Power of Phyto Foods *(Viking Canada).*

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as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.

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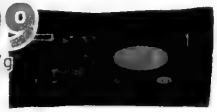

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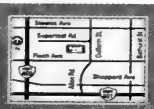
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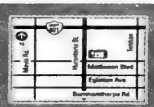
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Canada opposes anti-Israel resolutions at UN

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

In what has become an all-too-predictable pattern, the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) ignored ongoing rights violations around the world and hammered Israel with a series of condemnatory resolutions last week.

The HRC passed three resolutions that condemned Israel's settlements, its policy on Golan and its military attacks on Palestinians, while ignoring the deaths of an estimated 140 Tibetan demonstrators at the hands of Chinese soldiers.

At the same session in Geneva, the HRC named Richard Falk, an American Jewish academic who has compared Israel to Nazi Germany, as its special rapporteur on the Palestinian territories, and it appointed to an advisory group Jean Ziegler, a former Swiss socialist politician with a history of cozying up to dictators.

It was, in the words UN Watch executive director Hillel Neuer, "one of the worst weeks ever for human rights."

The resolutions adopted against Israel are one-sided and say nothing about ongoing Palestinian terrorism. "The message is that building settlements on barren hilltops were worse human rights violations than killing students in Tibet," he said.

Anne Bayefsky, senior editor of the EYE on the UN website, said last week's developments are part of "a very clear pattern which reached, in many ways, an ultimate low point in the HRC session. The HRC has been utterly subverted by the world's worst human rights abusers, and part of this sickness is a gross form of anti-Semitism. It's very raw and uninhibited now: the continual analogizing of Israel to Nazis, of Israel as the archetypal racist human rights violator in the world today. What is particularly shocking about it is the willingness of the European Union to refuse to stand up against it. Canada is left alone and one should be incredibly proud of being a Canadian at the moment."

Canada was the sole holdout in a 46-1 vote that urged Israel to dismantle its settlements. It also registered the only vote against a resolution criticizing alleged Israeli human rights violations in the Golan Heights, and it voted with nine European countries against a resolution "combatting defamation of religions," but which referred explicitly to only one faith – Islam.

Canada did not oppose the consensus appointment of Falk as special rapporteur on human rights in Palestinian territories, but it subsequently voiced an objection. "Based on the writings of one of the candidates… Canada expressed serious concern about whether the high standards established by the council would be met by this individual. Therefore, Canada dissociated itself from any council decision to approve the full slate," said Marius Grinius, Canda's permanent representative at the United Nations.

In a rebuke to the council, Israeli Ambassador Itzhak Levanon said, "I find it nearly impossible to believe that out of list of 184 potential candidates, the eminently wise members of the consultative group honestly – and in good faith – have made the best possible choice for this post."

Falk, he noted, last year authored an article titled *Slouching toward a Palestinian Holocaust*. He "has taken part in a UN fact-finding mission which determined that suicide bombings were a valid method of 'struggle.' He has disturbingly charged Israel with 'genocidal tendencies' and accused it of trying to achieve security through 'state terrorism.' Someone who has publicly and repeatedly stated such views cannot possible be considered independent, impartial or objective, as is explicitly required… It does not appear difficult, even at this early stage, to predict what his first report will say."

Ziegler, who was named to the HRC's 18-member advisory group, was the subject of an intense lobbying campaign prior to his selection. MP Irwin Cotler, Canada's former justice minister, joined Per Ahlmark, the former deputy prime minister of Sweden, and numerous human rights NGOs to urge the Swiss government to suspend Ziegler's nomination.

They noted "Ziegler's support for serial violators of human rights," including dictators in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Iraq and North Korea, and his support for French Holocaust denier Roger Garaudy, whom Ziegler called "one of the leading thinkers of our time." Ziegler co-founded the Moammar Gadhafi Human Rights Prize and joined Garaudy, Louis Farrakahn and Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad as recipients of the honour, they noted.

The anti-Israel resolutions marked the 17th time the HRC has condemned Israel since it was created two years ago, but "China has never been condemned for Tibet. As TV images [appear] on our screens, with people being shot and killed, there's silence. No resolutions, no special sessions," Neuer said.

"The Organization of the Islamic Conference is completely calling the shots," he said. There is a lot of backroom horse trading going on, and the European HRC members are making deals for support on some resolutions in exchange for not opposing other proposals. "It's a Faustian bargain. You're left with a council that does virtually nothing but condemn Israel."

Bayefsky, a senior fellow with the Hudson Institute, a conservative think tank, said that "the most important lesson here is that the UN as a vehicle for human rights protection is a fiction in the 21st century."

She pointed to a "shocking" report by John Dugard, who is being replaced by Falk, that "gives a licence to kill Jews… Dugard's report redefines terrorism, creating a category of terrorism that is not murder, but is justifiable, understandable, comprehensible and inevitable."

"This council is a pro-terror, anti-democracy creation from hell which is analogous to a runaway train that has commandeered the United Nations and driven it to the bottom of Lake Geneva," Bayefsky said.

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Archeologist finds artifacts from time of Solomon's Temple

Yuval Baruch

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — Yuval Baruch made archeological history in October 2007 when he uncovered pottery artifacts on the site of Jerusalem's Temple Mount. They are considered to be the first physical evidence of human activity during the time of King Solomon's Temple (the First Jewish Temple).

Baruch, who is Jerusalem's district archeologist at the Israel Antiquities Authority, speaking at the Berney Theatre here, outlined his world-famous discovery as part of a lecture series put on by the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University.

The Temple Mount, Judaism's holiest site, is where Jews believe Abraham almost sacrificed Isaac at God's behest. It is now covered by Islam's Dome of the Rock and Al-Aqsa Mosque.

Baruch says the artifacts he found have shed new light on what is hidden beneath the Muslim mosques.

"The Muslim Waqf [the Muslim religious authority that controls the internal administration of the Temple Mount] does not allow Israeli archeologists to conduct any excavations on the site. But I got access to a small tunnel where electrical cables run under the site when there was an electrical shortage and the Waqf had to get the electricity fixed...

Pottery shards that Yuval Baruch uncovered on the site of Jerusalem's Temple Mount were taken by the Israel Antiquities Authority.

"I was not supposed to be left there alone, as the Waqf always has someone present when Israeli archeologists are on the site. It was in the evening after 8 p.m., and by chance the Arab electrical workers left me and a member of my staff for about 15 minutes while they went to pray. When I was alone in that brief time, I found the pottery shards among dust near the bedrock level," he says.

The tunnel to which Baruch got access, was a sealed archeological level – "about 400 metres long," he says – that was exposed during the inspection in the area close to the southeastern corner of the raised platform surrounding the Dome of the Rock.

Baruch's findings include animal bones; ceramic bowl rims, bases and body shards; the base of a juglet used to pour oil; the handle of a small juglet; and the rim of a storage jar. In addition, a piece of a white-washed, handmade object was found. It may have been used to decorate a larger object or may have been the leg of an animal figurine. The finds are dated from eight-to six-century BCE.

Continued on page 52

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Release ends 'a frustrating, nightmarish ordeal'

Continued from page 1

Reading from a statement, Itzhayek expressed deep gratitude to those who championed his cause, most notably his sister.

They included Cotler, Cotler's executive assistant Howard Liebman, an interfaith coalition that included several rabbis, Canadian Jewish Congress and supportive media.

Sylvia Itzhayek told *The CJN* that her brother's release ended a frustrating, nightmarish ordeal for him and the family. Sylvia, through a Montreal connection and after going through three other lawyers in India, finally found the right advocates to handle the case: former Indian solicitor general Harish Salve and his associate, Aparajita Singh.

Liebman said Salve and Singh were the ones who were able to persuade the appellate court to reduce Itzhayek's sentence to time served.

After a flurry of paperwork requiring the approval of a lower court and police, Itzhayek, as another condition for his discharge, was escorted out of jail by Canadian High Commission officials Jordan Marsh and Jaswinder Singh. On his hand, stamped in blue, was his exit visa. The High Commission officials accompanied Itzhayek back over the border to Birganj, the Nepalese town from which he had walked to the Indian border 10 months earlier, and he began his long journey home.

Escorted out of jail by Canadian High Commission officials

Sylvia Itzhayek thanked the Canadian government for pushing for her brother's release, although she had been quite critical that it had not been doing enough during his long months of imprisonment.

A tricky issue for Canada, according to Liebman and others, was to strike the right balance between allowing the judicial process of a fellow Commonwealth nation to run its course, while at the same time responding to the lobbying to have the Canadian government seek Itzhayek's release.

Eventually, government officials, among them Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and Secretary of State Helena Guergis in particular, made representations on Itzhayek's behalf. Bernier's office issued a statement last week saying, "We are pleased that justice has prevailed in India, and that Mr. Itzhayek is free to return to Canada."

Cotler said the legal strategy to free Itzhayek took a two-track approach: allow the Indian legal process to unfold, while pressing the Indian executive branch to use its discretionary power to free him.

"If there had been no pressure put on the Canadian government, no one would have known or cared about the case," Sylvia Itzhayek said. "The lobbying put the pressure on Foreign Affairs, and the effect on the Indian government was that Canada was showing a genuine interest."

She said it is not yet known what psychological toll, if any, his ordeal might have on her brother.

But last Friday, at least, everybody was jubilant. Itzhayek and his family, including mother Angel, father Reuven, and his other stepson Ilya, were whisked away from the airport in a black Acura, and last Sunday the family held a celebratory meal to mark Saul's return to freedom.

Last weekend, Itzhayek said in radio interviews that he was able to cope with his confinement through an abiding faith in God. He also revealed that he was able to maintain contacts with his family using a cellular phone that he would hide in a different location every day.

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Beth Tikvah Synagogue 3080 Bayview Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M2N 5L3

Artifacts uncovered on site of Temple Mount

Continued from page 50

Baruch said that the artifacts have been dated to the First Temple Period because of their "shape, materials, colours, and the technique for making the pottery." In particular, the bowl shards were decorated with wheel burnishing lines characteristic of the First Temple Period.

Baruch and Sy Gitin, director of the W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research in Jerusalem; Ronny Reich of Haifa University; and Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University have concluded that the finds might help reconstruct the dimensions and boundaries of the Temple Mount during the First Temple Period.

Baruch says the archeological finds indicate the presence of people on the site of the Temple Mount during late eighth-century and seventh-century B.C., which is consistent with Jewish biblical claims.

This is the first time that archeologists have found artifacts that have not been disturbed in later periods.

"The reaction of the Muslim authority [the Waqf] was to ignore the finds," he adds, which he says was not surprising since over the years the Waqf has tried to undermine Jewish historical ties to the site.

"The Waqf's official position is that there was never a Jewish Temple on the Temple Mount, he says."

He notes that Muslims believe the Temple Mount is where Abraham almost sacrificed Ishmael, not Isaac, at God's behest.

Since 1967, Israel has left internal administration of the compound to the Waqf, while Israeli police have taken responsibility for overall security.

Baruch also says that the reports circulated by the Waqf last month that the Temple Mount was damaged when an earthquake shook Israel are not true. "There was an earthquake [measuring 5.3 on the Richter scale] but it's not true that there was any damage from it on the site," he says.

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בשדרות מלחמה והעיר למעשה נעובה על ידי כל מי שידו משגת לעבור למקום אחר, ולעומתה בתל אביב החיים נורמאלים, שוקקים ואופטימיים. עיר ללא הפסקה שהיא פקק תנועה כמעט עשרים ארבע שעות ביממה. בתחילת מרץ השמש רכה ומלטפת והכל עומד בפריחתו. עוד חדשיים והכל יתחיל להתייבש.

יש הרגשה שאין פתרון ממשי לבעיה הנדולה, וכל אחד מנסה מטבע הדברים לחיות הכי נורמאלי שאפשר. השקל הישראלי הפך לענק לעומת הדולאר האמריקאי ואפילו לעומת הדולאר הקנדי, עד כדי כך שנציד הבנק נאלץ לקנות 25 מליון דולאר כל יום כדי שערך הדולאר יעלה והיצואנים לא יפשטו את הרגל. מצב הזוי לחלוטין. אבל הישראלי מהשורה ממהר לקנות תבילות תיור זולות יותר בדולארים כדי לבלות את חופשת הפסח מחוץ לגבולות המזרח התיכון.

האוסקר וישראל

שבע פעמים נבחרו סרטים ישראלים לתחרות האוסקר לסרט הזר, ועד כה, כולל השנה, לא הצליחה ישראל לזכות בפרס הנכסף. הפעם הראשונה היתה עם סלאח שבתי של אפרים קישון בשנות הששים, והפעם האחרונה היתה עם ביפור השנה.

מטבע העניין סיקרן אותי לראות את הסרט האוסטרי שזכה השנה, לא מעט בגלל שהוא עוסק בשואה. מעל בימת פרס האוסקר אמר הבמאי האוסטרי הצעיר והנרגש שהגיע זמן שארצו תכיר באחריותה למה שקרה בזמן המלחמה. ואכן, כשביקרתי בוינה עם אבי, שנולד שם, הוא אמר בעצב:

"תראה-בנות הבירה אפילו לא הפציצו את העיר הזאת, שתושביה היו יותר אנטישמיים מנרמנים."

הסרט האוסטרי "הזייפנים" (The counterfitters) מספר את סיפורו של זיגפן יהודי מהולל שנתפס על ידי הנאצים ונשלח לעבוד ביחידה שאמורה היתה לזייף את הלירה שטרלינג ואת הדולאר האמריקאי כדי להציף את אנגליה ואמריקה במטבע מזויף וכך להזיק לכלכלתן בזמן המלחמה. הסיפור האמיתי הזה מסופר בצורה מאד משכנעת ואכזרית, ואין ספק שאיכותו של הסרט מצדיקה את הפרס שקיבל, אם כי אני חייב להודות שעדיין לא ראיתי את ביפור, ויהדי דבר מהללים גם אותו על איכותו.

שמעה בסולם קורן.

"אני רוצה למות על מיסתי"

בימים אלה הוציאו תקליט אוסף כפול של להקת האחים והאחיות וכן, לצד הלהיטים הנדולים, גם מספר ביצועים חדשים. ואם הכותרת הזאת נראית לכם מוזרה-הוי שירו של המשורר יהודה עמיחי, שנכתב אחרי שכמעט נהרג במלחמת השחרור, והיטיב, כמה עצוב, הוא עדיין רלבנטי ועכשווי ששים שנה יותר מאוחר. ואנחו הקדשנו אותו לשבויים הישראליים שמדינה שלמה מחכה לשחרורם. וכך מתחיל שירו של יהודה עמיחי:

כל הלילה עלה צבא מן הגיא נבל
להגיע עד שדה הקסל ועד בבל,
השתים באדמה שכבו בערב ונקשחו,
אני רוצה למות על מיסתי.

עיניהם היו צרות כבסוף האשנבים,
אני תמיד מעטים והם רבים,
אני מוכרח למות, הם יכולים להקור אותי
אבל אני רוצה למות על מיסתי.

Manitoba-Israel water symposium slated for Aug.

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Though a long way from her home riding of Riel, Manitoba, Christine Melnick, her province's NDP minister of water stewardship, was glad to be back in Toronto last week to announce a major project between her ministry and the Jewish National Fund (JNF).

Melnick, who has been an outspoken supporter of Israel and has travelled extensively to the Jewish state, was in town at the invitation of JNF, which held a private evening gathering hosted by philanthropists Leslie and Anna Dan at their North Toronto home in honour of the minister's years of work with the fund.

Speaking to some 100 invited guests and dignitaries, Melnick announced that from Aug. 12 to 14, Winnipeg will host the first-ever Manitoba-Israel Water Symposium on water protection.

She said 120 scientists and researchers from Israel and Canada have already been booked for the event, which will address "issues of mutual concern" to both countries, such as wetlands reclamation and waste-water management.

"I'm trying to create a situation where people think of the Manitoba-Israel partnership as natural," Melnick said.

She added that as a point of interest, the symposium organizers plan to fly Israeli delegates over Lake Winnipeg, which is bigger than all of Israel in geographical size.

Manitoba has put great emphasis on protecting its water supplies from pollutants in recent years, and it's very interested in JNF water stewardship expertise and Israeli water technologies.

In 2006, the JNF and the Manitoba Ministry of Agriculture signed a memorandum of understanding to jointly "develop initiatives" regarding water conservation.

Since then, the province has established a joint Manitoba-JNF fund to sponsor research on rapid-growth greenhouses, water conservation and forest diversification.

The province is also sponsoring JNF projects with communities in northern Manitoba to help adapt "green tech to cold climates and build skills with natives to create employment," Melnick said.

Melnick also used last week's reception to make a second major announcement, saying that with the help of JNF, she has set up a new Minister of Water Stewardship scholarship program.

The $250,000 scholarship fund will be awarded in $25,000 increments to one Manitoba post-secondary student per year over the next decade in order for them to "pursue water-related studies at a post-secondary institution in Israel," Melnick said.

Students will be billeted with Israeli host families for a short time to help them acclimatize to the country.

In addition, upon returning to Manitoba, the students will have jobs waiting for them with the ministry, where they will be encouraged to apply their experience for the benefit of the province, Melnick said.

"Instead of getting off the plane and thinking 'What do I do now?' I wanted the student to realize 'Oh! Tomorrow I have to go to work,'" Melnick told *The CJN*.

The first scholarship winner will be announced this summer at the Manitoba-Israel water conference.

Israel's consul general in Toronto, Amir Gissin, praised the news.

"I've devoted the last 10 years of my life to the fight of Israel's image abroad," Gissin told the guests. "It's a fight we usually lose. But we now want to present the positive face of Israel… and with this project, one minister from Manitoba has seen the possibilities in Israel and in making it relevant for Canada. And for that, I'm thankful."

Recalling other ways in which her government has pledged friendship with the Jewish state, Melnick recalled how last year, her party unanimously passed a resolution at its annual provincial convention condemning all forms of Holocaust denial.

"I find the left-wing voice is missing from the support of Israel, and I hope that one day, when I'm done as a [provincial] minister, I can participate on an international level to be the voice of the left and speak the truth about Israel," Melnick said. "I'm living proof that you can be strong on the left and [also] be very strong on Israel."

After her speech, JNF Toronto president Jerry Wegner presented Melnick with a specially made keychain pushke as a token of friendship and thanks for her support of Israel.

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Facing access problems

Family Matters

by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator for 26 years

Question. My wife has refused to allow me to see my six-year-old daughter for the past several months. There is no problem with the child support I pay, but she insists I am a poor influence because we had a bad marriage. What can I do?

Answer: In the absence of neglect or abuse, the courts are generally very conscious of a child's right to have as much contact as possible with both parents, including the parent with whom they do not normally reside. Such contact is actually spelled out in the Divorce Act.

Even with a written agreement in place, "access parents" often face problems by primary caregivers who attempt to frustrate access for various reasons.

The better way to deal with such situations is good communication, not court action. Head off conflict by trying to stay on excellent terms with your ex. If this becomes impossible, a mutual good friend or Rabbi may also save you a bundle. If all else fails, a competent family law lawyer can bring a court application to restore your access by enforcing your order or agreement, or commencing access rights by application in either the Ontario Court of Justice or the Superior Court of Ontario (Family Division).

After filing and serving your Application, in which you make your claims of access denial, a Judge sits in a room with both parties and their counsel and attempts to mediate the dispute without making a decision by clarifying how another Judge at a trial or motion might decide the case.

This initial court session is called a "case conference" and is the preferred method of resolving matters in the Ontario Family Courts. If the parties follow the advice of this initial case conference Judge, the matter often ends right then. But if even one of the parties cannot agree, the Judge might recommend that the children's lawyer or other third party professional be appointed to assess what type of access, if any, is best for the child before a trial takes place

In the meantime, the access parent can still ask a Judge after the case conference on a "motion" to make a preliminary order before the trial for scheduled access based on evidence that the child is being unfairly denied time with the other parent.

Mr. Syrtash has now moved to a new law firm and has been appointed as Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

Neither Garfin Zeidenberg LLP nor John Syrtash is liable for any consequences arising from anyone's reliance on this material, which is presented as general information and not as a legal opinion.

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U of M reviving Judaic studies, hires new prof

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — Justin Jaron Lewis, an academic from Queen's University, has been hired as an assistant professor of Judaism at the University of Manitoba, which is reviving its department of Judaic studies.

Lewis is currently an assistant professor in the department of religious studies at Queen's and has served as the director of Jewish studies there. He has been hired for a full-time, tenure-track appointment at U of M and arrives in Winnipeg this summer.

"I am very excited about coming to Winnipeg with my family," Lewis told *The CJN* in a telephone interview.

Lewis received his rabbinic ordination from the Academy for Jewish Religion in New York in 2001. "The academy is a rabbinical school that is interdenominational. I studied with others who were Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, everything, all streams of Judaism... I define myself as Jewish, non-denominational," he said.

Lewis, who is also a professional storyteller, has a special interest in chassidic studies. His book, *Imagining Holiness: Classic Hasidic Tales*, will be published by McGill-Queen's University Press as part of the Studies in the History of Religion series

"I spent last Rosh Hashanah in Ukraine with my 12-year-old son, going to the grave of Rabbi Nachman of Breslav [in the town of Uman]. This was a major chassidic pilgrimage of 25,000 men and boys," he said

Lewis, who is fluent in English, French, Hebrew, German and Yiddish, and speaks Yiddish to his two children at home, said he is "very excited about the rich history of Yiddish culture in Winnipeg."

Assistant U of M professor Ben Baader, who teaches Jewish history there, said Lewis' hiring is a very positive development for the university and the Jewish community here.

"I am very much looking forward to building the Jewish studies department with Dr. Lewis and [think] he will be a wonderful addition to our community."

Justin Jaron Lewis has been hired as an assistant professor of Judaism at the University of Manitoba.

According to Baader, Lewis' hiring is one that was very much needed, and he hopes it will breathe new life into Judaic studies on campus.

"The position that Dr. Lewis will be filling is the position that was once occupied by the late Rabbi Moshe Stern before he became ill. The position has not been filled for many years, and there was an obvious gap that existed," Baader said.

"There have been ongoing conversations in the department of religion to revive the Jewish studies program. The dean of arts, Richard Sigurdson, has been very supportive and last year the department of religion made the position in Judaics a hiring priority."

Baader hopes that in the not-too-distant future another person will be hired by the university to join himself and Lewis in teaching Judaics.

"There is talk of creating a third position. With a third person, we would be able to run a Jewish studies program or perhaps a centre for [Jewish] research. This is in the works. The funding is still in the process," he said.

"Since there haven't been Jewish studies taught [at U of M] for years, we want people to know that there will be new classes offered in this area. We hope there will be an enthusiastic student response, and then we will be able to build a third position."

This fall, Lewis will teach a class on rabbinical Judaism at U of M, and in the winter of 2009, he will teach a class on contemporary Judaism.

Lewis received his PhD in post-biblical Hebrew language and literature from the department of near and Middle Eastern civilizations at the University of Toronto in 2003. Until 2007, he was the rabbi of Congregation Iyr HaMelech, in Kingston, Ont., where he was responsible for adult education.

He is the author of *Many Pious Women*, an annotated translation of an early 16th-century Yiddish manuscript, which will be published by the Jewish Publication Society in Philadelphia.

In addition to teaching on campus, Lewis hopes to get involved in storytelling in Winnipeg.

"I like to tell chassidic stories, and my wife, Jane [Enkin], is a singer and storyteller who uses Jewish materials in her storytelling," he said

"We're also excited about the folk-music scene in Winnipeg. We've heard about the Winnipeg Folk Festival, which is very well-known."

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Israeli-PA talks on right track, Rice says

By BARAK RAVID
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JERUSALEM — U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said on Monday that Israeli-Palestinian peace talks are on the right track and she believes a deal is still possible by the end of the year.

"I have to say I find very impressive the work that is being done and the seriousness of the process, and I think it's all moving in the right direction," Rice said at a news conference in Amman, Jordan, with Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas in Jordan.

Commenting on U.S. hopes for an agreement before President George W. Bush leaves office in January, she said, "I fully believe it's a goal that we can reach."

Abbas also expressed confidence, despite differences with Israel over what the outcome of the negotiations should be.

"I am confident, God willing, we will reach a comprehensive peace in 2008. We, the Israelis and the Americans, and all the concerned parties in the region, are working to achieve this," Abbas said.

Israeli officials say the goal of the talks was to reach understandings that would set out the shape and structure of a future Palestinian state, rather than producing a comprehensive peace agreement this year that would be implemented.

On Monday, Rice also called for a halt to Israeli settlement building.

"We continue to state America's position that settlement activity should stop, that its expansion should stop, that this is indeed not consistent with 'road map' obligations," Rice said at the press conference with Abbas.

Rice met earlier Monday in Jerusalem with Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and former Palestinian prime minister Ahmed Qureia, both of whom are heading the recently revived final status peace talks.

Rice also met Monday with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and was travelling to Amman to meet for a second time with Abbas, as part of a three-day mission to the region aimed at advancing the peace process.

On Sunday, Rice said the United States would step up its efforts to ensure that Israel carries through the implementation of promised measures aimed at improving living conditions of Palestinians in the West Bank.

In a meeting Rice held with Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Prime Minister Salam Fayyad, Israel presented a list of measures that it intends to take to ease West Bank restrictions, including the removal of a permanent checkpoint east of Ramallah and some 50 dirt roadblocks that have prevented passage in the areas of Jenin, Tul Karm, Qalqilya and Ramallah.

In the coming weeks, the defence establishment will evaluate the idea of lifting more roadblocks and will present its recommendations in early May, prior to Bush's scheduled visit.

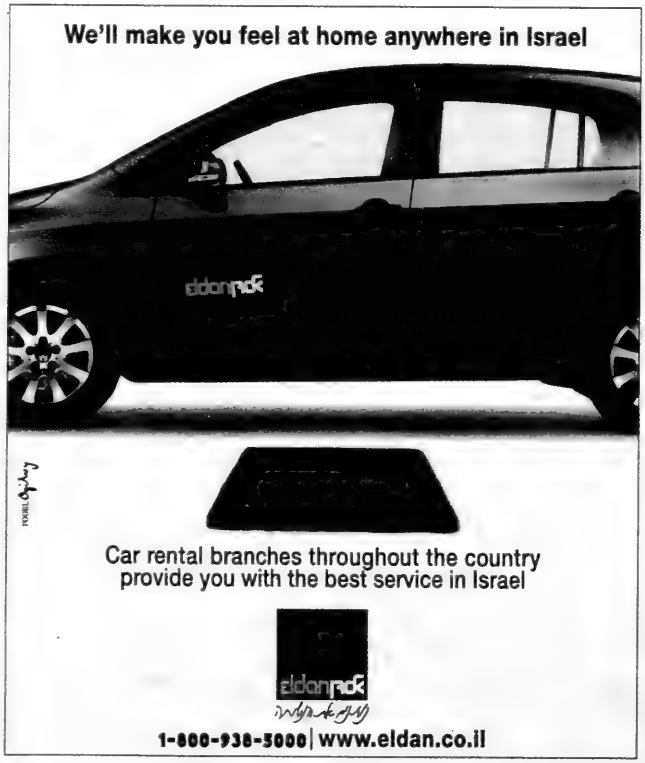
Israel has also agreed to allow the PA's security forces greater freedom of action in West Bank areas that are under Israeli security control, also known as Area B. The mechanism by which Israel grants permission to PA security forces to operate will be improved, and the time lag between the requests and the permits will be cut to an hour.

The PA will also be allowed to build new police stations in Area B.

In addition, a decision was made to revive a promise made during the tenure of Amir Peretz at the Defence Ministry, allowing the Palestinians to build a new neighbourhood with 5,000 to 8,000 new residential units near Ramallah.

The construction had been approved a year ago in a meeting between then-deputy defence minister Ephraim Sneh and Palestinian mediator Saeb Erekat at the home of the U.S. ambassador to Israel.

Meanwhile, U.S. officials said Monday said that Lt.-Gen. William Fraser III, the military man appointed by Rice to monitor implementation of the peace plan road map, is expected back in the region around April 11.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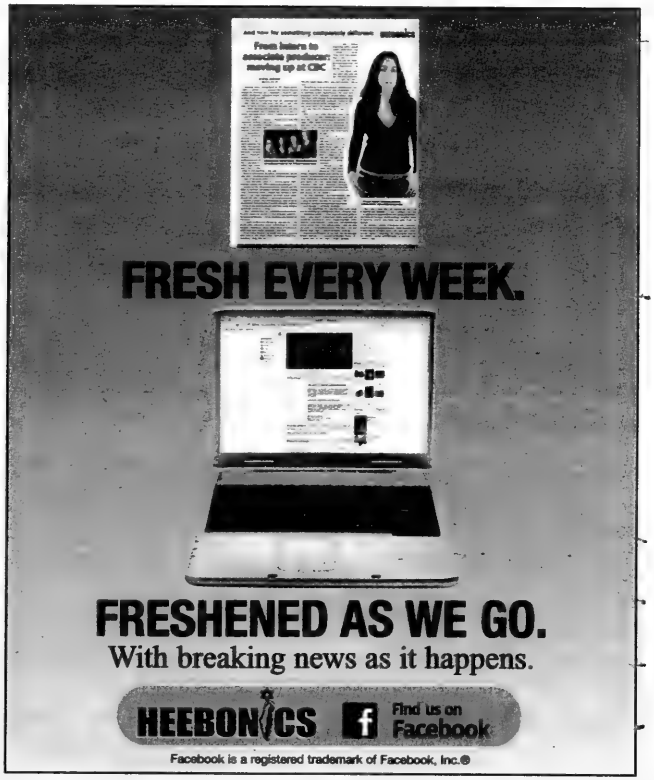
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Russian Muslims reach out to Jews

By GRANT SLATER
JTA

MOSCOW — Russia's chief rabbi and the chairman of the country's main Islamic council are patching up a relationship severed two weeks ago after an Islamic community leader called Zionism a cancer and Israel a fascist state.

Ravil Gaynutdin, the chairman of Russia's Council of Muftis, reached out to Rabbi Berel Lazar during Purim celebrations and asked for a meeting as the Russian media began to report that Lazar's Chabad-led Federation of Jewish Communities was cutting ties with the council.

In a joint statement released on the council's website, the two leaders said they were "ready to continue maintaining a respectful and trusting relationship."

The statement made no mention of Nafigullah Ashirov, a co-chairman of the Islamic council, whose comments this month drove a wedge between the two groups.

"Zionism is a cancerous tumour because Zionism is fascism," Ashirov, the council's director of spiritual administration in the Asian part of Russia, said at a March 4 news conference when asked how he felt about Israel.

After Ashirov made similar comments at a rally last year, Jewish leaders decried the remarks and called on the Council of Muftis to repudiate them. The council responded swiftly, saying Ashirov's beliefs did not represent its view.

This time, however, the council remained silent after the comments were widely reported and the Jewish federation again asked the council to denounce the statements.

"We took this silence as a sign of agreement with Ashirov's opinion," the federation's spokesman, Boruch Gorin, told JTA.

Both Lazar and Gaynutdin are members of Russia's Public Chamber, a consulting body to the Russian Legislature comprised of prominent figures in Russian society. The federation and council participate in the Russian government's interreligious councils and engage in interfaith dialogues.

On March 20, the federation announced that it would not participate with the Council of Muftis in these forums. The same day, Gaynutdin reached out to Lazar for the meeting, which Lazar scheduled for March 27, Gorin said.

But the conflict continued to simmer, attracting the attention of the Russian media, government and religious groups.

It was the first such split between two groups from different religions in Russia's post-Soviet history, Gorin said.

Alexander Ignatenko, a member of the Public Chamber and the president of the Institute of Religion and Politics, said Nashirov's words were part of an attempt to radicalize Russia's Islamic population.

"With all his comments, Ashirov was not expressing the opinion of Russian Muslims but rather broadcasting over Russian media slogans and statements that were formed outside Russia," Ignatenko told the Russian-language Jewish News Agency.

Most of Russia's Muslims are more liberal and less susceptible to anti-Western or anti-Israeli rhetoric than those in the Arab world, Gorin said, adding that Ashirov may well represent the minority as "the loud-mouth voice of the Arabic community of Russia."

Evgeny Satanovsky, the president of the Institute of Middle Eastern Studies in Moscow and a vice-president of the Russian Jewish Congress, said Ashirov embodied the worst aspects of a creeping influence from more strident anti-Zionist regimes in Iran, Syria and the Palestinian territories.

The disparity in ideology between Russian Islamic leaders and their counterparts abroad presents a problem.

"The major danger is the civil war inside the Muslim community," Satanovsky said.

The Council of Muftis reacted with surprise to the intensity of the furor surrounding the federation's announcement that it was suspending ties with the council.

In a statement on its website about the "alleged controversy" in the Russian mass media, the council said it had never received an official request from the federation to denounce Ashirov's statements.

"The situation has all been played out for the sake of the press," the statement said.

Gorin said the council promised the federation "that in the very near future they would find how to stop provocative announcements from getting out."

Leading up to the Muslim-Jewish meeting, other Islamic umbrella organizations rushed to condemn Ashirov's statements.

Rastam Valeyev, an envoy for the Russian Central Muslim Spiritual Administration, told the Interfax news service that Ashirov's comments had "endangered interreligious peace in the country."

One day after the split, the Public Chamber's committee on religion adopted a statement calling on both sides to re-engage in dialogue.

Rabbi Zinovy Kogan, the chairman of the Congress of Jewish Religious Organizations and Associations, took a measured approach to Ashirov's remarks.

"Before deciding to freeze the relations, meetings should be held to discuss the disputable aspects," Kogan said.

With the apparent denouement of the conflict last week, several leaders in the Jewish community said the events signalled a change in tone among their organizations in Russia as they defend against anti-Semitism and attacks on Israel.

Alexander Axelrod, the Anti-Defamation League's representative in Moscow, said before last week's reconciliation that no matter what steps are taken, an emboldened Jewish stance has been aired over the past two weeks. Satanovsky of the Russian Jewish Congress noted that Russian Jews today are free to speak out against anti-Semitic or anti-Israel rhetoric without fear.

"In the year 2008, the Jewish community is strong enough, independent enough and I think have all the possibilities to tell these guys what we really think about them," he said.

ON CHEMO?

www.lifemel.ca

The Executive Director,
The Jewish Camp Council of Toronto

The Jewish Camp Council of Toronto has a successful history dating back to 1909, providing tens of thousands of children, young adults, and seniors with enriching experiences, through a broad range of land and water-based programs in the summer and surrounding seasons. The Jewish Camp Council of Toronto, a not-for-profit organization, operates Camp Northland-B'nai Brith which attracts a wide cross-section of youth from the Jewish community, regardless of ability to pay, religious affiliation, or level of observance. The camp is located on 700 secluded acres in the beautiful Haliburton Highlands of Ontario, nestled among heavily forested land and on a clear lake. The camp has facilities to accommodate 550 campers and 200 staff for each of two summer periods.

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Interested candidates should submit a résumé and letter of intent or cover letter by April 25, 2008 to nbbresumes@cmicanada.com Only qualified candidates will be contacted. Additional information on the camp may be obtained at www.campnbb.com

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Iran supplies rocket plans

Hamas operatives who recently returned to Gaza after training in Iran have a detailed plan for upgrading the capabilities of rockets being developed in Gaza, senior Palestinian Authority sources told *Ha'aretz*. Members of Hamas' military wing smuggled blueprints and technical instructions into Gaza that will enable the group to develop rockets capable of striking communities north of Ashkelon, 15 kilometres north of Gaza's northern border, the source said.

Israel nixes Carter, Annan

Israel turned down an offer by Jimmy Carter and Kofi Annan to mediate a ceasefire with Hamas. The former U.S. president and former U.N. secretary general belong to the Elders, an international conflict-resolution group established last year by British tycoon Richard Branson. Several weeks ago, the Foreign Ministry received a proposal that Carter and Annan come to Israel along with two other Elders, former South African archbishop Desmond Tutu and former Irish president Mary Robinson, to pursue a truce with Hamas and promote peace talks with the Palestinian Authority.

Seder suspect nabbed

A Hamas leader suspected of involvement in the 2002 Passover suicide bombing was arrested. Omar Jaber, head of the Palestinian Islamist terrorist group in Tulkarm, was arrested March 26 by Israeli security forces. He is to be prosecuted for helping recruit the Hamas bomber who struck the Park Hotel in Netanya on a seder night, killing 30 and wounding more than 140. It was the bloodiest bombing of Israeli civilians. The attack's mastermind is already serving multiple life sentences in Israel.

Jewish numbers in decline

Nearly one-third of Israelis will be non-Jewish by 2030, according to government projections. Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics released data suggesting that by 2030, 24 per cent of the population will be Arab Muslims or Arab Christians, and another 4.2 per cent will be non-Arab gentiles. The remaining 71.8 per cent will be Jews. Jews now comprise nearly 80 per cent of Israel's population, and Arabs and other non-Jews the rest. Many demographers say Israel's Jewish majority is at risk, given the relatively higher birthrates of the Arab minority, which could be boosted by Palestinian numbers if Israel doesn't pull out of the West Bank as it did from Gaza. Israel's overall population in 2030 will be approximately 10.1 million, up from the current seven million.

Israel and Syria talking?

Israel hinted at secret talks with Syria. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said last week he wants to resume peace talks with Syria that stalled in 2000, though Jerusalem has balked at preconditions by Damascus, such as the complete return of the Golan Heights.

– JTA and Ha'aretz

Israel to set up Internet portal for world Jewry

BY ANSHEL PFEFFER

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JERUSALEM — With the large number of Internet sites dealing with Judaism and Israel and the number of hits on websites in Hebrew, businesspeople, communications experts and educators have already asked the question: why is there no central Internet-based portal for Jews and Judaism?

A number of past attempts have failed. Apparently the vast amount of material and approaches do not lend themselves to one site and funding would be prohibitive for a site that might not be profitable.

Still, last week, cabinet secretary Oved Yehezkel called a meeting in the Prime Minister's Office of representatives of world Jewish organizations, including the Jewish Agency, the World Jewish Congress, the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish People Planning and Policy Institute and Hillel. On the agenda: how to create a platform to serve the entire Jewish people online and be a bridge between Israel and the Diaspora.

The initiative is part of a comprehensive program that Yehezkel is preparing for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to redefine the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora.

The site will be in English and Hebrew, but its appearance, content and who will maintain it are still unknown. Even so, at least some of the meeting's participants were enthusiastic.

"All the Jews in the world can connect to it," Yehezkel says. "They'll get Jewish history, education, heritage and government PR, too."

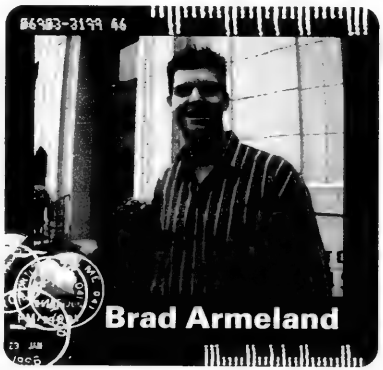
"People can look for relatives and use all the tools the Internet provides," he adds.

The government clearly sees the proposed site as a way of getting its message across through the back door. A new public-relations committee in the PMO, headed by former Jewish Agency spokesperson Yarden Vatikai, is also involved.

"It will never happen," declares one participant in the meeting, who asked not to be identified. "If it's a government site, it will be treated like one and will not be popular. If people can freely state their opinions and advertise, there will be lots of things the government and Jewish organizations will not be able to live with, and they'll have to censor."

Meeting participant Moti Friedman, the director of Jerusalem's Herzl Museum who has developed Internet sites for the Jewish Agency, says, "It answers a need. People want a place on the Internet where there will be interaction among Jews from different places and where things like works by Jews can be found – a place where you can read articles by A.B. Yehoshua, Elie Weisel and Bernard-Henri Levy."

MASA Israel Representative in Canada



Now that Brad has returned to Windsor, Ontario from a year of volunteering on a post-college MASA program in Israel, he is getting involved with both Jewish youth and adult groups. He enjoys speaking about "how important it is to support and visit Israel and learn about its history and culture." Brad believes that "all of our efforts towards the upkeep of Israel as a safe and vibrant country demonstrate that we are truly one people."

Brad is just one of thousands of MASA participants. MASA offers over 150 programs, including a year in Israel after high school, a semester abroad during college, and post-college community service and resume building internships.

At a time when many Jewish young adults are alienated from Israel, it's encouraging to know that MASA participants like Brad return to their campuses and communities with a vibrant, enduring connection to Israel and a strong desire to serve as Israel ambassadors to Canada.

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Israeli companies to take stock of greenhouse gases

By KARIN KLOOSTERMAN

TEL AVIV — Aside from the small number of climate change deniers in the world, leaders from most developed nations recognize that taking stock of their greenhouse gas emissions is the first step in reducing them.

Greenhouse gases are believed to be causing global warming. And while Israel ratified the United Nations' Kyoto Protocol in 2004, it has no limit on how much greenhouse gases it can send out into the atmosphere.

However, Israeli government and industry recently showed its intent to do its part in fighting global climate change, by hosting an international workshop. The workshop's mission was to help Israeli companies set up a voluntary mechanism to measure their greenhouse gases.

The recent two-day event was held in a conference centre at Yad Hashemona, near Jerusalem, and included international guests from the United States, Germany and Mexico. The workshop was "a first of its kind," reports Israel's Foreign Ministry.

There, Israelis mingled with policy-makers and officials from other countries, and discussed the best ways for setting up an efficient and effective greenhouse gas emissions mechanism in Israel.

Only a week earlier, some 15 Israeli cities made a pledge to voluntarily reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent by the year 2020. And a day before the workshop, Israel's environmental protection minister and the German ambassador signed an agreement saying that they would work together on fighting climate change.

Franzjosef Schafhausen, deputy director general of Germany's Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature, Conservation and Nuclear Safety, said at the conference: "Climate change is a threat to global peace and security. I hope that yesterday's signature will create a closer co-operation with the people of Israel."

Among the local attendees included Israel's two carbon offset provider companies, Elysium and EcoTraders. Roni Komar, the president of EcoTraders and formerly the general manager of the Ministry of Environmental Protection, told ISRAEL21c that in order to be competitive, international markets will require companies to account for their greenhouse gases.

His company currently works with major Israeli companies in the areas of solid waste, cement, energy and other heavy industries to help reduce and take stock of their carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions: "EcoTraders is a three-year-old company, and we have 15 projects in Israel, a diverse portfolio that includes power plants," he says.

"We are also specialized in the magnesium sector and are world pioneers on how to deal with SF6 – the most harmful greenhouse gas."

There are six major greenhouse gases; carbon dioxide is the one most people are familiar with. Organizations such as EcoTraders help companies find ways to reduce the gases they create and, in some cases, invest in developing clean technology for future generations.

One of EcoTraders' clients in Israel is Nesher Cement. The company helped Nesher install a vertical grinding mill, a type of grinding technology new to the region, in order to improve energy efficiency in its cement production process.

At the Hiriya Landfill, the old garbage dump of Tel Aviv, EcoTraders are collecting and flaring landfill gas to reduce greenhouse gases and odours and to prevent explosions at the site. "Some of the gas may be sold to local industry as a fuel-replacement, which will cut the use of fossil fuels and contribute to improved air quality in the area," the company says.

Climate change worriers and warriors believe that companies cannot stall any longer: they must take account of their greenhouses gases. This recent workshop in Israel shows that the tiny nation of seven million is playing its part.

Karin Kloosterman is the associate editorial director of ISRAEL21c, a media organization focusing on 21st-century Israel.

ON CHEMO?

www.lifemel.ca

The Dennis Waldman Foundation For Jewish Education

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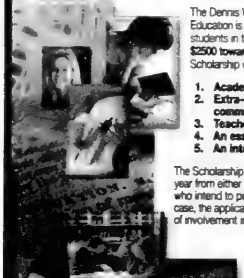

The Dennis Waldman Foundation for Jewish Education is soliciting applications from high school students in their graduating year for an award of $2500 toward university education. The Waldman Scholarship will be awarded on the following criteria:

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Applications due by May 9, 2008. Scholarship will be awarded in June.

Bulgaria accepts blame for death of 11,000 Jews in Shoah

By YOSSI MELMAN

© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — Bulgaria accepts responsibility for the genocide of more than 11,000 Jews in its jurisdiction during World War II, President Georgi Parvanov said during a visit to Israel last week.

The 11,000 Jewish victims were residents of Thrace in Greece and Macedonia in Yugoslavia, areas annexed to Bulgaria in April 1941. Nazi Germany awarded these regions to the Balkan kingdom in gratitude for its co-operation.

Bulgarian police, acting under Nazi orders, arrested the Jews in the annexed territories and deported them to Treblinka in 1943. In parallel, Bulgarian church and political leaders saved the 48,000 Jews living in Bulgaria proper, whom the Nazis had also demanded be deported to death camps.

King Boris III agreed to the Nazi demands, but bowed to pressure from public figures and did not carry them out. The deaths of the Thrace and Macedonian Jews were played down over the years while the rescue of the Bulgarian Jewish population was emphasized.

After the fall of Bulgaria's Communist regime in the 1990s, Bulgarian leaders who visited Israel refused to take responsibility for the deeds. Parvanov, a member of the Socialist (formerly Communist) party, is the first to do so.

"When we express justifiable pride at what we have done to save Jews, we do not forget that at the same time there was an anti-Semitic regime in Bulgaria and we do not shirk our responsibility for the fate of more than 11,000 Jews who were deported from Thrace and Macedonia to death camps," he said at a ceremony at the president's residence in Jerusalem on March 25.

Israeli President Shimon Peres also emphasized the historical dichotomy in Bulgaria during World War II. A monument to King Boris was removed from a Jerusalem Hills forest in 2000 after protests by a group of Macedonian descendants.

Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov places a memorial wreath in the Hall of Remembrance of Yad Vashem. [Israel photo]

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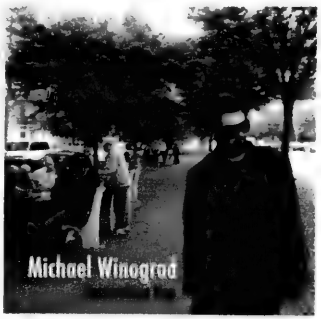
And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Brooklyn clarinettist is a poster child for klezmer continuity

By EZRA GLINTER
Special to the CJN

At first glance, the hip young urbanites and strictly religious chassidic Jews who live side by side in Montreal's Mile End neighbourhood don't seem to have much cultural ground in common. But a new generation of musicians and artists has started to straddle the seemingly unbridgeable cultural gap.

By drawing on traditional Jewish sources as well as an irreverent youthful sensibility, an increasing number of artists are introducing the much-prized Ashkenazi musical heritage to a growing audience of Jews and non-Jews alike.



Michael Winograd, a Brooklyn clarinettist and one of the youngest stars on the New York klezmer scene, is one of the many musicians bringing the newest incarnation of the age-old genre to one of Montreal's most popular and most historic neighbourhoods.

With the support of a hand-picked selection of fellow klezmer players, Winograd has recently released his first solo album, *Bessarabian Hop*, and will be unveiling his efforts to a Montreal audience at a one-night-only show on April 10.

Klezmer – the traditional folk music of eastern European Jewry – is currently flourishing, but it was once thought to be as good as lost.

Amid the rapid assimilation of Jewish communities in the middle decades of the 20th century, klezmer's characteristic trills and wails seemed to be headed straight into cultural oblivion.

But in the late 1970s and '80s, a small group of North American musicians began reviving the endangered genre, and today the movement boasts dozens of bands and several major international festivals.

While the klezmer revivalists are still going strong with their own creative and educational projects, the new generation of musicians whom they once taught has begun to make itself felt.

At only 25 years old, Winograd is widely acknowledged to be one of the most promising up-and-coming players and is a poster child for klezmer continuity.

But despite his bohemian looks and rainbow-coloured clarinet, in many ways he's much like the musicians of an earlier era.

Unlike many of klezmer's current practitioners, who only came to the genre after years of playing jazz or classical music, Winograd claims klezmer as his first and longest-lasting musical fixation.

"There is starting to be a group of people who are playing professionally and who are young enough to have been brought up playing klezmer," he said. "That sort of situation, when people grew up playing folk music and where klezmer was a first musical language, hasn't been for a long time."

Having grown up playing piano and saxophone in addition to clarinet, Winograd's musical education also included the annual winter KlezKamp festival in New York State.

After high school, he decided to pursue klezmer by attending the New England Conservatory of Music in Boston, where he studied with klezmer pioneer Hankus Netsky.

While still at the New England Conservatory, he formed a band called Khevre with several other students and released an album, *At the Crossroads*, or *Ofyn Sheydveg*. Despite the band's youth and relative inexperience, the album was a success and received critical praise from all corners.

Though Winograd contributed compositions and arrangements to *At the Crossroads*, his new album, *Bessarabian Hop*, puts his talents fully on display. As opposed to more hybridized forms of klezmer, *Bessarabian Hop* is fairly traditional in nature.

But Winograd's exploratory arrangements and assured clarinet playing revivify even the older melodies. And though much of klezmer is already happy sounding (its roots are in wedding music, after all), Winograd's compositions are often downright jovial. Even what might have been mournful numbers become thoughtful and even hopeful with his light but sure touch.

And in contrast to the album's traditional feel are song titles such as *Freylekh for Gwen Stefani*, as well as a cover of Gnarls Barkley's *Crazy*, which Winograd refers to as "tasteless jokes."

Though *Bessarabian Hop* bears Winograd's name, the contributions of his band members are also largely responsible for making it stand out from what has become a regular stream of new klezmer releases.

According to Daniel Blacksberg, a Philadelphia-based trombone player who has collaborated with Winograd since university, the success of the album has a lot to do with the relationship of the band members with the music as well as with each other.

"These are all people who are really invested in the music," Blacksberg said. "Everyone in this band is really dedicated to the music and considers it [the band] an important part of their musical life, as opposed to something they do just to make money, and I think it really comes through in the way the band sounds."

Michael Winograd, who has just released his first solo album, will perform next month in one of Montreal's most popular and historic neighbourhoods.

In addition to Winograd's clarinet and Blacksberg's trombone, one of the most noteworthy aspects of the album is the virtuosic mandolin work of New Yorker Joey Weisenberg, who functions as a second lead player.

"I think that Joey and I found some sort of connection a while back. Me and him have a lot of shared musical opinions and so it makes sense. I love how he plays, and I love how he plays my music," Winograd said.

While a life involved in a single musical genre may seem limiting to some, for Winograd, the subtleties of klezmer have given him room to explore.

"I think that as a musician, playing klezmer music, I find its limitations give you the most challenge. It gives me quite a bit of focus, and I think that's a good thing," he said. "I think what it comes down to for a lot of people is just the music. I'll play a song if I like it, and if I don't like it, I'm not going to play it. I think that among musicians, especially among my contemporaries, at this point we're just trying to do things that excite us."

The Michael Winograd Klezmer Ensemble plays Montreal's Kola Note on April 10 at 8:30 p.m. Tickets are $15 or $10 for students from the box office or www.admission.com.

CJN Profile

28-year-old is tops in exciting, little-known profession

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Can you imagine how much money the world famous Nike brand is worth? Or the cash value of the patent for revolutionary products like the telephone or television?

While such figures are likely inconceivable to you, there is a group of professionals who devote their days to figuring out these sorts of things.

They are called Chartered Business Valuators (CBV's) and an up-and-coming member of this exciting, though little known area of the finance and business world, is Moshe Deutsch.

The 28-year-old Toronto resident was recently recognized for achieving the third highest score in the Canadian Institute of Chartered Business Valuators (CICBV) 2007 Membership Entrance Examination (MEE).

"I was really hoping to pass," says Deutsch, who is also a chartered accountant and works at the firm Ernst & Young LLP.

"So receiving the third highest mark was a nice bonus."

Deutsch has a knack for garnering extremely high results in his field.

To that end, in four of the six courses he took as part of earning his CBV designation, Deutsch earned the top mark in the class.

"I find what I do very interesting," he relates.

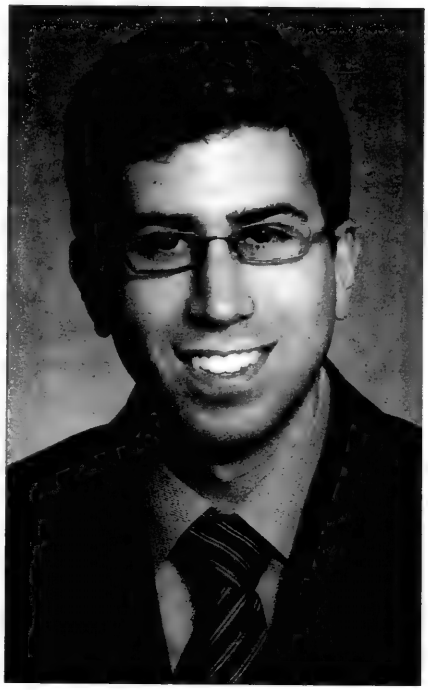
"Every project is very different and involves something new so you have to be creative in terms of how you approach each situation."

He notes that on one day, he may be working on valuing a company that is worth billions of dollars, and the next day he will be immersed in valuing a brand as part of a legal dispute.

In a nutshell, what CBV's do is quantify the worth of all, or part of a business or its securities. This includes determining the value of hard or tangible assets, like office equipment, as well as intangible assets, such as intellectual property.

After they have crunched all the numbers, the CBV then writes a report that explains it all.

"What's really important about our profession is that we work independently and objectively, so if there is a dispute, the company has the assurance that our report is done properly," Deutsch says.



Moshe Deutsch

The value of this work is significant and applicable to many situations.

Everything from issues involving the sale or purchase of a business, to marital disputes, insurance losses, personal injury claims and breach of contract cases, can all hinge in some way on the report the CBV develops.

Originally from Montréal, Deutsch was raised in an Orthodox Jewish family and received private Jewish education before attending McGill University.

His mother and father, a chartered accountant and elementary school teacher respectively, were supportive of his accounting aspirations all the way through.

"My parents have always encouraged me in all that I have done and I think they would have encouraged me in any field, be it accounting or something else," he says.

"I was influenced in some ways by the fact that my father and sister are both CA's, but I chose to do this because I like the job, it really interests me and I am happy and proud to be in this profession."

Deutsch did an internship at Ernst & Young in 2000, and after earning his CA designation in 2003, he moved to Toronto and continued at the same firm.

He is currently a manager of valuation & business modeling.

"I came to Toronto for the opportunities, but also because my wife Lisa was coming here to do her residency," Deutsch says.

Today Deutsch is excelling at Ernst & Young and his wife is also enjoying a great deal of success working as a doctor at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

As for the future, things are definitely looking bright and promising for this young man.

"Going forward, I see myself in valuations because I am very happy in it," Deutsch says.

"I guess I'll just have to see where all of this goes."

If a fellow CBV put a value on this rising star's future, surely it would be full of potential prosperity.

Novelist sought to understand an 'unfathomable' event

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Melanie Little, a Catholic writer born in Timmins, Ont., has written a young adults novel about fanaticism and racial discrimination set during the Inquisition in 15th century Spain.

The Apprentice's Masterpiece, published recently by Annick Press, turns on two teenaged boys, a Jewish convert to Christianity and a Muslim, caught up in a vortex of bigotry.

Little, who in part dedicates it to "victims of intolerance everywhere," was drawn to the topic precisely because it was so far removed from her own milieu. "One of the things that drives me as a writer is the quest to understand and perhaps shed some light on things that seem initially unfathomable to me," she said in an interview from her home in Calgary.

Having read about the Golden Age in Spain, the pre-Inquisition period when Jews flourished under Muslim rule, Little wondered how Spain could turn so murderously intolerant.

"The nightmarish shift from a seemingly pluralistic, rational-minded society into a veritable machine of discrimination, plunder and even genocide is something we have continued to witness through the centuries, and tragically, continue to see."

In creating the main characters, the converso Ramon and the Muslim Amir, Little thought she could gain a measure of insight into the minds of ordinary people during extraordinary times.

She knew, from the start, that the richness of Spanish culture had to be at the heart of her novel. "Medieval Spain percolated with art, music, philosophy, poetry and science, all influenced and enhanced by the confluence of Jewish, Muslim and Christian societies," she explained.

Continued on page 65

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
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Books & Authors

Poyln recreates, in part, the world of pre-war Polish Jewry

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Yehiel Yeshaia Trunk (1887-1961), born in the village of Osmolsk and raised in Lodz, the centre of Poland's textile industry, was a writer of commanding repute in Poland before the Holocaust.

A successful businessman by day, Trunk – a member of the Bund, the largest Jewish social democratic party in Poland – was at heart a literary person. He published criticism and wrote novels and stories.

In the wake of Germany's invasion of Poland, he and his wife fled to Vilna, which was then occupied by the Red Army. He reached New York City in 1941 via Siberia and Japan, arriving as a penniless immigrant.

Within days of his arrival, he started writing his memoir, *Poyln: My Life within Jewish Life in Poland, Sketches and Images*, in Yiddish. Seven volumes were published between 1944 and 1953.

A portrayal of Polish Jewry on the cusp of the Holocaust, *Poyln* has now been translated into English thanks to the Toronto chapter of the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada and the Konstanty Reynert Chair of Polish History at the University of Toronto.

The first volume in what promises to be a series has been translated by Anna Clarke, edited by Piotr Wrobel and Robert M. Shapiro and published by the University of Toronto Press.

Wrobel, the holder of the Konstanty Reynert chair, calls *Poyln* "a family chronicle, an autobiography, a nostalgic epic portrait of Polish Jewry."

Indeed, *Poyln* brims with a rich cast of characters ranging from wealthy timber merchants and landowners to Orthodox rabbis and talmudists. Many are relatives from several branches of Trunk's family. Not surprisingly, much of *Poyln* is set in Osmolsk, which is near Warsaw, the capital.

In essence, *Poyln* consists of skilful portraitures of people he knew or knew of, and recreates a vanished era in European Jewish history.

The first of Trunk's 23 vivid sketches concerns his grandfather, Borukh, a dairy farmer who fell in with Chassidic Jews. Despite his wealth, he lived modestly in a one-room house owned by a Jewish peasant. His unassuming wife, Khaye, raised chicken and geese.

Trunk's description of Borukh could well have appeared in a novel by Isaac Bashevis Singer. "Grandfather was in charge of the fertile fields of the Osmolsk estate," he writes in a typical passage. "His wheat was good and plentiful, and he raised sugar beets for the sugar factory in Sanik. During the snow and cold of the long winter months, Grandfather set out by sleigh into his woods wrapped in a big fearsome bearskin and was away for whole weeks."

In another sketch, Trunk dwells on Simkhe Gayge, a shrewd Jewish farmer who was friendly with Borukh. Trunk, in quick brushstrokes, describes him: "He was a sturdy little man with a coarse voice and a hard little grey beard ... He had the upturned nose of a Gentile and burning reddish eyes. His hands were those of a hard-working man, hairy and with earth under the nails... He smelt of barn dung..."

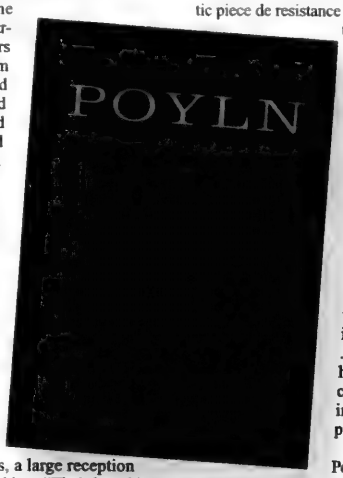
Borukh's eldest brother, Uncle Avromke, is also grist for Trunk's mill: "He was a small, thin man with a moulting little beard, with gaps on his chin, and with a long, red nose always covered by bluish, dried blotches."

Trunk's powers of observation transcend individuals. In a reference to the "wonderful romantic splendour of the landscape" around his birthplace, he writes, "The fields are broken up into a kaleidoscope of varied colours. The golden ripe wheat, the yellow *lubin*, the white flowers of barley, the green clover, and the meadows – all this plays together in an artistic perspective and in an idyllic illumination."

His sketch of an outdoor market in Osmolin is atmospheric: "Rich peasants in their bright coats came from surrounding villages. The women, healthy and tall, flesh and milk, wore red and green wool dresses, braided ribbons on their arms and in their hair, and were wrapped in the wonderful Lowicz shawls, which reflected the hues of the meadows and fields."

Trunk is particularly adept at evoking the two classes of Jewish beggars with whom he was familiar as a youth.

Town beggars, living among the Jewish underworld in back alleys, surfaced on Fridays. Country wanderers lived like Gypsies and trudged from one village to the next in dilapidated wagons harnessed to sick, crippled and half-blind horses. "They carried sacks and dark earthenware pots and begged for milk and bread," he notes.



Returning to Borukh yet again, Trunk recalls that he spared no expense for his daughter's wedding.

"He engaged the services of the most famous wedding jesters in Poland, among them the lion of jesters, Noah Nashelsker, to entertain the honoured guests. He also hired two klezmer bands."

Food was an important consideration, too. Chefs and women cooks were hired, and whole flocks of geese, turkeys and hens, as well as carp and pike, were readied for the expected feast.

At the wedding, Trunk observes, a large reception room was packed with rabbis and rebbes. "Their long black silken coats rustled and the air was filled with the strong, sharp smell of fur hats. The buzz of Hebrew words was heard as rabbis conversed with one another. The room was smoky from cigars and pipes. The candles flickered.

"At the head of the table, the young groom was already seated, pale from fasting. He wore a big black fur hat and a brand-new long silk coat. The several common Jews present wavered uncertainly among the rustlings of the rabbis."

As the ceremony unfolds, guests converge on the wine racks, and Trunk, in a flight of fancy that may be the stylistic piece de resistance of *Poyln*, writes, "People set to opening the old, mud-caked bottles of wine. The wonderful aromas and bouquet of the old Hungarian wine spread thickly over the tables and blended with the smell of stearin candles, pipes and cigars. The wine was poured out into sparkling glasses, and it shone golden and heavy through polished glass, like the glow of a dim and dark sunset."

And in a rustic touch, he adds, "The smells of the fruit-laden trees wafted in through the open windows from the orchard. A cool wind blew from the fields of grain. One could hear the lowing of ... cows and also the bleating of sheep. The heavens burnt like fire ... Colourful clouds rested on the horizon like golden exotic ships. Frogs croaked in the little pond. The twittering of birds was heard. People were preparing for the wedding ceremony."

Trunk's evocative sketches of pre-war Poland throb with emotion and are redolent of a bygone epoch, destroyed by the Nazis.

Yet since they deal almost exclusively with rural Poland and deeply observant Jews, leaving out city Jews, working-class Jews, secular Jews and Jews engaged in the arts and politics, they are limited in scope.

One hopes that Trunk will deal with these classes of Jews in future volumes.

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Moroccan films portray Arab-Jewish relations and aliyah

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Morocco's venerable Jewish community, which has been greatly depleted by successive waves of emigration since the 1960s, has caught the attention of Moroccan filmmakers of late.

Laila Marrakchi's *Marock*, a romantic drama about a love affair between a Jew and a Muslim, appeared at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2005.

And now, at the 11th annual CineFranco festival, which ends its run at the Royal theatre on April 6, two more Moroccan movie directors have addressed this theme.

Mohammed Ismail's *Goodbye Mothers* (*Adieu Meres*) and Hassan Benjelloun's *Where Are You Going Moshe?* (*Ou vas-tu Moshe?*) both take place in the early 1960s and touch on two interlocking topics: Arab-Jewish relations and the flight of Jews from Morocco.

Goodbye Mothers, which is scheduled to be screened on April 3 at 8:30 p.m., is set in 1960, four years after Morocco attained independence.

The main characters in this competently made film are a Jew and an Arab, Henry and Brahim, business partners in a sawmill, and Mehdi and Ellane, star-struck lovers whose liaison is frowned upon by by their respective Muslim and Jewish parents.

Henry, having been convinced that his place is in Israel and that his children will have a better future there, breaks the news to his partner in a heartfelt exchange. "The Jews are all scared," Henry says in an implicit reference to the tide of Arab nationalism that has swept across Morocco.

Brahim is disappointed by Henry's decision, being convinced that things will settle down. In a final plea, he says, "Nothing in the world can affect our brotherhood."

Brahim's lament is naive. As the film suggests, the situation for Jews is growing worse. In a revealing scene symptomatic of the times, a young Arab man rudely brushes past a group of Jews outside a Casablanca synagogue, injuring a Jewish girl.

Meanwhile, Ellane's somewhat hysterical mother consults a rabbi after learning that her daughter is dating an Arab, and Mehdi and Ellane vow to be true to each other, no matter what may occur.

By chance, Mehdi's wealthy father is in the midst of closing a lucrative deal with a Jewish businessman who must unload his real estate holdings at a considerable loss because he, too, has decided to settle in Israel.

A Jewish family marks the Sabbath in *Goodbye Mothers*.

Mehdi's father is portrayed as a shrewd entrepreneur who is not above making snide anti-Semitic comments when the occasion suits him.

The only other unsympathetic character in *Goodbye Mothers*, which unfolds in French and Arabic, is the emissary from Israel, who berates Ellane for having an Arab boyfriend.

In line with one of its themes, the film dwells on the question of aliyah, which Morocco declared illegal shortly after the advent of independence.

A rabbi introduces the emissary and he proceeds to talk about the need for aliyah. Around a roaring campfire, teens bound for Israel sing uplifting songs. And as the camera pans on a number of Jews waiting to board a ship heading to Israel, the musical score from the movie *Exodus* fills the air.

Goodbye Mothers is suffused with the tragedy of the Egoz, a ship that sunk off the coast of Morocco on Jan. 10, 1961 with scores of new immigrants aboard.

Where Are You Going Moshe?, which was shown last week and also unfolds in French and Arabic, has comedic and political overtones.

In the town of Bejjad in 1963, the new Muslim owner of a bar tries to convince local Jews to remain in Morocco. He has ulterior motives, since only Jews and Christians are permitted to drink alcoholic beverages at bars.

The bartender goes to immense lengths to keep Jews from leaving, such as claiming that Israeli beer has no suds. It's to no avail. The Jewish inhabitants of Bejjad, including a watchmaker-cum-musician who really feels at home in Morocco, are determined to make aliyah.

Benjelloun, who is not as objective as Ismail in telling a story, cannot resist throwing brickbats into the works.

The olim who arrive in Haifa complain that Israelis do not eat kosher food and that they prefer Ashkenazi to Sephardi Jews as immigrants. "We want to go back home, Morocco is our home," some chant in a makeshift demonstration.

And in a jarring dig that clouds his mostly apolitical film, Benjelloun descends into the realm of propaganda by saying that the Israeli leaders who led Israel into the 2006 war in Lebanon were the descendants of the 1960s Moroccan wave of immigration. Presumably, this polemical remark is a reference to Israel's then defence minister, Amir Peretz, who was born in Morocco.

It's a cheap shot that demeans *Where Are You Going Moshe?*

Mehdi and Ellane are star-struck lovers whose liaison is frowned upon by their parents in *Goodbye Mothers* which screens on April 3.

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Renowned pianist looks forward to Toronto concert

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Virtuoso pianist Orli Shaham is coming to Toronto to perform with the AMICI Chamber Music Ensemble during its final concert for the 2008 season.

She'll be playing with the ensemble, cellist David Hetherington, clarinetist Joaquin Valdepeñas – both founding members of AMICI – violinist Jonathan Crow and violist Teng Li, on April 6 at Glenn Gould Studio.

The program includes three selections on the theme of Hungarian folk music: Béla Bartók's *Contrasts for violin, clarinet and piano;* Zoltan Kodaly's *Duo for violin and cello* and Erno von Dohnányi's *Quintet in C minor, op. 1 for piano and strings.*

Though Shaham may be a master pianist, coveted by orchestras across the globe these days, she's much in demand at her home in New York, where the 32-year-old is taking care of her newborn fraternal twin boys, Nathan and Alex.

"I'm starting to despair about sleep," she said, laughing. "But they're so wonderful."

Her husband, David Robertson, is the director of the St. Louis Philharmonic Orchestra. The couple maintain a residence in that city as well.

Speaking to *The CJN* from New York last month, Shaham anticipated a top-notch performance with AMICI.

"I know Joaquin Valdepeñas for many years… we've played together many times. I'm really excited to be making music with these folks. I just know the quality is gonna be unbelievably high," Shaham said.

She added that she has fond memories of Toronto, her last two visits being to record CDs at the Glenn Gould Studio.

"It's going to be interesting coming there now not to record," she quipped.

Musicality runs in her family. Shaham's older brother, Gil, is a celebrated virtuoso violinist.

The siblings have played and recorded together over the years, and Shaham considers herself lucky to have her older brother to kick around whenever the two get together for some music-making.

Pianist Orli Shaham performs with the AMICI Chamber Music Ensemble at Glenn Gould Studio on April 6.

"It's the greatest communication. [We have] a shared cultural upbringing, and we have shared musical sensibilities because of that. On that level, the music-making is just so natural," Shaham said.

"On a personal level, usually when you're playing chamber music, you have to be very polite and gently ask [co-performers] if they wouldn't mind playing faster or something. But if it's your brother you just say, 'Hey Gil. Speed up.'"

The Israeli-born Shaham moved to the United States with her family at the age of seven in 1982.

Her talents were recognized early on. She received her first scholarship for musical study from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation at the age of five.

She studied at the Rubin Academy of Music in Jerusalem and later at the prestigious Juilliard School in New York.

She also taught music literature at Columbia University.

"In Israel, I was very lucky that the climate and musical community was so supportive of musical studies for children," she reminisced. "I had performing opportunities right away at age five. I was playing on the radio, had student concerts in Israel. And after we moved to the U.S., that continued. I seemed to always have one more concert."

> *'I had performing opportunities right away at age five'*

From 2005 to 2006, Shaham hosted a radio show she created. *Dial-a-musician*, on the Classical Public Radio Network in the United States, was carried by 40 radio stations.

The premise was that Shaham would take listeners' questions about the classical music world and then call upon her musician-friends to answer them.

"It was an incredible experience," she said. "Even I learned. Because every instrument has its own field of expertise."

Dial-a-musician is no longer airing on radio, but Shaham offers archived podcasts of the show on her website, www.orlishaham.com. Approximately 60 shows were done in all.

Shaham said she's excited about Sunday's performance as it gives her a chance to change things up from her normal concert routine.

"I love having something like the AMICI [performance] in the middle of my season," she admitted. "Although I love playing chamber music, I don't usually get to play much of it during the season. Most of it tends to fall during the summer festival [season]."

She said the AMICI concert allows her to interrupt her schedule of solo recitals and orchestral concerts and gives her "a moment to make music in that kind of very collegial setting."

For more information, visit www.amiciensemble.com

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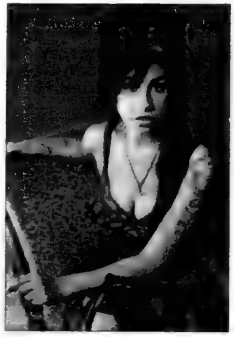
Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

NEW BIO OF AMY WINEHOUSE EXPLORES HIGHS AND LOWS OF HER LIFE & CAREER

Omnibus Press, a British publisher of rock and pop books, has released a biography of troubled retro soul diva **Amy Winehouse**, recent winner of five Grammy Awards. *Amy Amy Amy: The Amy Winehouse Story* (146 pages, $17.95) delves into Winehouse's life and career, from her early bouts with depression to her signing with Island Records at age 18 and subsequent meteoric rise to stardom.



Amy Winehouse

Winehouse made an auspicious debut in 2003 with the award-winning album *Frank* and followed it up last year with the massively successful CD *Back to Black*. But as *Amy Amy Amy* notes, the singer-songwriter's open use of alcohol and drugs, and well-publicized problems with anorexia and bulimia, threaten to obscure her amazing talent.

The book does not appear to be an authorized biography, since it features material from many of Winehouse's associates, but apparently no interview with its subject. Let's hope the spectacularly gifted Winehouse will eventually do as well at rehab as she has already done in the recording studio.

* * *

Stars on Spadina: Toronto Star theatre critic **Richard Ouzounian** hosts *Stars on Spadina*, a musical gala celebrating the heart and soul of the MNjcc, featuring **Daniel Barnes**, **Andrew Craig**, **Ron Davis**, **Mary Lou Fallis**, **Jacques Israelievitch**, **Amanda Martinez**, **Adrianne Pieczonka**, **Jackie Richardson**, **Theresa Tova**, **Bora Kim**, **Laura Tucker**, and **Bruce Dow**.

$180 per ticket includes dessert reception; proceeds to support arts and cultural programming at the Miles Nadal JCC. Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

* * *

Names in the News: The *Jewish Chronicle* of London, England, reported recently that **Ron Prosor**, Israel's ambassador to Britain, met with **Jerry Goldman**, director of the Beatles Museum, as well as with **Julia Baird**, John Lennon's sister, to apologize for the "misunderstanding" that led to the cancellation of the group's appearance in Israel in 1965. Prosor also invited surviving Beatles **Paul McCartney** and **Ringo Starr** to join in Israel's 60th anniversary celebrations.

* * *

Girl's Coming of Age Story: Sprockets Toronto International Film Festival for Children is screening *Max Minsky and Me* (Germany, 2007), a humorous and heart-warming coming-of-age story of 13-year-old Nelly Sue as she navigates boys, basketball and her bat mitzvah. The film, which has some sexual content, is based on the award-winning novel by **Holly-Jane Rahlen**. Both she and director Anna Justice will be in attendance. April 12, 1:50 p.m., at Canada Square and again on April 13, 1:15 p.m., also at Canada Square. http://sprockets.ca

* * *

Literary Notes

• *The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky* by **Karen X. Tulchinsky** is one of three books shortlisted for the Vancouver Public Library's One Book, One Vancouver 2008. The winning title will be chosen on Canada Book Day, April 23.

• Canaan Tours Of Jewish History #1 – *In The Beginning*, by **Ian D. Bier** and **James DuPrie**, is the first in a series of chapter books designed to teach Jewish history to school children in a fun way. The text combines fantasy with traditional Jewish interpretations of biblical stories and themes.

American cantor **Michael Smolash** called the series "a blessing for parents" and "a gift for Jewish educators." The book is published by Purple Monkey Books of New Hampshire, whose publisher, Paula Diamond, is a native Montrealer. www.purplemonkeybooks.com

• Literary Voices presents **Charles Halpern**, public interest lawyer and social entrepreneur, reading from his new book, *Making Waves and Riding the Currents: Activism and the Practice of Wisdom*. Free. Miles Nadal JCC, Tuesday April 8, 7:30 p.m. harrietw@ mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 133.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **The Toronto Symphony Orchestra** welcomes **Maestro Benjamin Zander**, a prominent **Mahler** interpreter and specialist, who will conduct Mahler's *Symphony No. 5* and deliver a pre-concert talk to the audience. Roy Thomson Hall, April 3 and 5. 416-593-4828, www.tso.ca

• Ventriloquist-storyteller **Yehudit (Judy) Shier Weisberg** tells Jewish stories together with her "Aunt Hannah" as part of the 30th Annual Festival of Storytelling. Free. Harbourfront Centre, Brigantine Room. Sunday April 6, 4:15 to 5:15 p.m.

• Beginning Feb. 20, entertainer **Bette Midler** performed a run of 19 sold-out shows at the Colosseum in Caesar's Palace, Las Vegas, where she is scheduled to perform a further block of shows in June and July. Her show is titled "The Showgirl Must Go On;" *Time Magazine* called it "a fresh, sinfully satisfying distillation of her career." Tickets range from $95 to $250 and are available at www.ticketmaster.com.

• The topic is "Fantasy and Reality: The 1990s" at the next film talk with **Shlomo Schwartzberg**. Films under discussion include *Life is Beautiful* and *Schindler's List*. $9 admission includes bagels, coffee and film clips. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday April 6, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• **Congregation Darchei Noam's** commitment to the principles of tikkun olam and *bal tashchit* (do not waste) is expressed in the design of its environmentally friendly new home. Join members of the congregation's building design, construction and environment committees, along with Les Klein of Quadrangle Architects, for a presentation on the synagogue community and environmental responsibility. 864 Sheppard Ave. W. Sunday, April 13, 7 p.m. www.darcheinoam.on.ca

• A reader has informed us that several Montreal June dates have been added to Leonard Cohen's upcoming concert itinerary. A third Toronto concert has also been added.

CHAT students kick up their heels in stage version of *Footloose*

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Three students from the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto are honing their acting skills in the Randolph Young Company's production of *Footloose*, a musical based on the 1984 movie of the same name.

Grade 11 students Michael Grundland and Noam Tomaschoff, from TanenbaumCHAT's south campus, and Brian Lee, from the north campus, have been travelling by bus to the Bathurst Street Theatre, south of Bloor Street, three times a week for the past 10 weeks to practise for the production, which runs until April 13.

The Randolph Young Company, Toronto's only performance-based program for young people ages eight to 19, is part of the Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts, a college-level program for students 18 and up.

Lawrence Axsmith, director of *Footloose* and artistic director of the company, said the production – students must audition for a spot – is packed with dance numbers and favourite songs from the original film, as well as some new tunes by the original film's songwriting team of Tom Snow and Dean Pritchford.

"More than a nostalgia piece, *Footloose* touches on the theme of the importance of finding positive avenues for self-expression. [The performers] were not born yet when the film was released, but that doesn't stop them from relating to the theme. Ren [a city boy who moves to a rural town where dancing is banned] bucks authority, but he does it the right way. He stands up for what he believes in, and goes through the proper channels to do so."

Grundland, who plays Ren, had no acting experience except for camp plays before he auditioned for last year's performance of the Randolph company's *High School Musical*.

> *Ren bucks authority, but he does it the right way*

"That was the catalyst. I probably won't be a professional actor, but this is a serious hobby," he said.

"It's a great opportunity to expand my horizons. I'm meeting people and learning things I never [otherwise] would."

Tomaschoff, who is in a math class with Grundland, said the two spend their one-hour bus ride to the theatre practising lines.

Playing Cowboy Bob, Tomaschoff has been in school musicals and participated in the Royal Conservatory's summer theatre program. "Acting is my ultimate passion. I would be happy living on the street in a box if I got to perform."

Lee, who plays Reverend Shaw Moore, has been on stage since he was seven and a student at Leo Baeck Day School.

"[This performance] is a big commitment, but it prepares us for the world of theatre. There is a definite fun and social aspect to it, but [ultimately] we're all here to work," he said.

Tickets, which cost $20, are available at Ticketmaster locations, at www.ticketmaster.ca, or by calling 416-872-1111.

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James Chatto, Toronto Life

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Author fascinated by phenomenon of conversos

Continued from page 60

Little, therefore, portrayed Ramon as an apprentice scribe and charted Amir's struggle with poetry to explore his attempts to regain his voice in a hostile world.

She was also fascinated with the phenomenon of forced conversion, a feature of the Inquisition.

"So many people, Jews and Muslims alike, were compelled to embrace a religion, Catholicism, that was foreign or even abhorrent to them. What must have that been like for an ordinary person? And most of all, what was it like for the children who were raised in one faith but who found out later in life, as many did, that their lives concealed hidden layers, hidden origins?"

Little researched *The Apprentice's Masterpiece* in Spain, spending time in Toledo, Cordoba and Granada. She was particularly impressed with Toledo's Sephardic Museum, which she considers "an astonishingly moving place."

Prior to her trip, she boned up on her Spanish. "My Spanish is pretty rudimentary, but I studied hard before I went so that I'd be able to absorb as much as I could," she said.

Having written the book for readers 12 and older, she felt she had a tremendous responsibility to be historically accurate and sensitive. "I was keenly aware that many young readers would be encountering these issues and events for the first time."

Melanie Little

Melanie Little always interested in outsiders

She composed it in free verse, a form outside her comfort zone, in recognition of the fact that she was subjecting her protagonists to harrowing experiences. "And I was keen on the freedom a collection of poems gave me to jump around, narratively speaking."

Little had no difficulty in segueing from her debut book, *Confidence*, a collection of short stories, to *The Apprentice's Masterpiece*.

As she put it, "I've always been interested in outsiders, in characters who tread rather uneasily on the shaky ground of their lives. So I think there's a lot of commonality, especially in terms of characterization, between *Confidence* and this book."

Little, a McGill University graduate born in 1969, published her first short story in 1997 after leaving an English PhD program at the University of Toronto to pursue an MFA degree in creative writing at the University of British Columbia.

"I've been brazenly calling myself a writer ever since," joked Little, whom some critics have compared to Alice Munro.

Little, whose short stories have appeared in a succession of literary journals, is not the sole writer in her family. Her father Doug, a former reporter and columnist at the *Timmins Daily Press*, published a memoir, *Losing Mariposa*, while her mother Roberta Major,was "a stupendously good" letter writer. Little's husband, Peter Norman, is a writer as well.

A writer-in-residence at the University of Calgary in 2005-06, Little currently works as an editor and publisher at Freehand Books in Calgary. Before, as a struggling writer, she held down jobs as a bartender, dance instructor, stage manager and concierge.

At present, she is working on a novel for adults. The theme will surprise no one familiar with Little. As she said, "It's about an outsider."

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Health & Lifestyles

Mental health can be assessed online

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Depression is a "vicious, life-robbing condition," asserts Karen Liberman, executive director of the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario (MDAO).

For her, this is not just an academic conclusion. Liberman has overcome a 15-year battle with the illness, not only with the help of medication and talk therapy but also through such techniques as meditation, walking and yoga.

Besides depression, conditions included under the term "mood disorders" are anxiety disorder, which includes post-traumatic stress disorder; panic disorder; obsessive-compulsive disorder; bipolar disorder, a condition that is often called manic depression and is characterized by extreme mood swings; and seasonal affective disorder (SAD).

SAD, Liberman explains, is a type of clinical depression that follows a seasonal pattern, usually starting around November and ending in early March.

Contrary to what many think, SAD is not related to the weather. Rather, she says, it is related to the number of daylight hours and the amount of light the body gets.

"Waking up in the dark and then going to sleep in the dark can plunge people into depression." By February, Liberman says, when it gets dark later and light earlier, the symptoms start to alleviate. By March, people are feeling better.

It used to be considered just a form of depression, she says, but there are definite differences. In depression, for instance, there are changes – either an increase or decrease – in appetite, while those with SAD have an intense desire for carbohydrates, leading to weight gain; those with SAD have sleep disturbances as opposed to a craving for sleep; and, especially with SAD, "there's a real lack of energy – like a lead weight on the body," Liberman says.

She says a light box has been found to help about 70 per cent of those with mild cases of SAD. For more severe cases, medication might be needed.

It is important, Liberman says, to realize that mood disorders are not a sign of weakness or a flawed character. They cannot be handled by exhortations to "just pull your socks up and get over it." They should be looked at as illnesses that should be treated appropriately, she says.

Mood disorders are not just minor inconveniences, either. Depression, for instance, according to an MDAO fact sheet, "accounts for 30 per cent of all disability recorded at three of Canada's best-known companies," and strikes 10 to 15 per cent of men and 15 to 25 per cent of women.

For every 100 people with a mood disorder, only 25 seek treatment, and only six of those are adequately treated.

Although MDAO does not prescribe medication or give medical advice, it offers support groups, educational programs, information and a toll-free support line.

There is even a group called Drumming to Our Own Beat, in which participants let go of their emotional roadblocks by energetically banging on African drums.

MDAO's services are not only for those suffering from mood disorders, Liberman says. Their families have to first understand what is going on, deal with their own frustration and aggravation, and learn how to help constructively.

The organization has started a mental health checkup on the Internet at CheckUpfromtheNeckUp.ca. It is a user friendly and confidential means of assessing your mental health.

The checkup questionnaire asks for the frequency and severity of various symptoms (such as panic episodes or feelings of guilt or worthlessness) and then suggests whether your answers indicate that you should look for help.

"After all," Liberman says, "we check our eyes, our blood pressure and so on, so why not the brain, too?"

The mental health checkup has the support of the College of Family Physicians and the Ontario Psychological Association, which helped design the questionnaire on the site, as well as doctors active in the field, including Dr. Anthony Levitt, head of psychiatry at Sunnybrook Hospital.

The toll-free number for MDAO is 1-888-486-8236; its website address is www.mooddisorders.on.ca.

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Katz named university coach of the year

By ELI SHUPAK
Special to The CJN

After losing four starting players, this season shaped up as a rebuilding year for the University of Toronto men's basketball team. However, the Blues improved so much over the course of the campaign that Mike Katz was recently recognized as the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS) Coach of the Year.

The fourth-year bench boss led the team – his alma mater – to a 17-5 regular-season record, good for second place in the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) East, behind Carleton, which finished the season undefeated at 22-0. Toronto was ranked as high as sixth in the country in February, its highest level in the polls since 1997.

Mike Katz

The Blues clinched an opening-round playoff bye, but saw their best season in over a decade end at home in a 63-60 sudden-death semifinal loss to the University of Ottawa.

"From my standpoint, I don't think we exceeded expectations," said Katz, who became only the second U of T coach to win the Stuart W. Aberdeen trophy. "I have realistic goals. By and large, I think we made them. In this business, you've got to look at the overall picture, so I think I was pretty pleased."

A three-time Canadian college coach of the year, Katz, 59 this month, credits this season's success as well as the award to his four assistants, one of whom is his son, Ben. The younger Katz was a first-team conference all-star playing for his dad the previous season.

Katz has a long list of achievements on his coaching resume, including leading Canada to a silver medal finish at the 1997 World University Games in Italy and spending a good part of 10 years with the national team, culminating with his role as assistant coach under Jay Triano at the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

Earlier in his career, he relished the opportunity of coaching Canada at the Maccabiah Games. He went to the 1993 competition as an assistant, after having played in the 1977 and 1981 Games. However, Katz has not had anything to do with Maccabi Canada since. He is disappointed he wasn't selected to coach the team at the 2005 Games..

"Bernie Offstein was heavily involved in Maccabi and the year before he died [January 2004], he told me I was going to be Maccabi coach," recalled Katz. "I said 'Fine, I'll do it.'

"He gave his life to Maccabi and as soon as he's gone, the guy he groomed [Allen Gerskup] turned around and said, 'Mike, I have no choice, I can't give it to you.' I didn't appreciate that. I let him know that."

Gerskup, now Maccabi Canada president, said it wasn't Offstein's place to offer Katz the position because it wasn't his decision.

"Bernie was on the executive. He wasn't on the [National Action] Committee," said Gerskup. "He had no input whatsoever in that."

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Dear boy: W08FXCJN

Soccer team could be Israel's best ever

By MOSHE BOKER
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Dror Kashtan is in a bind. His team goes into a five-month break with the sweet taste of victory and with the sense that this time, any result besides qualifying for the 2010 World Cup in South Africa will be considered a personal failure.

Since the Euro 2008 qualifying campaign came to an end, team manager Kashtan has chalked up two impressive achievements: a win over Romania and last week's 1-0 win over Chile. It is true they have been friendlies, but the 25,000 fans who showed up at National Stadium in Ramat Gan answered Kashtan's call to come and support the national team. These fans will not forgive him if he does not get Israel into the World Cup.

Kashtan has one of Israel's most talented national teams ever. We love to remember the golden generation of Haim Revivo, Eyal Berkovic, Avi Nimni and Tal Banin, but the current squad is perhaps even better.

It has great talent, is young and is unlike the team of Revivo and Berkovic which, despite its great talent, kept itself occupied with ego contests and personal entanglements. They were players who were satiated, not hungry.

Here, Kashtan has a squad with one dominant leader – Yossi Benayoun, who scored the goal against Chile in the 30th minute – a tight team and many hungry players. Kashtan has another advantage in the fact that a significant percentage of his squad plays in Europe. It is no longer possible to talk about the gap between Israel and the continent when you look at the national team and see players from Liverpool, Chelsea, Barcelona and Bolton – all big clubs.

Against Chile this national team played attractive, efficient soccer. We also saw it is capable of moving the ball quickly. There is no question this team has the best two rear midfielders ever in Gal Alberman and Tamir Cohen, and the entire forward unit – Elyaniv Barda, Barak Yitzhaki, Yossi Benayoun and Omer Golan – plays in Europe.

The national team proved it has the talent and is hungry. Now Kashtan needs to prove he is capable, with the team he has built, of making the proper decisions in the upcoming campaign.

Israel hockey launches new Web site

The Israel Ice Hockey Federation has launched a new website at www.israelicehockey.com.

The interactive website will feature information on Israel's national teams, grassroots programs, camps, clinics and the World Jewish Hockey Championships. It also features a multimedia section with videos, photos, slideshows and other content.

Israel Hockey is partnering on the project with Esportdeskpro.com, a web services company that caters to sports organization. They are the web developer and host as well as longtime supporters of the Israel Ice Hockey Federation.

Israel's 'special' friend

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

New Views

For more than 40 years, Israel and Germany have maintained what has come to be called a "special relationship."

What's so special about it?

To be sure, the two countries have had significant economic ties since the early 1950s. They started with the meeting of David Ben-Gurion and the then-chancellor of West Germany, Konrad Adenauer, in 1950, which led to West Germany's agreeing to make massive reparations payments to Israel in 1952. Ever since, Israel and Germany have maintained a strong economic relationship – Germany is now Israel's second-most important trading partner, behind only the United States.

When people refer to the "special relationship" of the two countries, though, I doubt they're speaking about economic affiliation. More likely, they mean the largely symbolic, diplomatic engagements between the two countries that seem to occur on a regular basis. Here's a sampling of some of the more recent political niceties: in 1999, then-Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak was the first foreign dignitary received by the German government at its new home in Berlin (after having moved from Bonn); to mark 40 years of official diplomatic relations, then-Israeli president Moshe Katsav and German president Horst Kohler exchanged state visits in 2005; and most recently, the two countries held a joint cabinet session in Israel last month.

During that trip, German Chancellor Angela Merkel addressed the Knesset in German. "The mass murder of six million Jews, carried out in the name of Germany, has brought indescribable suffering to the Jewish people," she said, and "the Shoah fills us Germans with shame. I bow to the victims. I bow to all those who helped the survivors." She also addressed the Iranian threat – "Iran must convince the world it does not want the nuclear bomb" – and made zero mention of Israel's contentious continued building of settlements.

Wow. What a good friend to Israel Germany is. In one 20-minute speech, Angela Merkel planted herself and her country on Israel's side vis-à-vis the trifecta of major Israeli and Jewish concerns – the Iranian radical Islamist threat, Israel's right to retain its land holdings and the continued elevated status of the Holocaust in the lexicon of historical genocide.

No one likes Israel enough to be that nice. I mean, even the obviously pro-Israel U.S. president, George W. Bush, makes a point of putting pressure on Israel to stop settlement building or engage in "difficult" diplomacy with Palestinian leaders every once in a while. Germany is, like, Israel's bestest friend.

Is it just me, or do you feel uncomfortable about the love-in between Tel Aviv and Berlin? That Germany, of all places, would be Israel's best friend just 60 years after orchestrating the death of six million Jews (not to mention also trying to get rid of the rest of us) seems at the very least unlikely. It's the most improbable of diplomatic relationships in human history.

Of course, what it's really about is the Holocaust. From the German point of view, befriending Israel makes perfect sense. Germans – rightly – still feel guilty about Hitler and the Nazis, either because they actually feel bad about what their countrymen did 65 years ago, or because that still-recent part of history is a serious blight on their record, politically speaking.

But from Israel's point of view – and indeed, from a Jewish point of view – the question is why should we be such good friends with a bitter and very recent enemy?

If the answer to that question isn't "because we're nice, forgiving people" – and it's not – then what it boils down to is a case of Germany using Israel to bolster its place in the world. If all it takes for Germany to rejuvenate its political standing is an annual apology for the Holocaust and regular shipments of Volkswagens to Israel, that's a pretty good deal. For Israel and the Jewish world to accept it so easily is astonishing.

As things stand, in the current German-Israel relationship, it's the Germans who appear to be working to move beyond the Holocaust and the Jews who are continuing to allow themselves to be defined by it.

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- 2 c sugar
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- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 c chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease baking sheets or line with parchment paper. In a large bowl, beat sugar and butter until light and fluffy. Mix in eggs one at a time. Sift together cake meal, salt and potato starch. Stir into batter just until blended. Gently mix in walnuts and chocolate chips. Chill dough briefly for easy handling. Divide dough into halves; form each half into 5" wide loaf, 1" thick. Sprinkle cinnamon sugar over top. Bake 45 min. in preheated oven. Cool; slice into 1" slices.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO IN TORONTO, Isaac and Leah Schwartz and seven of their nine children and families assemble for a Passover seder. The year is 1933, the height of the Depression, and pineapples decorate the seder table. The photo was taken at 583 College St., between Clinton Street and Manning Avenue. The home was headquarters of the family business, Ontario Auto Wreckers, later Ontario Auto Supply, which operated a set of gas pumps outside by the curb. [Photo courtesy Rose Rubinoff]

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Homage to our professional giants

URBAN WRITER

Once a man sat down and thought to himself: "The Canadian Jewish community needs an organization to help the Jews of eastern Europe following World War I, ride the wave of Jewish nationalism and Zionism and represent our people to the government." Out of this very real moment came the creation of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), Canada's oldest and most prestigious organization.

Who was this man? He was Yehudah Kaufman of the Labour Zionist movement, and he was joined by Reuben Brainin, a scholar and editor. Both volunteers, they co-ordinated the first plenary of CJC held on March 16 to 19, 1919, in Montreal. Magnificently, the Jewish Immigrant Aid Service (JIAS), an organization that has assisted eastern European Jews escaping pogroms, Holocaust survivors, Bosnian refugees and a multitude of other Jews from around the world, was the creation of that plenary.

We are all aware of late great lay leaders such as Samuel Bronfman, the national president of the CJC from 1939 to 1962. Who, however, were the Jewish professionals who spent hours, if not days, away from their families ensuring our community and the Jewish people of Canada were safe? Who were these men and women who hand in hand with our brilliant volunteers changed the course of our lives?

Are you familiar with the name of Hananiah Caiserman, the very first CJC national general secretary from 1919 through to his death in 1950? Where might we find this man's name memorialized, knowing that, according to CJC archives, Caiserman "was Congress from a professional staff perspective as he kept the aims of the organization alive from his office in Montreal's iconic Baron de Hirsch building?"

What were the names of some very tenacious Jews on the community's payroll who launched an effort to provide support for the Jews of Hungary in the 1950s and Soviet Jews in the '70s and '80s? Where might any of us find a plaque on federation grounds, or a picture on the walls of our cherished organizations, paying tribute to Ben Lappin, the executive director of CJC, central Ontario region, from 1941 to 1955?

We won't, which is a shame, because Lappin, according to professor emeritus and author Gerald Tulchinsky, was in a most important position in a time when the Jewish world was very much in transition. CJC archivists wrote that Lappin "knew the Toronto Jewish community extraordinarily well, especially the multitude of political organizations, labour unions, sick-benefit societies, synagogues and family associations that were affiliated with the Congress."

One can only imagine the challenges Lappin faced. He invites us into his professional Jewish world and its shifting structure in an article in *Commentary* in 1955. He wrote: "The complexion of Toronto's Jewish community was changing, with many Holocaust survivors and other immigrants, most of whom had little patience with ideology, stressing more traditional forms of identity and setting communal agendas that were in many respects markedly different from those of their predecessors."

Lappin was an extraordinary human being and Jewish community professional who, among other things, produced ground-breaking articles on the rehabilitation of the 1,116 child Holocaust survivors who immigrated to Canada after 1945.

Our Jewish community professionals deserve a place in the annals of history and to have their names and pictures on display in a Jewish community professional hall of fame. Unlike in the United States, Jewish professionals are seldom recognized for their work in Canada. It's impossible to find an award given exclusively to a Jewish civil servant in Canada. Why? Stay tuned for Part 2.

avrum@veahavta.org Sderot/Sudan?

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...we were so filled with gratitude for the care Mount Sinai gave our very premature daughter.

— Amanda Demers & Brian Collins

Brian and Amanda's first child, Charlotte, was born prematurely, weighing only one pound, eight ounces. "Mount Sinai looked after my wife and child during the pregnancy; delivered Charlotte with great skill; and then cared for her in the Valentine Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for the first three and a half months of her life," Brian Collins says. "Her birth was an opportunity for us to reflect on the communities that have shaped who we are and reflect our values. Mount Sinai is definitely up there."

...ordinary people can sometimes do the most extraordinary things.

— John Honsberger

According to John Honsberger, attorney and executor for Doris Mack, she was a humble person who grew up in the Depression and was "never sure whether she would have enough. Mrs. Mack did know, however, that she wanted whatever she and her husband had left, to help young medical students. I don't think she had any idea of how important her contribution to Mount Sinai would be."

These are just a few of the people who have created a meaningful legacy that includes Mount Sinai Hospital. To learn more about including Mount Sinai in your legacy, or to share your story with us, please call or visit

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This Week

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National

Sderot residents talk about life under siege. ***Page 3***

El Al faces stiff competition from other airlines. ***Page 6***

Chabad fashion show honours shluchot. ***Page 25***

Heebonics

Toronto youth founds basketball tournament for Ethiopian Jews. ***Page 54***

Arts & Travel

Regenesis* actor** relishes his role in theatre production. ***Page 65

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 26
On Campus 28
Passover Food Ideas 36
Israel & the Jewish World 51
Heebonics 54
Family Moments 55
What's New 56
Obituaries and Notices 58
Health & Lifestyles 59
Books & Authors 61
Arts & Travel 62
Classified 66
Sports 70

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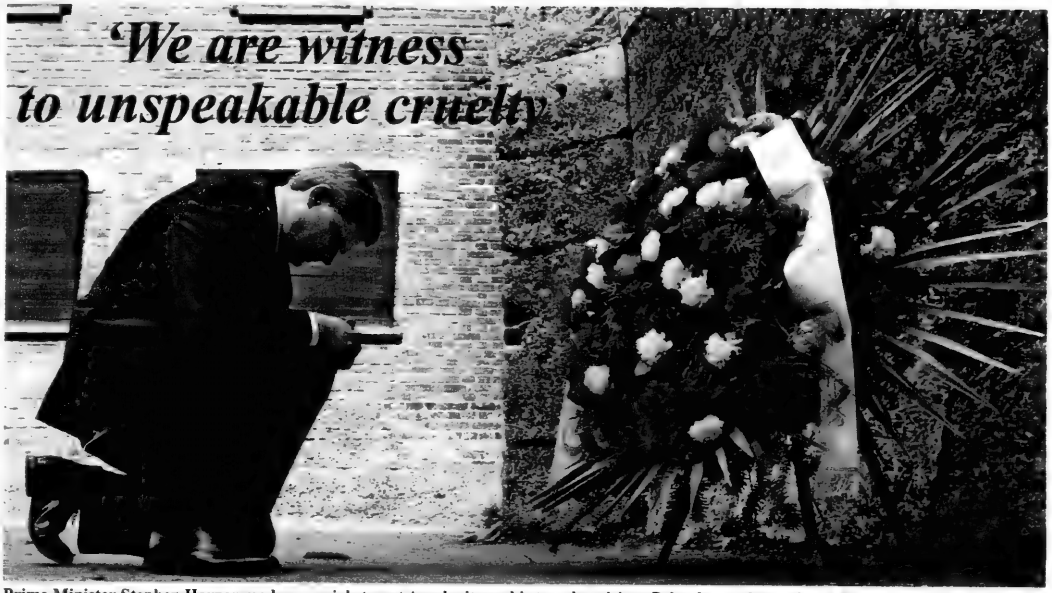
'We are witness to unspeakable cruelty'



Prime Minister Stephen Harper made a special stop at Auschwitz on his two-day visit to Poland over the weekend. Moved by the tragic history of the Nazi death camp, where more than one million Jews, Poles and Gypsies were slaughtered, Harper left the following inscription in the memorial book at the site: "We are witness here to the vestiges of unspeakable cruelty, horror and death. Let us never forget these things and work always to prevent their repetition. Lord, bless the souls of those who perished and suffered here, and deliver us from evil."

[Jason Ransom photo]

Census shows drop in Jewish numbers

Data based on ethnic or cultural self-identification

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

The number of Canadians identifying their ethnic or cultural origin as being, at least in part, Jewish dropped significantly between the 2001 and 2006 censuses.

The total was 315,120 people in 2006, down from 348,605 five years earlier, according to data released by Statistics Canada last week. While the sharpest decline was recorded in Quebec – about 14 per cent – Ontario is also down by about 10 per cent, and even more in Toronto alone.

In Quebec, the total was 71,380, down from 82,450 in 2001. Just over 38,000 offered Jewish as their sole ethnic origin. In Montreal alone, the figure is 68,485 (down precipitously from 80,390). The numbers are worrisome to a community that has been on the decline for at least 30 years and still speaks of itself as being 90,000 strong.

Outside Montreal, 325 people identify as Jewish in Quebec City, and 220 in Sherbrooke. It's hard to believe, though, that many of the 135 people in Trois-Rivières and 35 in Rivière-du-Loup, for example, offering Jewish as part of a multiple response are Jewish in any meaningful sense.

In Ontario, the total was 177,255, with 76,750 offering Jewish as a single response, down from 196,260 in 2001. Toronto itself records 141,685, down a dramatic 20,000 (161,215).

Canadian Jewish community demographer Charles Shahar is at a loss to explain the figures. "It's difficult to interpret. My initial reaction is surprise… It's very strange, shocking, really," he said.

A possible reason for these figures is that they are a statistical aberration, but that's unlikely because the same question and methodology were used. They may show a shift among Jews toward viewing their identity

Continued on page 34

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Sniper fires on CIC mission to Sderot — please see page 51

The News in Brief

CANADA

Protester Apologizes

WINNIPEG — A 22-year-old protester who likened the Israeli-born mayor of Winnipeg to Hitler during a protest last month says he plans to write Sam Katz a letter of apology. At a March 26 protest at city hall against the privatization of city services, Steve Mack carried a placard with four images of Katz dressed in a German military cap and a moustache. Katz, whose parents survived Nazi concentration camps, said he was disgusted by the placard. Mack told the *Winnipeg Sun* that he's not anti-Semitic and meant no harm, and that he regrets "casting a shadow" over the protest. "It wasn't supposed to be Hitler, but I can see how that connotation could be concerived. I am very ashamed of that," he said, adding that he called Katz's office and apologized to his staff, and that he will also send the mayor a letter. Organizers said Mack hadn't been invited to the protest.

Swastikas Found

TORONTO — A Jewish woman who lost relatives in the Shoah said she and her family will likely move out of their North York apartment after six swastikas were found in a stairwell by their unit. Marina Hirsch told the *National Post* that the swastikas, found on a Shabbat late last month, were meant for her family to see, as they only use stairs on Saturdays. The words "CCCP" and "We will win" were found nearby. The family has lived in the building at Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue for about 18 months. Hirsch said that as its only visibly Orthodox family, they've been targeted before: their car was vandalized and the mezuzah was ripped from their door.

WORLD

Christians Criticized

CINCINNATI — Rabbi Eric Yoffie objected to Jewish co-operation with Christian Zionists and called the Palestinian movement one of the "ugliest and stupidest" in modern history. In an April 2 speech to a convention of Reform rabbis in Cincinnati, the head of the Union for Reform Judaism, the largest U.S. Jewish group, said Jews shouldn't be allied with Christian Zionists, despite their support for Israel. He said Jews shouldn't make alliances "with those who do not speak respectfully of other faith communities" and reject territorial compromise. But in his harshest remarks, he said that "the Palestinian national movement, in its various manifestations, is one of the ugliest and stupidest national movements in modern history."

Americans Pro Israel

NEW YORK — A majority of Americans sympathize more with Israelis than with Palestinians, a survey says. The Gallup Poll found 59 per cent of respondents placed "sympathies more with the Israelis," with 17 per cent sympathizing more with the Palestinians. The poll also found Americans split evenly on whether the Bush administration is doing enough to advance the peace process, with 46 percent agreeing it is doing enough and 47 per cent disagreeing.

Israel Unpopular

LONDON — Israel is second only to Iran in a survey of the world's most unpopular nations. The BBC World Service annual poll of views on various countries found the highest number of respondents, 54 per cent, voiced negative views about Iran's influence on global affairs, with Israel next at 52 per cent. Pakistan was third.

Groups To Take Zoning Flap To High Court

MONTREAL — A chassidic group says it will go to the Supreme Court of Canada after the Quebec Court of Appeal ruled that it is violating the Laurentian village of Val Morin's zoning bylaws.

In a dispute dating back some 25 years, the Belzer community has maintained that it is within its rights to use two houses as a synagogue and a school within the enclave where its members spend their summers.

The municipality says the area is zoned for residential use only, and that position was upheld by Quebec Superior Court in 2005.

The Court of Appeal found that the bylaws do not contravene the community's freedom of religion, since the zoning regulations permit the establishment of places of worship in the neighbouring zone.

If given leave to appeal, the Belzers' lawyer Julius Grey said his argument before the highest court of the land will be "based in part of the freedom of conscience and in part on the duty to act fairly."

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Sderot residents speak about life under fire

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — There is a human face to the suffering caused by the daily barrage of Qassam rockets being launched at Sderot, and three of the town's citizens were in Ottawa to last week to present that face to Canadians.

Tal Pichovich, George Adjedj and Eeki (Itshak) Elner made a two-day trip to the nation's capital to tell their story to representatives of the Canadian government and media. During their whirlwind visit, they tried to spread their message as widely as possible, visiting with students, politicians and members of the Jewish community.

"We didn't really come to get answers. We came to tell our story. That is the main purpose of our visit," Pichovich told *The CJN* prior to a solidarity evening at the Soloway Jewish Community Centre on March 31.

Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker welcomed the three visitors to Ottawa and expressed his displeasure with how the Canadian media have downplayed the suffering of Israelis while covering the plight of the Palestinians and accusing Israel of using "disproportionate" force in retaliating against attacks.

"We at the embassy felt that it would be very important if we could have people from Sderot come here to speak to the Canadian people, the politicians who determine Canadian policy, so as to give them a better understanding [of the Israeli side of the story,]" Baker said.

Former Ottawan hikes across Israel for child victims of terror

Please see page 33

Elner has only lived in Sderot for two years, having moved there from Tel Aviv out of a sense of solidarity with its citizens. "I moved to that town because I felt that it was a mission and I felt that it is a community in need of support," he said.

"Ten years ago, Sderot was one of the jewels and one of the most prosperous towns in Israel. There was culture, commerce, factories and plants. Great teachers came to teach, but they left… How much can they suffer and endure the threat?"

Describing the daily life of Sderot's citizens – highlighting the constant interruptions in their daily lives as they run for shelter with each "red alert" for incoming missiles – Elner told of children not being able to play in parks; of people celebrating weddings and bar mitzvahs without family and friends from other parts of the country who are afraid to travel there; and of walking the streets of Sderot after an attack and "smelling death."

"I am not here to cry about our suffering. I am here to tell you that first of all we will survive," Elner said.

"With your support, we feel stronger, but most of all we would like you to carry our message to people that are not involved with Israel…we would like people to see the faces behind the headlines. We are people like everybody else."

Pichovich owns a bar in Sderot that was hit by a Qassam missile only three months after it opened in 2007. She immediately reopened for business, in a deliberate a show of resiliency and determination.

"There is mostly anxiety in Sderot. There is no normal life," she said. "I won't give up. It is hard for me to say that I believe in peace, but I still hope for peace and quiet."

Speaking in French, Adjedj described the lives of the town's children, who are growing up in an environment of fear.

Before 2001, there were two psychologists in Sderot. There are now 27 psychologists and three psychiatrists working with citizens to deal with the effects of trauma, he said.

Only time will tell how the young people's lives have been affected by this daily terror, Adjedj added.

While in Ottawa, the three met with Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and student activists, and they attended a dinner with members of the House of Commons and Senate foreign affairs committees. They also attended a press conference hosted by MPs Irwin Cotler, the Liberal human rights critic, and James Lunney, the Tory MP who chairs the Canada-Israel Inter-Parliamentary Group.

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Vayaged Yehonatan, The Eybeshitz Haggadah: Experiencing Redemption, by Rabbi Shalom Hammer (Devora Publishing, Jerusalem, New York) is a compilation of the writings of the legendary 18th-century scholar, teacher, kabbalist Rabbi Yehonatan Eybeshitz.

Rabbi Eybeshitz was one of the main rabbinic authorities, the *dayan* (judge), in Prague and subsequently in the "three communities" of north-central Germany, Altona, Hamburg and Wandsbek. His reputation as a true master of Torah, an intellect and preacher were undisputed.

But he was also a magnet attracting deep controversy among many weighty contemporary scholars such as the highly respected sage, Rabbi Yakov Emden who suspected Rabbi Eybeshitz of secretly being a follower of the teachings of Shabbetai Tzvi, even though Rabbi Eybeshitz had been a signatory to the *cherem* (ban) against Shabbateans and Shabbateanism in 1725. Indeed the controversy surrounding these suspicions persisted long after Rabbi Eybeshitz died.

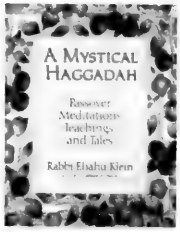
The controversy notwithstanding, there was no doubting the sophistication and eclecticism of his thinking.

Indeed it was the compelling nature of his thinking that attracted Rabbi Shalom Hammer, a former Rosh Yeshiva in Israel, to assemble and edit Rabbi Eybeshitz's writings on the Haggadah. "Rav Yehonatan's brilliance and expertise in so many diverse areas of Torah grabbed my interest and fuelled my fascination with his commentaries," Hammer wrote.

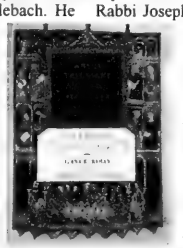
But this work is not a dedicated commentary on the Haggadah by Rabbi Eybeshitz. As Hammer tells the reader, "Rav Yehonatan did not write an official commentary on the Haggadah." Using the Haggadah's text as a guide, Rabbi Hammer brings together " a multitude of different sources and ideas" from Rabbi Eybeshitz.

* * *

From the 18th century Eybeshitz Haggadah we move to the 21st century's *A Mystical Haggadah: Passover Meditations, Teachings and Tales*, by Rabbi Eliahu Klein (North Atlantic Books).



Rabbi Klein has taught Kabbalah, Jewish meditation and chassidism for over 30 years in the United States, Great Britain and Israel. He apprenticed under Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan and Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach. He serves currently as a Jewish chaplain for San Francisco County Jails and the State of California department of rehabilitation.



Rabbi Klein brings a variety of readings and stories from the chassidic world as well as "meditations, contemplative prayers, reflections and mystical teachings" from a wide pantheon of kabbalistic masters such as rabbis Isaac Luria, Haim Vital, Moses de Leon and Isaiah Horowitz.

Rabbi Klein explains why he wrote the commentary: "The purpose of this montage of Haggadah traditions is to transmit a full spectrum of illumination that is embedded within these teachings [chassidism and Kabbalah]; to show that it is worthwhile for seekers and practitioners to explore many traditions, and to extract those aspects that resonate with their souls so they may experience the maximum spiritual experience during this sacred holiday of Passover."

* * *

Why Is This Night Different From All Other Nights? – The Four Questions Around the World, by Ilana Kurshan (Schocken Books, New York) is not a Haggadah.

It is in fact a marvellous little primer on the varied and various Jews of the world. Kurshan presents the iconic Four Questions in each of 23 indigenous languages and English transliterations from 23 distinct Jewish communities. She also presents a succinct min-essay on each of those communities. With a superb and inspiring introduction by Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, the book is a delightful point of entry to further study about our fellow Jews around the world.

As all of us make our preparations for the Passover seder, it is important to bear in mind the words of Rabbi Telushkin: "Jewish children have been reciting the *Mah Nishtanah* for about 100 generations and, as this book makes clear, in many different countries. But of one thing we can be sure: As long as children are chanting these questions, the Jewish people will go on." — ***MBD***

SeeJN

WELCOME HOME DINNER

Interfaith Coalition members welcome home Saul Itzhayek, a Montreal businessman who was jailed in India for 10 months for travelling with an invalid visa, with a *seudat ho'da'ah* (Thanksgiving meal). In the back row, standing, from left, are Carmine Seccareccia, husband of Sylvia Itzhayek, Saul's sister; Rabbi Reuben Poupko; Rabbi Michael Whitman; Bernie Farber, CEO, Canadian Jewish Congress; Rev. Darryl Gray; and Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz. In the front row, from left, are Sylvia Itzhayek, Saul Itzhayek and Howard Liebman.

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El Al faces tough competition on Canadian routes

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Last year, a record 60,000 Canadians visited Israel in what was a banner year for tourism in the Jewish state.

The Israel Government Tourism Office is forecasting a new record in 2008, with as many as 65,000 Canadian visitors expected.

With figures like that, you might think that the general manager of El Al's Canadian operations would be relaxed and optimistic about the year ahead, but Dina Kutner knows that with higher passenger volume comes greater competition.

Air Canada is the airline's main competitor for passengers flying to Israel, but many European carriers – and even one from India – have entered the fray, offering travellers the option of a flight to Israel with a continental stopover.

Nevertheless, "We're holding our own and growing," Kutner said in an interview in the airline's downtown office.

The Passover season is hot, as expected, May is nearly full and the peak summer period is expected to run at 90 per cent capacity, more or less in line with historic precedent. Winter, however, was "a bit of a struggle," she said.

Kutner, who took over as El Al's general manager last August, came to the airline after four years as head of sales and marketing for Austrian Airlines. Before that, she worked for 19 years at Air France, as well as for a tour company.

She arrived at El Al, she said, at a "challenging time." Air Canada, with its points-loving customers and national feeder system, was firmly entrenched in the Canadian market. During the winter months, it flies four times per week to Israel, versus El Al's three flights. During the summer, Air Canada is expected to boost that to seven weekly flights, as opposed to El Al's four.

El Al has tried to fight back with competitive pricing, appeals to loyalty and service, and completing a code-sharing agreement with American Airlines, which would make ticketing and marketing simpler.

For years, El Al was pretty much the only game in town for non-stop flights to Israel. With increased competition, El Al has been offering aggressive pricing on fares, Kutner said. For Passover, ticket prices have ranged as low as $849 to $998, "fares that have never been seen before… We want to give an opportunity to people going without having to go via Europe," she said.

Kutner said the airline has always had a loyal customer base, but it has reached out in recent years to new and existing customers with the pitch that flying El Al is the best way to get to Israel. "Service has improved 1,000 per cent. The airline stands on par with any major carrier," she said.

What's more, El Al is the only airline that provides an "Israel experience" before you even arrive in the Jewish state.

Flight attendants, who spend no more than five years on board El Al planes before taking other jobs with the airline, are young, eager, friendly and outgoing.

Flying El Al "is really an extension of your trip to Israel. You start the Israel experience when you board the plane," Kutner said.

Perhaps sooner. She said the ground staff at the check-in counter know many repeat travellers and their special needs. "Over the years, it's [become] one big family," she said. "It really is amazing. It's something I didn't experience at any other airlines."

Nevertheless, the Toronto operations continues to be plagued by high landing fees, while all airlines face rising fuel costs, eating into profits. With predictions that the world airline industry will face a tough year in 2008, El Al's Toronto operations are in a precarious position.

"We're still under the gun [from head office] to make Toronto more viable," she acknowledged.

"Things look very promising, yet challenging. We have to seek the support of the community. We need them… The bottom line is you have to offer customers a competitive product at competitive prices."

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RAPUNZEL, RAPUNZEL: At the Eastern Canadian Region of United Synagogue Youth (ECRUSY) winter's end convention recently, Ayelet Seed, left, donated her hair to Pantene Beautiful Lengths, which teams up with the Canadian Cancer Society to distribute wigs to women with cancer. She was assisted by Leah Silverman, the organization's social action/tikkun olam (SATO) vice-president, who cut Seed's hair after USY raised more than $150 toward tikkun olam in honour of Seed, the convention's co-chair. Money was raised by asking members to donate in honour of Seed for tikkun olam.

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Remember Darfur!

One week before Pesach, the quintessential remembrance of freedom, and three weeks before Yom Hashoah, the reverential remembrance of the Holocaust, is an appropriate moment to call our attention yet again to the atrocities being committed against the suffering people from the Darfur region of Sudan.

Daniel Rackowski, a senior fellow for European Union affairs at the Transatlantic Institute in Europe, recently summarized the situation in the Sudan in a report titled *The Darfur Disgrace*.

"After years of deliberation, repeated condemnations and the eventual deployment of UN and EU troops, Darfurian communities continue to be threatened by expulsion, rape, famine and extermination in a strife-torn region. Darfur is not only a testimony to the atrocities committed by the apocalyptic Janjaweed horsemen and by Sudan's very own armed forces in response to rebel factions demanding greater independence and power; it equally serves as a reminder of the world's continuous and collective failure to effectively interfere in the gravest man-made catastrophe of our time."

The extent and nature of that catastrophe are widely known, if alas too widely ignored in the council chambers of many governments. It is a brutal, horrific atrocity involving human beings: more than 200,000 people have been slaughtered, more than two million people have been displaced from their homes, and countless thousands of women have been tortured and raped.

The UN-African Union peacekeeping mission that the Security Council created last year primarily to protect the preyed-upon Darfurians has again been delayed in its deployment. The mission is having difficulty finding sufficient recruits to man the mission, and the Sudanese government is placing stumbling blocks in the path of the mission's intended lifesaving deployment.

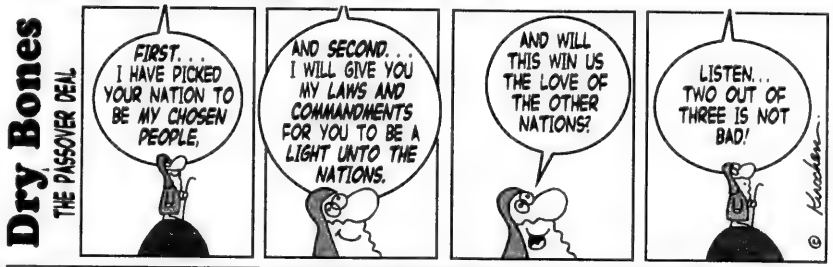
The ongoing atrocities in Darfur are sad confirmation of the view held by many aid and relief workers, diplomats, NGO workers and simply forlorn observers of international politics that the United Nations is simply incapable of acting justly and quickly. It cannot overcome its inherent structural dysfunction. And thus, more innocent people are abused and more lives ruthlessly taken.

In the face of international inaction, what can be done on behalf of the people of Darfur? In her essay on the opposite page, Toronto-area member of Parliament Carolyn Bennett places our personal and our collective obligations in their proper perspective. "Canadian values exemplify a shared humanity and demand a renewed commitment to 'never again.' Africa is a huge test. We cannot turn our backs on this major humanitarian crisis."

This Sunday, April 13, Day for Darfur rallies will be held across the country. The event is part of the fifth annual Global Day for Darfur. Lending our support to those rallies is one way, at least, we can point ourselves, our hearts and our consciences in the right direction, toward the suffering Darfurians.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The 40th anniversary of the abortive Warsaw Ghetto Uprising was marked by ceremonies in Warsaw and in Washington. However, Marek Edelman, the last surviving commander of the uprising, along with other survivors, boycotted the Warsaw event because of what they called Poland's continued anti-Semitism.


Dry Bones
THE PASSOVER DEAL
FIRST... I HAVE PICKED YOUR NATION TO BE MY CHOSEN PEOPLE.
AND SECOND... I WILL GIVE YOU MY LAWS AND COMMANDMENTS FOR YOU TO BE A LIGHT UNTO THE NATIONS.
AND WILL THIS WIN US THE LOVE OF THE OTHER NATIONS?
LISTEN... TWO OUT OF THREE IS NOT BAD!

Editorial Advisory Board: **Michael Brown, Sandra Brown, Donald Carr, Adam Hummel, Zac Kaye, Igor Korenzvit, Hagai Kuperman, Keith Landy, Andrea Most, Lou Ronson, Jacques Sayegh, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Rabbi Reuven Tradburks**

Canadian, U.S. Conservative Judaism

Even though I will not agree with all approaches authorized by the Conservative movement in dealing with critical social topics of our time, such as homosexuality and egalitarianism, I am proud to belong to a movement that chooses to engage such issues that affect numerous Jewish lives ("Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ," *CJN*, April 3). I am encouraging my congregation to remain within the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism because of my belief that what the Jewish world needs today is a serious traditionalism moderated by a need to be as welcoming as possible, within Jewish tradition and law, to an increasingly diverse community. That much of American Conservative Judaism is more liberal than the reality reflected in many of our Canadian congregations is more reason to remain within the fold, the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), to allow our strengths to influence the greater Conservative Jewish world and to recognize that we can learn from those with other perspectives as well.

Rabbi Philip S. Scheim
Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation
Toronto

* * *

Throwing out baby with bath water

As a past president of Adath Israel Congregation, and also a past president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Ontario region, I have a unique perspective on the current issues of secession ("Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ," *CJN*, April 3).

The beauty of the United Synagogue is the ability for big shuls to help little shuls. Most organizations need to re-examine themselves periodically. It's good for the soul and helps them to re-energize. But it seems to me that my shul has thrown out the baby with the bath water.

Morris Adams
Toronto

* * *

Learned to excel at She'arim

I graduated from She'arim Hebrew Day School last year ("She'arim to close its doors in June," *CJN*, March 20). At She'arim, I learned that I can overcome any obstacles that may be thrown my way. I acquired many skills and learning strategies that I would not have picked up elsewhere. Most importantly, I learned that teachers can be your best friends. They help you when you are at your lowest and are happier than anyone you know when you have excelled. She'arim has taught me how to excel at everything I can do. Never again will I be the girl at the back of the classroom who is made fun of and doesn't understand the lesson.

Closing She'arim is the wrong decision. At She'arim, students learn skills that can't be taught at a regular day school. Financial problems should not be influencing the future of the special education. Together, we can help influence a change in this decision.

Naomi Max
Toronto

* * *

Where is the community's Jewish heart?

I can't believe that the decision was made to close She'arim Hebrew Day School ("She'arim to close its doors in June," *CJN*, March 20). Where is the Jewish heart of our community that we can find money for bricks and mortar and put the needs of children second? Why was there not a major fundraising campaign for Sh'earim?

She'arim successfully met the needs of children with learning disabilities. Its students developed feelings of self-worth. Every educator know that children with good self-images learn more easily.

No child should be left behind. We have heard that before. She'arim was the guarantor of that mantra.

Leah Feinman
Toronto

* * *

Machal reunion

This year, what is probably the final reunion of the Machal (Haganah) takes place, with a Yom Hazikaron service at the Machal Memorial in Sha'ar HaGai. Unfortunately, there are some people here in Toronto (and I'm sure elsewhere in Canada) who cannot attend. Some can't attend because of infirmity, but more sadly, some are unable to attend due to lack of funds.

A suggestion for an activity in recognition of the State of Israel's 60th anniversary: that individuals planning to attend a mission to Israel or UJA Federation of Greater Toronto make it possible for some of these "old soldiers" to attend this final reunion of those who put their lives on the line to make the first anniversary possible.

Wilf Mandel
Thornhill, Ont.
Wilfm@hotmail.com

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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Perspectives

Never again... reflections on Sudan

By CAROLYN BENNETT

It seems impossible that in 2008, humans are still being killed just because of their religion. In Sudan, so-called religious people are still involved in campaigns that can only be described as genocide. As Canadians, we say we abhor it, but the killing goes on. Some wring their hands and ask, "What can we do?" "What can one person do?" It seems impossible to us that the perpetrators cannot find enough compassion, or even common sense, to see that their victims are fellow human beings, that the violence destroys their economies and the future security of their children and grandchildren.

For those – like Romeo Dallaire, Glen Pearson and Jane Roy – who have had a front row seat at the slaughter, their experiences have changed their lives. They will never be the same. I recently returned from a trip to southern Sudan, and I will never be the same.

I have written often about how my first trip to Israel was so important to my understanding of "Shalom." Growing up in Canada, I had taken security for granted. I remember noticing the absence of garbage cans on Ben Yehuda Street in Jerusalem, the tour of the bomb shelter in a child-care centre in Metullah, or listening there for the rockets at 8 p.m. The yearning for a lasting peace was so clear in every conversation. I could feel the dreadful legacy of the Holocaust not only at Yad Vashem but in every hour of every day.

During the last election, I was visited by representatives from Canadian Jewish Congress and was asked about Darfur. I now so clearly understand why the Canadian Jewish community stands so firmly in solidarity with the people of Darfur. The government of Sudan had made it so difficult for others to help. However, Canada's leadership on the "Responsibility to Protect" doctrine gives an imperative to intervene.

Last year, Glen Pearson was elected to the House of Commons. He and his wife, Jane Roy, have shown us all the power of individual Canadians, as they worked to stop the slavery in Sudan. Numerous documentaries, articles and citations have documented their success in buying back the slaves to freedom. Their work has been compared to that of Oscar Schindler.

File photo of refugees from Sudan fleeing for their lives. [RNS/Reuters photo]

Recently, I was privileged to accompany Glen and Jane to Malual Kon in southern Sudan, the region near the borders of Darfur and northern Sudan where they have been working for almost 10 years. I was witness through their eyes to the demonstrable progress – the schools, the clinics, the wells – but also through my own to the unbelievable poverty, sickness and lack of human security: children without shoes, babies with TB oozing from sores on their neck, young women who have never been to school but who know they want their daughters to go to school, young men pleading with us for the financial support to go away to boarding school in Uganda because the secondary school was blown up years ago. It was heart-wrenching. They remember the fighting in their region and are grateful that the three-year peace agreement between the north and the south seems to be holding.

We travelled north and camped out in a settlement of Darfur refugees established over a year ago, and we found 30 new families who had recently fled from the fighting. I talked with a breastfeeding mother whose husband had died the previous week in the church that had been bombed in January…

We watched an elderly woman preparing a basket of leaves for the adults to eat because the settlement had determined that they would only be able to feed the children of the new families.

In the week after we left, three of the new arrivals died.

But there was some good news. Last year, Glen and Jane had written a proposal for funding for this settlement. They asked the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for $6 million. Last week, we learned that $3 million will go to the local office of the International Organization of Migration to help the community build waterproof shelters, get cooking utensils and begin to farm again. However, the money is coming through more than a year after the proposal was submitted, and hundreds have died in the interim.

It is clear, as in Afghanistan, that Canada must develop an integrated, timely and effective approach toward humanitarian crises around the world. The three Ds of diplomacy, defence and development have been left to flounder in three non-communicating silos with weak ministers. CIDA must dramatically change. It should be judged by its ability to measure and demonstrate real results.

Canadian policy must be relevant and reactive to the experience on the ground. We need to reverse the worrying statistics that 80 per cent of CIDA personnel work in Ottawa because of arcane Treasury Board guidelines. This ratio needs to be reversed. We need to listen to people like Romeo Dallaire and Dr. James Orbinski and NGOs like Jane Roy and Glen Pearson's Canadian Aid for Southern Sudan (CASS). We need to connect with the Canadian diaspora who receive daily information about what is working and what is not, and who could be persuaded to go and help for three- to six-month stints in their homelands if there were proper structures and processes.

As we have learned in the Middle East, Canadian foreign policy is never foreign; it's about family. Canadian values exemplify a shared humanity and demand a renewed commitment to "never again." Africa is a huge test. We cannot turn our backs on this major humanitarian crisis.

I'll go back to Sudan. I have to check on David and Christine and Simon who Peter and I will make sure will get secondary school this month. I need to check in on the nine goats I bought for my dad's 90th birthday, which Jane has already delivered to the refugee camp with tons of food from CASS. It feels good. I need to go back to see the progress. As we all try so hard for a better policy for Africa, and especially Darfur and Sudan, I am so grateful that Glen and Jane have shown me the huge difference that individuals can really make. Shalom.

Carolyn Bennett is the member of Parliament for the Toronto riding of St. Paul's.

In Parliament

The following are excerpts of statements made in the House of Commons April 1, the third anniversary of the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1593, referring mass atrocities in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for investigation and prosecution.

Deepak Obhrai, Conservative member of Parliament for Calgary East and parliamentary secretary to the minister of foreign affairs: Mr. Speaker, the situation prevailing in Sudan and Darfur is of great concern to the government of Canada. Canada believes there has to be a peaceful solution to the conflict in Darfur..., a situation which puts in jeopardy the security of so many Darfurians and others.

Last week, the minister of foreign affairs [Maxime Bernier] and I visited Sudan in our official capacity. While there, the minister of foreign affairs announced that Canada would invest $755 million for Sudan in 2008-09, including assessed contributions across three pillars of activity: security, diplomacy and aid. This builds upon Canada's existing support of peaceful efforts, humanitarian efforts and early recovery in Sudan for which Canada has provided over $388 million in voluntary contributions since 2006.

What the minister of foreign affairs and I conveyed to the Sudanese authorities was that better relations with Canada were dependent upon developments with regard to violence in Darfur, the African Union-United Nations mission UNAMID deployment, human rights and impunity…

Louise Thibault, Independent member of Parliament for Rimouski-Neigette-Témiscouata-Les Basques: People from my riding are regularly showing how concerned they are about human rights both here and abroad. It is for their benefit and for the benefit of the people of Darfur that I rise again today on this subject.

In Darfur, soldiers and militia groups rape and kill civilians with, in the case of the Janjaweed, the guilty support of the Sudan government. According to Amnesty International, we are talking about more than 200,000 people killed, more that 2.2 million internally displaced persons and 280,000 refugees. Thousands of women are systematically raped and opponents are tortured…

The Darfur crisis must be resolved politically above all, and it is up to the minister of foreign affairs to engage all stakeholders, China included, in seeking the solution. China is a particularly important stakeholder because, as we know, it buys 64 per cent of Sudanese oil and is one of the main arms suppliers to the Sudanese government…

Irwin Cotler, Liberal member of Parliament for Mount Royal: One year ago, the ICC issued arrest warrants for Sudanese government minister Ahmad Harun and Janjaweed militia leader Ali Kushayb for their planning and perpetration of war crimes and crimes against humanity in Darfur.

Sudan refused to hand over the accused and promoted these two perpetrators of genocide to important posts, thus abysmally abdicating their humanitarian and international responsibilities.

The international community must put an end to this appalling culture of impunity through enhanced targeted sanctions, travel bans, asset seizures, arms embargoes, divestment and the like. It must also pressure China to end its complicity in the vicious cycle that sustains the genocide: China buys Sudan's oil; Sudan buys China's arms; the Chinese arms are then used by the Sudanese government to massacre the people of Darfur.

The murders, displacement and destruction must cease and the Chinese complicity must be stopped.

Statements courtesy of Canadian Jewish Congress.

Opinions

The optimism of courage

My job is to inspire others. I scour the Talmud, Bible and assorted periodicals to find texts, ideas and anecdotes that might inspire others.

But every so often, someone asks me, "Rabbi, who inspires you?"

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Although I'm in the inspiration business, at the end of the day, I, too, have a soul that thirsts for inspiration.

People imagine that inspiration is best found among the learned and famous.

But that isn't always the case. The talmudic sage Chanina said he learned more from his friends and students than he did from his teachers. My experience with inspiration is very much the same: it's often my congregants and students who inspire me the most.

Joanne, the most inspiring congregant I've ever known, died recently. She was a young woman in her 40s who was hospitalized for most of the last decade of her life battling a series of ailments. She inspired me with her resilience, fortitude and good humour. But most importantly, Joanne taught me about optimism.

Joanne was relentlessly optimistic. In her years in the hospital, her cheerful spirit warmed the hearts of everyone she met. Hospital staff became Joanne's friends, and she became their confidante. An orderly who'd lost a child to suicide found solace for the first time in years after speaking with Joanne. And throughout, her courageous spirit remained strong. When a doctor told her that she'd never be able to walk again, she immediately remarked, "Well, that's what wheelchairs are for."

Joanne taught me what optimism should be. Most people think optimism is all about the glasses – that is, either half-empty glasses or rose-coloured ones. Joanne taught me that optimism is much more than a positive perspective. It can be – indeed it must be – a defiant act of courage.

The optimism of courage goes beyond seeing the bright side of things. Instead, it sees humour and hope as ammunition in the war against tragedy.

All humans face the same adversary: the angel of death. Joanne heroically battled the angel of death with the only weapons she had: her smile and optimism.

Joanne had a wicked sense of gallows humour. Even while staring the angel of death in the eye, she could laugh. One day, in a heart-to-heart conversation, I mentioned to her that I had never before seen a case of tragic suffering like her own. A humorous remark or two followed, and somehow, by the end of the conversation, we were laughing together.

But these jokes were more than shared laughter. Joanne was actually waging war, laughing in the face of the angel of death.

Joanne understood the optimism of courage. She will continue to inspire me for the rest of my life.

Cdn. teen works to recover after yeshiva shooting

On March 6, a Palestinian terrorist murdered eight yeshiva students and wounded another dozen, mostly teenagers.

Once again, the world saw what happens when Palestinians – in this case an affluent, employed, affianced 25-year-old – are raised on a steady diet of genocidal anti-Semitism. Once again, too many in the world acted abominably, with some Palestinians throwing candy in celebration as Israel-bashers defended the indefensible. But once again, Israeli citizens, many Jews, and good people everywhere, rose to the occasion, demonstrating ennobling, everyday heroism.

Gil Troy in Montreal

Nadav Samuels, whose father Noah grew up in Toronto, was shot repeatedly in the Mercaz HaRav Yeshiva library. Nadav just celebrated his 15th birthday in Hadassah's Ein Kerem Hospital with his arms and legs heavily bandaged.

"It's very hard to describe the horror of it. For the first week I couldn't even talk about what I had seen," his grandmother Sandi Samuels of mid-Toronto said with a shudder weeks later, still trying to reconcile her grandson's look of "sweet adolescence" and the ravages of the violence she saw when she and her husband Laurie arrived from Canada.

I had the privilege of visiting Nadav 11 days after the attack. Having endured numerous operations, he was still bedridden. Nevertheless, he greeted me, as well as Rabbi Adam Scheier of Montreal and Rabbi Emanuel Forman of Jerusalem, with a warm, shy, braces-filled smile – and one request. His father was at work and his mother, Hadassah, wasn't adept at laying tfillin. Would one of the rabbis help?

As Rabbi Scheier wrapped the leather straps around the teen's limp arm, Nadav closed his eyes. He prayed so intensely, so sincerely, that my eyes filled with tears. If Hollywood produced a film about the atrocity, the religious victim would lose his faith. The innocent teenager would become an angry rebel.

Instead, having survived an unimaginable trauma, this remarkable teen drew the tremendous strength he needed from his untarnished devotion to God and Judaism.

After Nadav finished, dinner arrived. With a glint in his eye, Nadav showed he was a normal kid – well on his way to recovery – by grousing about the hospital food. He preferred the goodies that both his grandmothers kept delivering. Nadav's mother, Hadassah, said, "Fortunately, he was only hurt from the shoulders down." His sharp mind and warm personality remain intact.

Demonstrating that the Samuels grace and optimism is multi-generational, Nadav's grandparents, Laurie and Sandi, reported with deep gratitude that the family has been embraced by a "chain of love" that extends around the world.

"We've had so many calls and offers of support," Sandi said. "Religious people offer to make a *Mishabereich* [a prayer for recovery]. Non-religious people say they will hold a good thought for Nadav in their hearts."

In Toronto, old school chums, fellow congregants and casual acquaintances have reached out warmly. In Israel, the local vendor at the market gets emotional every time he tells another customer that Sandi is the *savtah*, the grandma, of a kid from the *pigua*, the attack.

"Look, it's true that Israel has lots of tzuris," Laurie observed. "But balancing out all the trouble is one amazing thing: the Israeli people."

On March 28, for the first time in three weeks, Nadav stood up – aided by the angels of Hadassah, the Jewish and Arab doctors, and nurses and orderlies who, Sandi noted with a sigh, are far too expert at healing such injuries.

Nadav's mother, Hadassah, reported that one visitor, struck by his recovery from being in critical condition that first weekend, noted that together, Nadav's Hebrew initials spell *nes*, miracle. Considering Nadav's eight fallen friends, whom the terrorist shot repeatedly at point blank range, his nightmarish March truly has been miraculous.

As Nadav, the other victims, and the grieving families struggle step by step to heal physically and emotionally, our offers of support must not fade as quickly as the headlines do – the families will need love and more material assistance months from now, too. And we should all marvel at the miracle that, despite living among neighbors who raise their children with such murderous hatred, Israelis such as Noah and Hadassah Samuels imbue their children with faith, love, gratitude, humility and just enough humour to bear whatever burdens life imposes.

May they all retain their strength, optimism and grace. They will need it.

Fleshing out the Four Sons

In the Haggadah's rendition of the Four Sons, arguably one of the most popular sections of the seder liturgy, family dynamics mix with matters of heritage and legacy. Drawing on biblical verses and rabbinic commentary, the reading imagines a father who recognizes each of his sons for who he is and gives each the appropriate rejoinder.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Biblical stories about fathers and sons are far more complicated. Isaac and his twin sons, Jacob and his quarrelsome brood, David and the rebellious Avshalom – elemental feelings pull at these relationships in powerful and complex ways. Over time, feelings shift and are recalibrated, and the generations struggle with the mix of love, aspiration, disappointment, betrayal, misunderstanding, miscommunication, missed opportunities and, sometimes, reconciliation.

But the Four Sons of the Haggadah never change. Year after year, they ask the same questions of their father, and he tenders them the same response. They are, of course, types, not real children. Literary creations, they are intended to exemplify attitudes toward the seder, specifically, and Jewish tradition more generally.

The wise one asks his question precisely because he is wise, the wicked son's question is proof of his wickedness, and so on. The text presents their characters as a given. From year to year, the wise one remains wise; the wicked one, wicked; the simple one, simple, and the fourth one never does learn to question.

But sometimes, when we reach that section of the Haggadah, I find myself pulling the Four Sons and their father out of their storylessness and giving them shape, dimension, colour – as well as a past and a future.

What a family! The wise son always comes first, and the wicked one gets rapped even though his question is not so different. The simple and mute sons are subordinate to the high family drama, pushed out of the limelight by their more sharply defined siblings. The father favours the wise son, because he sees in him his own character and values. He can't understand the wicked son. He spars with him, even tries tough love. But these two boys are locked into position, playing off one another and pushed into polar opposite roles. The other two sons, the quieter ones, can't seem to get their father's attention. The favouritism and arguments drive them inward. They keep their own counsel. Who knows what they think?

The intense and complicated connection between fathers and sons is embedded in the meaning of Pesach. On the Shabbat immediately preceding the festival, Shabbat HaGadol, we read a special Haftorah from the book of Malachi, the last of the Tanach's twelve minor prophets. Foretelling the redemption of the people of Israel from suffering and exile, Malachi presents the ultimate reconciliation between God and his people in familial terms – a relationship between a loving father and his loving son: "My treasured possession; I will be tender toward them as a man is tender toward a son who ministers to him." The reading closes with the image of the prophet Elijah, Eliyahu Hanavi, a figure strongly associated with Pesach and the theme of messianic redemption. Here, Elijah's task is to "restore the hearts of the fathers to their sons and the hearts of the sons to their fathers."

Fleshed out in our imagination, the Four Sons of the Haggadah may be seen not so much as types but as a snapshot of a family, arrested at a particular moment. Perhaps they are Jacob's sons, placed anachronistically around a seder table: the favoured one, the rebellious one, several who mutter among themselves while their father pays little mind. Perhaps they are families much like our own. Eventually, the father begins to see different dimensions in each of his children: wisdom, rebelliousness, envy, nobility, anger, insecurity, shrewdness, maturity. He accepts the sons he has, instead of refashioning them into the sons he wants. If he is fortunate – if they are fortunate – he helps them to navigate their individual personalities.

For us, too, the seder offers a snapshot of our lives at a particular moment. The image may be static, but a series of such images, accumulated yearly and over a long time, tells a story about life, relationships, desire, loss, growth and change. The spiritual inheritance that Pesach represents may be passed along generational lines, like David's dynasty. Or it may jump families, to be shared with friends, or imparted to strangers. There's no telling who will appear at next year's seder.

And perhaps, we may hope, even the wicked son will be redeemed.

The Kirshner File

Breakthrough in peace process is not expected

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited the Middle East last week in yet another attempt to flesh out President George W. Bush's latest peace initiative, which is based on a two-state solution. At last November's summit in Annapolis, Md., Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas promised "to engage in vigorous, ongoing and continuous negotiations" to sign a peace treaty by the end of 2008.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

In a tangible demonstration of his commitment, Bush paid a brief visit to Israel – his first since becoming president – three months ago and expressed optimism that a treaty can be signed before he leaves office in January 2009. Bush plans to return to Jerusalem next month, when Israel marks its 60th anniversary of statehood, to push the process further along. Progress, however, has been glacial, and serious observers do not realistically expect a real breakthrough, even though Israel and the PA profess to be interested in breaking the impasse.

Cognizant of the difficulties that lie ahead, both sides have dampened expectations.

"I am not sure we will make it, but we are determined to [take] a giant step forward to end this dispute once and for all," Olmert said recently. Israel's deputy prime minister, Haim Ramon, has been even more candid, saying that "no one expects" a full-fledged agreement this year, and that only a "declaration of principles" is possible. Salam Fayyad, the Palestinian prime minister, has asserted that a comprehensive accord, based on the internationally sponsored 2003 "road map" peace plan, is unlikely to be achieved.

Under the road map, which is sponsored by the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United States, Israel and the Palestinians are bound by reciprocal obligations. Israel is supposed to withdraw from areas in the West Bank occupied since the eruption of the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000 and take steps to normalize Palestinian life there by such measures as the removal of roadblocks and checkpoints, which impede movement and thus harm the Palestinian economy. Israel is also supposed to freeze all settlement activity, including natural growth, in the West Bank.

The Palestinians, for their part, are supposed to stop incitement, renounce violence and terrorism and arrest, disrupt and restrain individuals and groups planning terrorist acts.

According to the United States, whose role is to monitor implementation, neither side has met its obligations.

Terrorism continues apace, but on a much lower level than at the height of the intifadah six years ago. This past December, three Palestinian groups – Hamas, Islamic Johad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade – took credit for the murder of two Israeli settlers near Hebron. In February, Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade claimed responsibility for a suicide bombing in Dimona in which a Russian immigrant was killed. Last month, in western Jerusalem, a Palestinian man apparently unaffiliated with any armed organization opened fire on rabbinical students at the Mercaz Harav yeshiva, killing eight young men. In February and March, Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip – unilaterally relinquished by Israel in the summer of 2005 and seized by Hamas from Fatah about a year later – fired hundreds of Qassam rockets at Israeli border kibbutzim and the town of Sderot and almost two dozen longer-range and more sophisticated Katyushas at the city of Ashkelon, causing few casualties but extensive property damage.

These attacks occurred as the Palestinian pollster Khalil Shikaki found that, while a considerable majority of Palestinians supported the murder of the seminary students and the rocket attacks, two-thirds of the respondents said they were in favour of a two-state solution and normalized relations with Israel.

Responding to these daily missile barrages, Israel launched a series of incursions, backed by air power, into Gaza, killing 120 Palestinians, some of whom were civilians caught in the crossfire. After denouncing Israel's "unjust war and open-ended massacres," the PA suspended peace talks with Israel for one week. Abbas, who had earlier threatened to "pursue armed conflict," said he would resume talks with Israel only after it reached a truce with Hamas. Under U.S. pressure, the Palestinians returned to the negotiations, explaining that the peace process is "a strategic choice" for them.

Before resuming talks, Abbas said that if a peace agreement is not signed this year, it will never materialize. Clearly, he was engaging in hyperbole. Yet no one doubts that he was expressing deep-seated frustrations with Israel's policies. In recent months, the mainstream Palestinian leadership, the most moderate in decades, has accused Israel of undermining the road map by erecting new roadblocks, expanding existing settlements, building new neighbourhoods in contested areas, tolerating unauthorized outposts and launching fresh raids in the West Bank.

Condoleezza Rice, the U.S. secretary of state, confers with PA President Mahmoud Abbas at a recent meeting.

The Israeli government has approved the construction of hundreds of new homes in such locales as Givat Zeev, a settlement north of Jerusalem, and Pisgat Zeev, a neighbourhood in eastern Jerusalem annexed in 1967. Israel justifies its unilateralism on the basis of its intention to retain settlement blocs near its capital. Last week, Olmert reiterated that Israel will not stop building in and around Jerusalem, declaring that "these places will remain in Israel's hands."

Although Olmert vowed at Annapolis that unauthorized construction in the territories would be banned, and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni said that the expansion of West Bank settlements is "unhelpful," a survey conducted by Peace Now indicates that there have been 101 cases of settlement construction since this past December.

By the terms of the road map, Israel also is obligated to evacuate unauthorized outposts in the West Bank established since March 2001. Two years ago, settlers were removed from one such outpost, Amona, but they have since returned. Defence Minister Ehud Barak, who is reluctant to dismantle the outposts by force and has described the Amona operation as "rash," wants to resolve the issue through discussions with the settlers. But no viable solution has surfaced. Since roughly three-quarters of the outposts are supposedly on private Palestinian land, the issue cannot be postponed for much longer. "We don't want a confrontation," Ramon said recently, "but if there is no choice, the government will fulfil its obligations."

As well, the Palestinians are pressing Israel to honour its promise to reopen Palestinian institutions – such as Orient House and the Arab Chamber of Commerce – in eastern Jerusalem and to call a halt to military operations in the West Bank. The Palestinians, too, are demanding the dismantlement of 580 checkpoints and roadblocks. Last week, in deference to Rice, Israel announced that 50 earthen roadblocks will be removed and that the PA can deploy police officers in Jenin. PA police are already in Nablus.

In an encouraging sign, Israel and the PA renewed talks on March 18 on final status issues ranging from final borders to Israeli settlements in the West Bank, but Jerusalem was not on the agenda because Olmert wants to leave it for last.

In general, Israel's policy is to continue pressing ahead with diplomacy while striking Hamas when necessary. But Israel has warned the PA that if reconciliation talks with Hamas should succeed, the peace process would grind to a halt. On the other hand, can Israel and the PA really reach peace without Hamas? Probably not.

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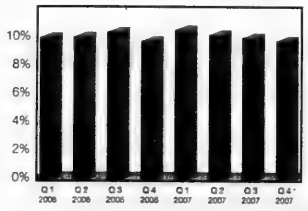

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Big ideas: Zionism, identity discussed at UJA forum

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Israel's struggles as a nation, the future of Jewish values and the fight against anti-Semitism were topics of panel discussions at UJA Federation of Toronto's Big Ideas Forum last week at the city's Park Hyatt Hotel.

The speakers were members of the Shalem Center, a research centre founded by scholars and public figures from Israel and the Diaspora. The keynote speaker was former member of Knesset, Natan Sharansky.

Sharansky, author of *Fear No Evil* and *The Case for Democracy*, spoke on March 30 about "The Power of An Idea – The Ongoing Creation of the Jewish State."

The Refusenik hero, who spent nine years in a Russian gulag from 1977 to 1986, began by discussing a special role former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon assigned him to investigate modern anti-Semitism on university campuses.

"I saw the delegitimization and demonization of Israel. I decided it wasn't enough to write articles and to talk about it. I decided I needed to visit campuses," said Sharansky, adding that "the anti-Israel propaganda [there] was overwhelming."

The day after the forum, Sharansky visited York University to deliver a lecture, an event that was organized by Hillel of Greater Toronto, UJA Federation and the Centre for Jewish Studies at York.

According to a statement released by Hillel and UJA, both Sharansky and about 100 students in attendance were harassed and intimidated by anti-Israel students who attempted to shut down the event by drowning out the lecture with boos and jeers.

Zac Kaye, Hillel's executive director, said in the statement that "the inexcusable conduct of those who seek to eliminate civil discourse through violent rhetoric is unacceptable. Hillel's deep commitment to exposing students to the wide scope of ideas and viewpoints will not be undermined by those seeking to destroy this basic principle."

At the Big Ideas Forum the day before, Sharansky talked about the importance of having students on campus who can respond intelligently to outrageous anti-Israel claims.

"We need 20, 30, 40 students on campus who know how to debate, who know the arguments, who know the truth, and can challenge the 'truths' people think they believe about human rights, and the reality of the Palestinian Authority and Hamas."

Sharansky made reference to his forthcoming book, *Defending Identity: Its Indispensable Role in Protecting Democracy* and stressed the importance for the Jewish people to reattach themselves to their cultural and religious roots.

He recalled that some 90 years ago, many Jews led the communist movement, striving for a kind of national unity, while steering away from Jewish peoplehood.

"They thought this was a great time to stop being part of the shtetl and the tribe, and our religion," he said. "But they ended up being a part of the worst regime in the world, who killed tens of millions of its own citizens…

"It is important to remind ourselves of this when talking about the meaning of the State of Israel. Israel cannot exist without its identity as a Jewish state."

Today, the same message of homogenizing into "citizens of the world" has become popular again, he said, which also carries the rhetoric of human rights. Human rights can be the outgrowth of Jewish values, not the other way around, he asserted.

"Human rights came from Judaism. It is us who have, 'Don't do to your fellow what you wouldn't do to yourself.' That's from Judaism," he said. "Israel is sensitive even to our enemies, which no other country in the world ever demonstrates."

Yossi Klein Halevi, author and pundit, spoke at the forum via satellite on "How Israel Is Meeting its Challenges Through the Realm of Ideas." Heather Reisman, CEO of Indigo/Chapters book stores, moderated the discussion.

Halevi, who is the Israel correspondent for *The New Republic*, spoke about Israel's image issues.

"It is really a war for the legitimacy of the Jewish story. It is far more profound than a political debate. As Israel and the Zionist story becomes delegitimized, all of Jewish history will be delegitimized," said Halevi to the 200 in attendance. "It's not a conflict between settlements, borders, occupation, but about the existence of a Jewish state."

Halevi made the distinction between the Jewish world's moral compass and the Islamic world's. He touted what he referred to as the "Baruch Goldstein test" – when a co-religionist commits terror, are we appalled?

"Jews passed the test with flying colours," he said, referring to the outrage at the Jewish terrorist in Israel who murdered 29 Arabs in a mosque in 1994. But with examples such as the Merkaz Harav yeshiva terrorist attack last month, where eight were murdered by an Islamic extremist, "Palestinians failed the test miserably. My ongoing frustration is that we didn't call them on it."

Also at the forum, a panel called "Zionism: An Idea That Has Changed the Jewish People" with the Shalem Center's Daniel Gordis, Meirav Jones and Daniel Polisar.

Jones spoke of the admiration gentiles had hundreds of years ago for Jewish liberal values and asked why today the history of the Jewish people isn't studied along equally with ancient Greek narratives.

Polisar invoked the Greek philosopher Archimedes, "If given a lever large enough, we can lift the world."

"We can transform what we learn," Gordis asserted. "We should, on our own as a Jewish state, be something unique. We have to see ourselves as ambassadors for our nation state."

With files from Sheri Shefa

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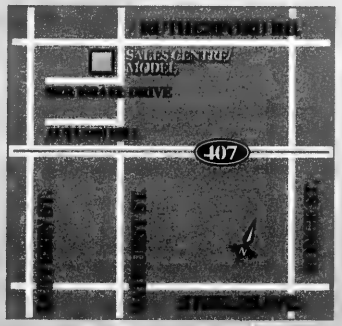

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BILD

Thornhill MPP puts up mezuzot at Queen's Park

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

In what might be a first at Queen's Park, Peter Shurman, Conservative MPP for Thornhill, has put up mezuzot on both his inner and outer chamber doors.

Shurman, who is Jewish, is a first-time MPP and was elected to Queen's Park in last year's provincial election.

He put up the mezuzot on March 31, the same day he gave his inaugural speech in the provincial legislature, he told *The CJN*.

"I was anxious to put a mezuzah up on the door, because it's part of my heritage," Shurman said. "A significant portion of Thornhill is occupied by Jewish people, many of whom are extremely religious, [and] worked hard in my campaign."

Shurman noted that the mezuzah on his outer office door is made of Jerusalem stone and was purchased in Israel by an observant friend specifically for his office.

"I was honoured to receive it," he said.

He added that the mezuzot were put up by prominent rabbis from Thornhill who were loyal to his campaign.

"I'm grateful to them for helping me get things started off with this mitzvah and putting these very important symbols of daily Jewish life on the entrance of the most important place of my business career," Shurman said.

Whether it's permissible for Shurman to place a religious symbol in public view at the province's main legislative building is an open question.

Pamela Longhurst, a spokesperson for the Office of the Sergeant at Arms – the office responsible for security and building management at Queen's Park – said there are no official regulations or conventions prohibiting Shurman or others from putting up religious signs or symbols at their personal chambers.

"If a member wants to do it, it's their office. I'm not sure if we allow it, but it's not something we'll police," Longhurst said. "I don't know if [a mezuzah placement] has been done before. We don't track that information."

Peter Shurman, Conservative MPP for Thornhill, stands outside his chambers at Queen's Park in front of his new Jerusalem-stone mezuzah. **[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]**

Shurman said he didn't think he would "get into trouble" for putting up the mezuzah.

Rabbi Michael Stavsky, who works at *The CJN*, noted that if Shurman were asked to take down the mezuzah on his outer chamber door, Jewish law would allow it, as it's not located at his personal residence.

Advertising Feature

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The sense of community is omnipresent here. The residents are extensively involved in day-to-day activities. There are lectures to attend; Professor Sharron Hyman speaks regularly on Jewish ethics. There are daily fitness classes, computer and art classes. There's entertainment, including Klezmer and Jazz. There are tea socials, challah baking...you name it, it's on the agenda. From the Kabbalat shabbat service led by Cantor Ron Graner to Jewish holiday observances, Constantia's Jewish environment provides a seamless transition from your current lifestyle.

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The wide range of activities extend well beyond Constantia. In addition to shopping excursions, outings take residents to the theatre, to casinos, to Harbourfront and other interesting locales.

The annual Senior Star competition held at Chartwell Retirement residences nationwide has become hugely popular. Constantia's entertainers are already honing their skills in anticipation of this year's June 19 event. Auditions will be held at Constantia May 21.

Constantia's extremely reasonable rates are all-inclusive; many amenities and services that are extras elsewhere — such as wireless lifelines, administration of medication and laundry — are standard here.

Outside, the beautifully landscaped grounds are connected by a walking path. Inside, the common areas include comfortable lounges, an activity centre, a greenhouse, a library, billiards and games rooms, a spa, a fitness centre, a beauty salon, laundry rooms on each level, and a big-screen theatre. All suites feature individual climate control and fresh air supply, ensuite bathroom with step-in shower, and kitchenette.

At Constantia, the residents' joie-de-vivre will redefine your notions of retirement living. Who would have thought that moving into a retirement residence could be so uplifting? At Constantia, it is.

Residents knit to give. *This industrious group of Constantia residents, who call themselves the* ***Knit Wits Circle Knitting Club,*** *donate proceeds from the sale of their handiwork to the Hospital for Sick Children. (L to R) Mrs. Sheila Gibbert, Mrs. Dinee Reading, Mrs. Goldie Plotkin, Mrs. Sybil Grevler, Mrs. Helen Brown, Mrs. Rose Bermanski, Mrs. Ruth Zaretsky, and Mrs. Charlotte Sasto. Also part of the group but not present here are Mrs. Sylvia Turner and Mrs. Bernice Goldberg. Kneeling at rear is Activities Manager Ms. Anthea Williams.*

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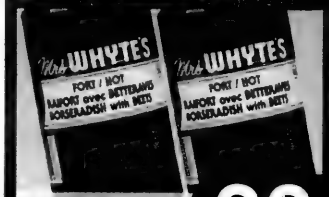

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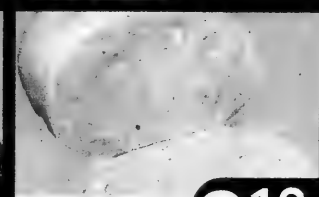

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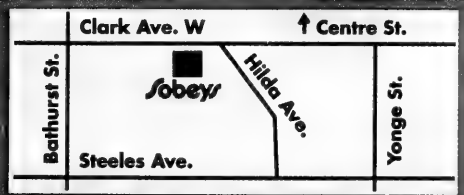

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Parents plead to keep She'arim open

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Emotions ran high at an open meeting last week as concerned parents and staff called on the community not to give up on Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, which is scheduled to close in June.

More than 100 people gathered April 3 at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation for the open meeting, which was held in an attempt to convince UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Mercaz, formerly federation's Board of Jewish Education, to keep the school's doors open.

The 27-year-old school – which is currently housed at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and serves 75 students with learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and mild forms of autism – is plagued by financial problems.

But Ellen Frischman-Snyder, a parent of a student at She'arim who led the meeting with a co-founder of the school, Rabbi Joseph Kelman, rabbi emeritus of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, said that the issue "boils down to Jewish values versus monetary values.

"A business model does not always work in the education field. Sometimes, business models are in conflict with Jewish values," she said.

Rabbi Kelman said he can understand why so many people are upset about the "possible" closing.

He said it's a "mistake" to close the school because students with learning disabilities would be forced to go back to schools where they used to be miserable, unsuccessful, and made fun of by other children.

"Mercaz and federation have acted in haste. What is the hurry? Even my own board acted in haste… I suggested that before a decision be made to close the school, give us a couple weeks to go to the community, because I am convinced that there are people in this room, there are people in the community, who would be very glad to help raise a million or $2 million," Rabbi Kelman said.

But UJA spokesperson Howard English told *The CJN* the day after the meeting that that the school would have to raise "well over $2 million" to cover both She'arim's deficit and its operating costs for one year, and the likelihood of raising that amount is not good. He added that the BJCC is closing at the end of June 2009 and the school would have to find another location that could accommodate it.

"She'arim would be educating, at the most, 50 students. It is a very high cost for a small number of students."

Matthew Moyal, a lawyer and parent of a student at She'arim who spoke at the meeting said whether it is about 50 students or 500 students, She'arim will always be needed.

He said She'arim needs to work with the Mercaz to come up with a practical solution to the school's financial woes.

"There are budgetary concerns, there is debt owing, but it is not a quick fix just to shut a school down," Moyal said.

"I run a law office and sometimes we're up and sometimes we're down. We don't just shut down. We work with the problem."

Lou Greenbaum, the chair of the Mercaz, attended the meeting to update the audience about the developments and accommodations being made for the She'arim students.

But before he did, he said it was unfair to accuse the Mercaz or the federation of closing the school.

"The decision that was taken to close the school is the decision coming out of a recommendation from a joint management committee, which was established when She'arim came to the community and indicated that it was basically not financially viable," Greenbaum said.

He said that next year, 18 She'arim students who will be entering Grade 8 will be housed at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto for a one-year program.

He said the program was designed under the supervision of TanenbaumCHAT principal Helen Fox and the She'arim administration.

Greenbaum added that the students will be taught by TanenbaumCHAT's special education teachers and they hope the students will be able to make the transition into CHAT's Grade 9 special education program.

He said that within the next couple of weeks, UJA will be deciding how to accommodate the rest of She'arim's students.

Richard Stoll, a guidance counsellor at TanenbaumCHAT and a parent of a She'arim student, got a standing ovation after he challenged Greenbaum.

"I don't feel like we have a partner. I recognize your presence and I thank you for coming, but I don't think you're listening. I don't think you were ever listening."

He said that it is "criminal" that parents were told at Pesach that there would be no school next year.

Stoll referred to an ad in *The CJN* that ran late last year that said UJA and Mercaz had hired Beverley Freedman, a consultant to the Ontario Ministry of Education and Tehila Pearl, who has an MA from Bar-Ilan University in diagnosing and teaching students with learning disabilities, to put together a report.

The ad promised that no future initiatives affecting She'arim would be undertaken until the report was reviewed and discussed.

"Have we heard today one word from the Freedman-Pearl report? No, we haven't. I would like to know how Bev Freedman feels about this."

Attempts to reach Freedman were unsuccessful, but English said the report made suggestions about improvements that can be made in methodology and educational quality at She'arim and it was "exhaustively reviewed" by the administration of She'arim.

But he added, the report "did not touch the financial crisis plaguing the school," which is the reason for the closure.

He said that the joint management committee had been dealing with the issue since the fall of 2007 and that closing the school was "a last resort."

Debate on closure burdened by misinformation

By DAVID KOSCHITZKY

The debate over the fate of Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School is understandably emotional, and often, unfortunately, burdened by misinformation.

As a committed community volunteer for more than a decade, one who has devoted thousands of hours to the cause of Jewish education for all children whatever their needs, I find it painful to hear or read that our community has turned its back on She'arim. Or that She'arim's children are unimportant to our community. Or that She'arim will cease operations as it currently exists because our community does not want to help fund learning-disabled students. Or that our community is "lavishing millions" on new community centres at the expense of students with special needs.

These tired stereotypes are not supported by facts. It's time to deal with them, then put them aside and look to the future.

During the life of She'arim, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto supported the school in every way possible. Federation was instrumental in moving She'arim from its cramped former premises to its current location in the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre. Federation continued to provide well over $2 million dollars in tuition subsidies during a time when She'arim's enrolment was falling well below the minimum required by the community for subsidies. Our former Board of Jewish Education (now known as the Mercaz) devoted considerable educational consulting resources to the school. In fact, the Mercaz, years ago, demonstrated its devotion to children with special needs at She'arim and other schools by establishing a separate unit, Tikkun Chaim, to assist these students. And our Jewish Foundation encouraged endowment donors with a particular interest in special education to direct their investment proceeds to She'arim.

Despite significant community financial, educational and moral support, the board of She'arim faced mounting debts and continual dramatically dropping enrolment, and it approached federation for assistance in the fall of last year.

Together with the school, federation established a joint management committee, consisting of equal representation from She'arim and federation, in addition to Paul Shaviv, educational director of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. The committee conducted an exhaustive diagnosis of She'arim's financial condition and commissioned, at federation's expense, an educational study by objective outside experts.

Guest Voice

The committee came to the clear recommendation that She'arim, as it currently exists, even with continued federation financial grants, could not function financially. The ultimate decision to close, however, was made by She'arim's board of directors, in its role as an autonomous governing body.

Now it's time to move forward. Federation's primary priority always was and always will be to help provide a sensitive, quality education for the student population served by She'arim, regardless of the higher costs involved, precisely because we consider them so important to our community.

Taking into account this year's She'arim graduates, there are 52 She'arim children to place next year. The goal of our recently established, 16-member transition team, composed of representatives from five schools, as well as She'arim and federation, and a respected special education consultant from the Toronto District School Board, is to transition as many She'arim children as possible, as a group, to one school, where they will receive the special, expert attention they need.

Eighteen She'arim children, currently in Grade 7, have been offered Grade 8 placements at TanenbaumCHAT under the guidance of the school's well-respected special education department. Our team is in discussions with several other schools to transition the balance of children in a similar manner. I take great pride in how many different schools in our community have come forward to help us, as a community, handle this challenge.

One final matter: we are blessed with a magnificent community, one that cares deeply about all its children – whether or not they are day school students. Approximately two-thirds of Jewish school-age children in the GTA do not attend day schools. We wish this number were lower, and we are trying to encourage greater Jewish school enrolment with innovative marketing and quality programs. But we are not prepared to abandon children who are not enrolled at Jewish day schools. For many of them, Jewish community centres are critical to their Jewish identity. Jewish community centres are an urgent investment in our Jewish future. Our community is too great to say that we can only support Jewish schools at the expense of community centres or vice versa. Only by offering all Jewish young people, whatever their educational background or their unique needs, a place to grow as Jews, can we assure ourselves of a flourishing future.

The She'arim debate should not be about allegations, recriminations and unfounded epithets. It should be about love and respect for every youngster in our community. It should be about responsible, creative, caring solutions to a difficult challenge. It should be about moving ahead for the sake of our children. As a great Jewish community, we can expect no less of ourselves.

David Koschitzky is chair of the board of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

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Palestinians want to destroy Israel: columnist

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The readiness of Arabs to accept Israel's existence and legitimacy has sunk to a new low, claims U.S. analyst and syndicated newspaper columnist Daniel Pipes.

Pipes, who was in Toronto last month as a guest speaker for the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, said Israel is far less accepted by Arabs than it was 15 years ago.

"Talk of eliminating Israel has become mainstream discourse in the Arab world," he said in an interview.

Pipes, who is generally associated with right-wing causes, blames Israel itself for the "significant deterioration" in its status.

Daniel Pipes

Pipes, whose columns are distributed by the New York Times Syndicate, argued that Yitzhak Rabin, the late Israeli prime minister, placed Israel at a disadvantage when he agreed to negotiate with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) under the 1993 Oslo peace process.

He said Rabin's policy of engaging Israel's adversaries was misconceived.

"First you have to defeat your enemies," Pipes said.

"Oslo was premature, though I wasn't against it in principle," he added.

Pipes, the director of the Middle East Forum think tank, said Rabin should have convinced the Palestinians that they cannot defeat Israel before he started talks with the PLO.

In his view, the Palestinians want to destroy Israel. He described their policy as "this evil, irredentist goal."

Asked whether the current president of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, shares that objective, Pipes replied, "Abbas is [former PA president] Yasser Arafat with a tie. He wishes to see no Jewish state."

Pipes said Israel should concentrate on winning the struggle with the Palestinians rather than negotiating with its leadership.

But last week, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Abbas indicated that peace talks are proceeding.

Olmert declared he is determined to press ahead with negotiations "until we finalize a solution," while Abbas said that talks between Palestinian and Israeli negotiators have already adddressed "all core issues without exception: Jerusalem, refugees, settlements, borders and security."

In an allusion to these talks, Pipes suggested that the Israeli government has not grasped Palestinian intentions.

"So how can the United States?" he asked.

Pipes said Israel should not enter into final status negotiations until the Palestinians fully accept its existence and legitimacy.

ISRAEL EXPOSITION: Or Haemet Sephardic School recently held an exposition on "Sacred Eretz Israel." Students from junior kindergarten to Grade 8 created projects and displays expressing our special connection to Eretz Yisrael on topics including holy places in Israel, special mitzvot in Israel, biblical wildlife, topography, Jerusalem, Beit Hamikdash, shmittah and geographical landmarks. Some of the students are seen in costumes that were part of their projects.

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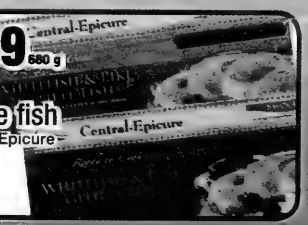

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Iran's human rights abuses can't be ignored: prof

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

An Iranian scholar said the government of Iran poses less of a threat to Israel than it does to the Iranian people.

Payam Akhavan, an associate professor in the faculty of law at McGill University and an international human rights expert, spoke recently about what he believes is the exaggerated threat by Iran against Israel and the human rights concerns in the Islamic Republic.

In his talk, titled "Human Rights Under Siege: What Should Canada Do?," Akhavan outlined what he contends are Iran's most pressing problems and what he thinks western nations should do in response.

Jonathan Kay, managing editor of the Comment pages at the *National Post*, moderated the talk.

"Iran remains a rogue state and is responsible for some of the instability in the region. It is a constellation of Shiite militias of Iran and extends into Gaza, Lebanon and Syria. What is it that drives Iranian power and [Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad?" asked Kay.

Kay said that he writes often about Iran and consumes countless articles about the Islamic Republic, but admitted that the country is still an enigma. "It seems to otherwise be a pro-American country, but the pronouncements of the president are vicious. And unlike other Arab countries, this one has a Jewish community. It's hard to square that with their state anti-Semitism."

Akhavan elaborated on still another paradox. "One is the hijab-clad, AK-47 toting 'death to America' crowd. The other is a lipstick- and miniskirt-wearing Iranian listening to western music on her iPod," he said. "We're not dealing with fossils that need to be studied and understood. The situation is complicated."

Payam Akhavan

The program, at Toronto's Heenan Blaikie law firm offices, was part of a business lunch lecture series of the Speakers Action Group, in conjunction with the Jewish Civil Rights Association.

The group's mandate is to provide knowledgeable speakers on topics that promote tolerance and fight anti-Semitism. This was the fifth of such events.

Akhavan was a war crimes prosecutor at international criminal tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. He also served with the United Nations in Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, during the height of tensions there. He quit the United Nations in 2001 because he was "exhausted by the human cruelty."

He spoke out against the brutality of the Iranian regime, outraged by the murder, in Europe, of 300 Iranian dissidents in the 1980s by the Islamic Republic's operatives. Akhavan accuses a weak-kneed Europe of giving in to Iran and not investigating the crimes, for the sake of oil resources.

Ahmadinejad's cabinet is guilty of countless crimes against humanity, too, according to Akhavan, who said that there have been some 4,000 state-sponsored executions of dissidents and moderates in recent years, which the West must take action against.

"There must be asset freezes, tribunals," he said. "[Iranian state] investments are in Toronto, Vancouver and many other cities. Canada alone cannot solve the problem, but it has leverage with its western neighbours."

Unfortunately, Iran's human rights abuses are often treated as a nuisance issue in diplomatic circles, which is focused instead on keeping nuclear weapons out of the hands of Iran.

"If Iran abandoned its nuclear program tomorrow, no one would talk about human rights. Just look at Libya," he said, referring to Muammar Khadafy's dismantling of a program to develop nuclear weapons after the United States invaded Iraq and how the international community now avoids discussion of Libya's tyranny.

Yet, Akhavan added, if Iran ever did acquire the bomb, it may not target Israel, contrary to popular belief. Radical Arab nationalism is much more a threat to Iran than the Jewish state, he said.

"Is it rational to believe of an Iranian first strike with a nuclear bomb [to Israel]? It is so unlikely that I have to put it into perspective. Their nuclear program was developed after their war with Iraq [1980-88]. Iran doesn't perceive a threat from Israel. Iranian conventional weapons outnumber Israel's. But Iran knows that the great equalizer is Israel's nuclear capability."

Regarding the alarming hate-filled rhetoric coming from Iran's leadership toward Israel and the United States, Akhavan said that it serves as a smokescreen to hide their own country's problems, including the knowledge that millions of dollars are being squandered to Hezbollah to fight Israel, yet there's no housing aid for the recent earthquake victims.

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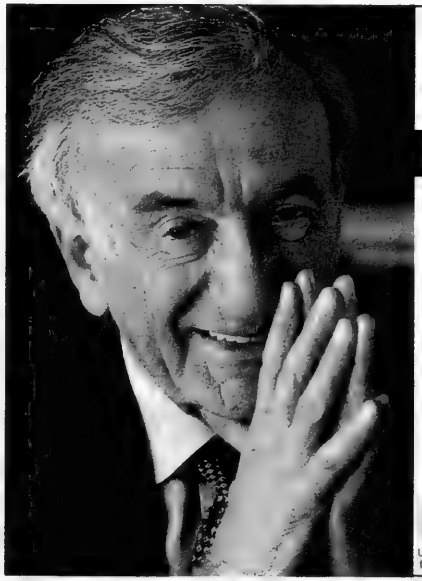

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'Don't say it's not your business, because it is'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Monologue describes an abusive marriage

Flower's Aren't Enough, Naomi Ackerman's one-hour monologue on domestic abuse, evolved from a short piece on violence against women.

A researcher, writer and performer, Ackerman, a U.S.-born Israeli, was approached by the Israeli government 10 years ago to write the short piece.

Naomi Ackerman

"Since then I've lengthened it and translated it into English, and I've performed it around the world more than 1,000 times," she said at a recent performance at Beth Tzedec Congregation that was co-sponsored by Beth Tzedec, its men's club and sisterhood, Jewish Family & Child, Jewish Women International of Canada and United Synagogue Day School's Bathurst branch.

The monologue tells the story of Michal, a young woman from an upper-middle class family who is in an abusive marriage. She describes how her partner physically abuses her, controls her and puts her down, and she talks about her denial and guilt. We watch her descend into the depths of despair, and then we witness her taking charge of her own life.

Ackerman writes in the program that the monologue "is woven from stories graciously shared by women willing to talk about their all-too-common experiences."

In a panel discussion following the performance, Ackerman – who spoke along with Beth Tzedec's Rabbi Sean Gorman and Debbie Feldman, supervisor of the women's abuse program at JF&C – said that she has met abused women "in every community, everywhere."

"People are [still] shocked that it occurs in the Jewish community. I'm proud that [we] talk about it and say that it's not OK. If it is happening next door, it is happening in your house. If someone is in trouble, don't hesitate to get involved. Don't say it's not your business, because it is."

She said that just because people don't talk about something, doesn't mean it doesn't happen.

"It does happen next door and across the street. To ignore it violates the biblical precept that we are not allowed to stand idly by the blood of our neighbours."

Rabbi Gorman, who has given sermons about domestic abuse, said the Talmud writes that "we are required to honour our wives more than ourselves. It is a long rabbinic tradition."

Asked why people still believe that domestic abuse does not occur in the Jewish community, Rabbi Gorman said that when we deny a reality enough times, we begin to believe it.

"A lie repeated often enough becomes the truth. A [myth such as this] takes more than a day or two to repair."

On a positive note, he said that 10 years ago, such a program would never have attracted the full house that came to see this performance. "This means there is progress."

Feldman said the more the community talks about women abuse, the more it is accepted as a complex social problem.

She said that her message to women is that there is help out there. "You are not alone. We are there to help you plan your family's safety."

She said that JF&C has been working on the issue since 1986, which is when its partnership with JWI began.

TIKKUN OLAM AWARD: Bialik Hebrew Day School was named institute of the year for 2008 by Ve'ahavta – The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian & Relief Committee in recognition of Bialik's partnership with Ve'ahavta over many years in projects that span all age groups throughout the school. Kirill Zaretsky, Ve'ahavta's director of development, left, recently presented the award to Bialik teachers, from left, Oriane Falkenstein and Hagit Dekel, and school counsellor Debra Danilewitz.

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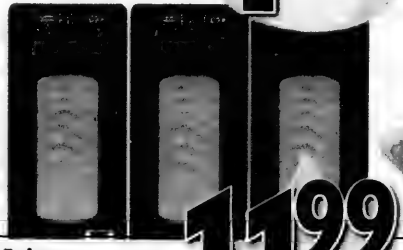

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Chabad fashion show honours *shluchot*

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham hosted a Mother-Daughter Fashion Show at The Bay Yorkdale late last month to honour 25 *shluchot*, or emissaries, who have worked to build their Jewish communities in Southern Ontario.

The March 30 event, attended by more than 400 women, was hosted by Erica Ehm, a former MuchMusic veejay and founder of the Yummy Mummy Club.

Before the crowd was treated to a fashion show that featured members of the Chabad community modelling collections and designs exclusive to The Bay, guest speaker Miryam Swerdlov lectured the women about the role of women in a Jewish family.

During her lecture, titled "If Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy," Swerdlov provided the audience with handouts that listed 24 sayings that, if practiced, can improve a Jewish woman's quality of life and the quality of life for her family.

Swerdlov, who is from Crown Heights, Brooklyn where she teaches history at Bais Rivka, an Orthodox school for girls, said that on the plane ride to Toronto, something the flight attendant said made her think about the role of women in Jewish families.

"She said before you put the seat belts on for the children, you need to put on the seat belt for you. That is a lesson in life. Because if Mama ain't OK, the kids aren't OK. We have to fix us before we can fix anybody else."

Swerdlov said that if something goes wrong, we have to P.U.S.H. – Pray until something happens.

"Guess what? You are not the general manager of the universe. Not even you. Let go and let God. Can you let Hashem do his job, please? All you have to do is pray and he'll take care of the rest."

She said that women today need to slow down.

"We live with so much stress. Say no to projects that don't fit your schedule. That will compromise your mental health. Don't do them trying to impress others. Don't do anything because some *yachneh* is going to be very impressed," she said, incorporating humour into her presentation wherever she could.

Swerdlov added that it is important to simplify your life.

Another tip Swerdlov offered to the women in attendance was about honouring Shabbat with your besf.

"Stop saving your silver and your crystal and your goblets, I'm not sure for who. Stop it. Use it Friday night for Shabbat dinner. Who are you saving it for? The Queen of England? I got a call, she's not coming to you…" she said, eliciting laughter from the audience.

"Your kids should see that you honour Shabbat with your best. Don't save it for another time. This is the time."

Swerdlov ended her lecture with a message about the importance of being positive even when times get tough.

"We women are great. We have to learn how to dance no matter what. We have to learn how to smile no matter what. Our husbands, our children, our world depend on us. It is not what you have that counts, it is what you are."

Following Swerdlov's address, Rebbetzin Goldie Plotkin of the Chabad of Markham briefly spoke to the crowd about the purpose of the event.

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham hosted a Mother-Daughter Fashion Show at The Bay Yorkdale last month that featured members of the Chabad community modelling collections and designs exclusive to The Bay. [Sheri Shefa photos]

"When we decided to have the fashion show here at Yorkdale… people were saying, 'A fashion show? Chabad? What's the connection?' If you think about it, the truth is, the fashion show is the perfect plan for a Chabad because when God created the world, he wanted to create a world where the physical and spiritual permeate one another… Everything that God has created can be elevated to something holy. Our clothing, when properly attired, becomes holy," Plotkin said.

"The 25 beautiful woman that we are honouring tonight, they have excelled in taking physicality and bringing it to a level of spirituality. That is what the Lubavitcher Rebbe has sent us here to do. He has sent us here to take all physical beauty of Toronto and make it a place where God wants to live."

After the 25 women were called up as a group to be recognized for their achievements, guests were given the opportunity to shop at The Bay after hours and received a 10 per cent discount on their purchases.

A portion of the proceeds from the event ticket sales went to L'chaim, an organization that offers support to women with cancer.

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Jewish Life

A fifth cup, for the future

By RABBI BARUCH FRYDMAN-KOHL

Rabbinic Reflections

During the Passover seder, the four cups of wine mark the four promises of God: "I am Hashem. I will free you... I will deliver you... I will redeem you... I will take you to be my people [Exodus 6,6-7]."

In a discussion about this in the Talmud Yerushalmi, Rabbi Tarfon suggests that an additional cup of wine should be consumed to reflect a fifth promise: "I will bring you to the Land that I promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." According to many commentators, this is the origin of the Cup of Elijah – a fifth cup that reflects the hope for a messianic, redemptive return to the Land of Israel.

When the State of Israel was established in 1948, Rabbi Menachem Kasher unsuccessfully proposed that after Israeli independence, we should consume that fifth cup. In our home, even though we don't drink the fifth cup, we do pour a bit from our individual cups into the Cup of Elijah to indicate that we join with God to play a part in the act of redemption.

Rabbi Michael Marmur suggests interpreting the cups of wine at the seder as being indicative of different Jewish perspectives on contemporary life, with the fifth cup representing the role of Israel in unifying our people.

The first cup is full, reminding us of the blessing of sufficiency. This cup is for those Jews who feel blessed by our families, by having enough, and by the virtues that guide our lives: kindness and chesed, tzedakah and justice, humanity and menschlichkeit. This is a cup of fulfilment.

The second cup is empty, signalling to us that there is real poverty, powerlessness and pain in this world. We have glimpsed this on the streets of Toronto, in the newsclips from Sudan's Darfur region, and in the missile attacks on Sderot. This cup calls on us to act in solidarity with those who still experience life as problematic and painful. This is a cup of challenge.

The third cup is overflowing, pointing to those who seek enlightenment, ecstasy or serenity. There are spiritual seekers who want something that will give transcendent meaning to their daily lives. Whether through kabbalah, meditation, or yoga, these Jews want something beyond the ordinary. This is the cup of rapture.

The fourth cup is broken, calling us to realize that the Holocaust profoundly disrupted the lives of so many of our people. Emil Fackenheim wrote that we cannot imagine Jewish life as ever being the same after the Shoah, even as we are bidden to continue to live as Jews. This cup calls on Jews to exercise power so that we will never again become victims. This is the cup of rupture.

Rabbi Marmur writes that each of these cups is "important and each is deficient. A commitment to [individual] happiness outside of history [may create] walls" that cut off our personal lives from the rest of the world, as if our own homes and family are enough.

A concern for others' problems may blind us to the legitimacy of our own needs.

"A search for spiritual fulfilment can sometimes shift from self-development to self-indulgence.

"An awareness of rupture can too easily slide into a justification of every act in terms of a rampant survivalism."

In Hebrew, *mizzug* is the pouring of wine. The same term refers to the blending of the many different Jews who have come to the tiny country of Israel. In a deep sense, Israel is *mizzug galluyot*, the mixing of the diversity of Diaspora Jewish life into a new blend. Israel pours for us a blended fifth cup of wine, for while it has provided survival, security and stability for our people, it is also full of poverty, pain, and the challenge of making peace.

Just as as the search for spiritual uplift through meditation or mitzvot is a part of life in the Holy Land for many Jews, so, too, is awareness of the Holocaust a constant reminder of the need for strength, swiftness and self-sufficiency. Israel is a complex country seeking a civic culture that will blend the wine of all four cups.

May each of the cups you drink during Pesah add to your self awareness and understanding of the variety of Jewish life.

When you sit for the seder, think about the historic issues that Israel resolved, the contemporary challenges it faces, and how Israel might blend and unify the various aspects of your Jewish yearnings and identity. Chag Kasher v'Samayach!

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl is spiritual leader of Toronto's Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Curriculum for high school students targets anti-Semitism

By ADI NEUBERGER
Special to The CJN

Ontario secondary school students and teachers are being offered a new tool to target anti-Semitism and confront its current effects right in the classroom.

Anti-Semitism in the Past and the Present, a newly released high school curriculum created by Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC), has been added to the academic arsenal aimed at eradicating hatred of Jews and other forms of intolerance through education.

The program, which complies with provincial Ministry of Education guidelines, is a series of interdisciplinary lessons for secondary school students studying English, dramatic arts, civics and Canadian history. It was designed for Grade 10 students, but FSWC consultant, Lindsay Soberano-Wilson said that teachers can tailor the program to suit pupils of all ages.

"The curriculum is designed so that teachers can easily adapt the lessons for students in other grades and even apply them to other types of racism," she told a small audience attending its official launch at the FSWC's Canadian headquarters in Toronto recently.

The new curriculum is part of FSWC's Tools to Teach certification program, which aims to help teachers introduce the topic of anti-Semitism into the classroom and to help students understand and identify its various forms. To date, more than 700 educators, police officers and journalists from across Canada have participated in the program.

With some 5,000 copies of the curriculum already distributed throughout the GTA, Soberano-Wilson noted that its effectiveness depends upon the number of teachers who choose to incorporate it into their overall course curriculum. "It's essentially up to educators to embrace and implement such an initiative if it is to achieve its objective," she said.

Paul McMorrow, superintendent of the Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board, said the FSWC curriculum is an effective and easy way for teachers to tackle the tough topic of anti-Semitism. It also represents a "significant step forward" in the fight against all forms of hatred, he added, simply because it's a "tremendous resource and teaching model."

McMorrow hopes other provincial school board superintendents promote the curriculum by persuading board members to endorse and encourage its use throughout Ontario's 72 district school boards. "This curriculum can only be successful if it is promoted from within the ranks," he said.

"Teachers are the ones fighting on the front lines in the war we're waging against anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred and intolerance," said Leo Adler, FSWC's director of national affairs. "It's imperative that we get through to these young people if there's any hope for a future free of intolerance."

Jewish Life

Megiddo: key to ancient Israel archeology

By ALEX GROPPER

Past Forward

Megiddo is arguably the most important of all the many archeological mounds in Israel. Its name has even passed into popular folklore. The Hebrew term for the mound of Megiddo is Har Megiddo, which has become shortened in English as Armageddon, which, according to the Book of Revelation in the Christian New Testament, is the place where the last great battle between the forces of good and evil will occur.

Historically Megiddo has been the site of numerous battles. In 1469 BCE, Pharaoh Thutmosis III, called by some the Napoleon of ancient Egypt, defeated a Canaanite coalition at Megiddo. This gave Egypt control of all of Canaan until the 12th century BCE. Some 1,500 years later, in the 13th century CE, the Mongol hordes unleashed by Genghis Khan suffered their first defeat nearby at the hands of the Mamelukes. This defeat put an end to the Mongol conquests and also inadvertently sealed the fate of the Crusaders in the Holy Land. (It was the Mameluke Sultan, Baybars, who destroyed the nearby Crusader castle at Caesarea.)

This was also the place where in 1917 the British general, Edmund Allenby, defeated the Ottomans, thus giving Britain control of the region for the next 30 years. Most recently, in 1948, a fledgling Haganah defeated Arab forces to give the new State of Israel control of the strategic area. It was a scene vividly portrayed in the closing scenes of the 1960 Hollywood epic, *Exodus*, based on the Leon Uris novel of the same name.

What makes Megiddo so important is its strategic location astride two major routes that bisect the country. One route leads up the coast, while the other goes east through the Jezreel (or Esdraelon) Valley toward the Jordan Valley and ultimately to Damascus and beyond.

Archeologically, Megiddo has been dug a number of times, first by the Germans at the beginning of the 20th century, later by the Americans in the interwar years, and finally by the Israelis, most recently in a joint project involving Tel Aviv University and Penn State University.

The site is crucial to understanding the chronology of ancient Israel, especially in an international context. It has been called the key to unlocking the cross-cultural relations between ancient Israel and the rest of the Near East throughout the Bronze Age and even into the Iron Age, circa 3100 to 900 BCE.

The most recent Penn State-TAU expedition has had three of the finest scholarly minds in the field involved in trying to solve the riddle of Megiddo. These are David Ussishkin and Israel Finkelstein of TAU and Baruch Halpern of Penn State. So far, these three acclaimed scholars have failed to reach a consensus among themselves, let alone on the overall result of their excavations.

Finkelstein is the most controversial of the three, and he has argued for a lower chronology, saying that Israelite Megiddo did not reach its apex until the reign of Omri in the ninth century BCE. Yet, more than 40 years ago, the legendary Israeli archaeologist, soldier and statesman Yigael Yadin had seen a similarity in the gates of Megiddo and Hazor leading him to argue that they were built by Solomon. Finkelstein and others have since argued that these magnificent gates were built by Omri and his son Ahab (who was married to the notorious Jezebel).

Scholars cannot even agree on who, or what, caused the destruction of Megiddo at the end of the 11th century BCE, just as the Israelite monarchy was being established. Some have argued that David caused this destruction when he conquered the city, whereas others see the possibility of an earthquake at work.

If there is no consensus on these relatively late events, how can scholars tackle the more critical and contentious earlier periods? These are the periods that are needed to link the earlier history of Canaan to the more reliably dated histories of Egypt and Mesopotamia. They are crucial to our understanding of Israel's early history and the formative events of the Bible.

Kosher wine: this is now

By MARK METKIEWICZ

The Jewish Highway

So many great kosher wines. So little space to write about them. Rather than turn this column into a list of wines (guaranteed to irk oenophiles because it could never be complete), I prefer to take you on an eclectic tour of kosher wine sites.

KosherWineGuy. com **[kosherwineguy.com]** and Kosher Wine Review. **[tinyurl.com/26rxhb]** clock in with hundreds of reviews of wines from around the world.

And kosher wine from Canada? Absolutely. But it may not be what you think. Rodrigues Winery of Newfoundland is certified kosher for its blueberry, plum, cranberry and other fruit wines, liqueurs and brandies. Since you won't find grapes or grape wines at Rodrigues, the kashrut certification process has far fewer requirements. **[tinyurl.com/3xr2vw]**

If you are searching for the perfect kosher Chardonnay or want to recommend a delightful Zinfandel, you should take a look at Chowhound's Kosher Message Board. A current discussion was kicked off with this: "I am visiting my parents soon and am pretty sick of drinking the Manischewitz that for some reason stays in their frig year round. I want them to expand their taste, but I don't really know what is good." Check out the recommendations or offer some of your own. **[chowhound.com/topics/485327]**

How did we get to this explosion of great wines? Daniel Rogov, wine and restaurant critic for *Ha'aretz*, has written a superb overview in Reform Judaism Online titled The Long Winding Road to World Class Wine. **[tinyurl.com/2wtlhz]**

One of the most historic names in the world of kosher wines belongs to Abarbanel Wines. Based in the Languedoc-Roussillon region in the southwest of France, the family traces its name back to Don Yitzchak Abarbanel, famed religious leader and royal adviser to Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand. **[tinyurl.com/38bgju]**

When you land at the Abarbanel site, you are welcomed with a few bars from Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. **[kosherwine.com]** Classy? I suppose. But I preferred things a few years ago when the wine marketed itself slightly differently. Back then, you were greeted with a delightful version of the Beach Boys' hit *Barbara Ann*. Luckily, I was able to track down an archival copy. **[tinyurl.com/yw2svp]**

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Abarabel – it's really swell
Abarabel – really swell
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All winemakers face a multitude of challenges: unpredictable weather, bad harvests and the changing taste of consumers. Kosher winemakers face all those and more. Craig Witchell was CEO and the sole permanent employee of Gan Eden Wines of Sebastopol, Calif. He has written a lovely essay about his odyssey growing up in Louisville, Ky., rediscovering Judaism and starting his own kosher winery. Ultimately, he and his wife had to close down the winery as they were unable to provide a Jewish education for their children while living on their farm in northern California. **[ganeden.com/myjewish.htm]**

Just because there are great kosher wines out there doesn't mean that kosher consumers are clamouring for them. With Passover just around the corner, the Kosher Wine Review has published a Seder Strategy for the Four Cups. The first piece of advice: know your participants: "The finest wine in the world is wasted if the people at the seder won't drink it. Many Jews in the United States were raised on syrupy, sugary wines; give them a bottle of Chateau Giscours and you might as well pour the wine down the sink instead." Try giving them some good, sweet wines this year and maybe next something more daring. **[tinyurl.com/32ybkq]**

Kosher winemakers may pride themselves on delivering a more sophisticated product for a more discriminating consumer. But not everybody's impressed with these changes – as Alice Feiring wrote about her mother in Wine Today. "Mother took a sip, and with her totally uneducated palate said, 'It tastes like wood.' She was right. Then she said, 'You know what this needs?' She took her bottle of 'naturally sweet' Kedem Matuck Rouge and cut the Herzog wine half and half. She took a sip and said, 'Now, that's a wine.'" **[tinyurl.com/3dcewd]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Jewish students fight for dignity at York

By ORNA HOLLANDER
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

Racism, apartheid, torture, ethnic cleansing, imperialism, colonialism, Nazism, and terrorism – these are examples of the many accusations that are entrenched in the constant bombardment of anti-Israel messaging at York University.

March 27 was no different. With a "60 Years of Nakba" rally, organized by Students Against Israeli Apartheid (SAIA), the scene at Vari Hall, York University's highest-traffic area, could be described as nothing less than appalling.

Dozens of Palestinian flags and banners proclaiming "Zionism is racism" and "shame on Israel" were prominently displayed. These visual messages were accompanied by hundreds of people chanting slogans such as "death to apartheid" and "shame on the Zionists," creating an atmosphere of intimidation for Jewish students and Israel advocates alike.

The crowd was further incited by speeches from SAIA students, as well as a CUPE representative, political science professor David McNally.

The speeches were loaded with false facts, such as the accusation that Tel Aviv University is built on "ethnically cleansed land" and that it studies the best "methods of the torture of Palestinian children."

McNally even urged the students to pick sides.

Unfortunately, this intolerant and hateful display is neither the first nor will be the last of its kind at York.

In an attempt to combat the one-sided rhetoric on campus, Zionist groups at York have been working to represent Jewish students.

Most recently, Hasbara Fellowships and Betar launched their "terror built this fence" campaign in order to challenge the false allegation that Israel's security fence along its boundary with the West Bank acts as an apartheid wall.

When it comes to the large gatherings of anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic forces, York's Zionist groups are largely outnumbered.

With hundreds of anti-Israel advocates condemning the Jewish right to self determination, some believe that Jewish students should just stay out of Vari Hall, claiming that there is no point in being there.

To them, I answer that the purpose is dignity.

We will not and cannot stay away and allow others to trample on our dignity.

In response to the rally, York's Jewish students rallied under the campus Zionist leadership of Hasbara and Betar in a "drown out the hate" campaign.

Clearly, singing Israeli songs, playing musical instruments and chanting "stop the hate, stop the lies" to drown out the hateful and anti-Semitic claims of the anti-Israel faction does not serve to educate the campus community as to the truth about Israel.

But at least Jewish and Zionist students can walk through Vari Hall with their heads held high, instead of hanging them in shame – and that is something.

To view the Hasbara and Betar "Drown Out the Hate" film, go to YouTube and type the title in the search field.

Orna Hollander is executive director of Betar Canada.

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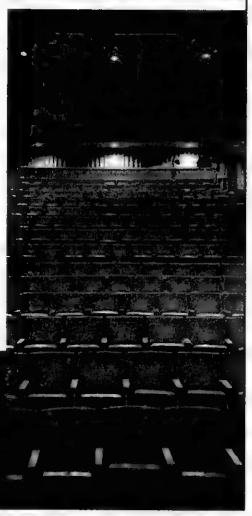

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York's Jewish holiday policy called discriminatory

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A York University professor says he was gratified to learn that an investigation into York's 34-year-old policy of closing the school on Jewish High Holy Days found the practice discriminatory.

David Noble, a history professor at York, has been butting heads with the school's administration for four years since he first called on the university to cancel its practice of closing the school on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur because he said it's against the law.

During the past four years, York has maintained that the policy was put in place to accommodate the large number of students and faculty who would have to miss classes on those days.

Statistics compiled by York political science professor Thomas Klassen show that Jews comprise almost six per cent of York's 51,000-strong student body.

Noble filed a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) in 2006, and late last month, OHRC investigator Kim Hanson filed a report to the commission that said York's "practice of not scheduling classes on Jewish High Holy Days clearly results in differential treatment on the basis of creed, in that individuals of one group, those of Jewish faith, are given preferential treatment over others."

Noble, a non-practising Jew, said "the Human Rights Commission has said what I've been saying for four years. The real question is will York comply? Four years ago, I made this request of [then-president Lorna Marsden]. Then I was referred to the chair of the senate, then the university council, then the ombudsman.

"This is not rocket science," he added.

"I also wrote to Mamdouh Shoukri, the new president, in July, making the same request as soon as he took office. He didn't [respond]. He just brushed me off."

Noble added that it's a "sad thing that it had to come to this.

"York University is so unwilling to comply with the law and stop its discrimination that they have to be forced. That is a puzzle to me."

York spokesperson Alex Bylik said that although the investigator's report concluded York's policy is discriminatory, the commission has yet to make a ruling.

"A case analysis report by an investigator was prepared for the commission on a complaint by David Noble that alleges unequal treatment in services and with respect to employment on the basis of creed and association… He alleges that [York] affords privileged accommodation to Jewish students… with regard to observance of religious holidays," Bylik said.

"We have 21 days to respond to this case analysis, which the commissioners will then consider."

OHRC spokesperson Afroze Edwards said that once the report and all other supporting materials are presented to the commissioners, they will decide whether to refer the complaint to a hearing.

Noble said it's a "mystery" to him why York refuses to change its policy.

"The accommodation policy at York is a very generous one, so that anyone who wants to observe their religious holiday can get out of class, and exams are not scheduled on those days if possible – that is actually senate policy. What we're talking about it something unique, which is actually shutting down the university. No other faith is so recognized," he said. "If they were doing this for Sikhs or Muslims, my position would be the same."

Noble said that now that the issue is out of his hands and between York and the OHRC, the university will have to comply.

Daniel Ferman, president-elect of Hillel at York, said: "A large number of York community members, including students, faculty and staff, would be adversely effected if the university decided to not close the school on Jewish High Holy days. While this would be disappointing, we are confident that the university administration will ensure that there is reasonable accommodation for Jewish students, staff and faculty."

Excalibur issues apology

Hillel of Greater Toronto says it isn't satisfied with an apology that ran in York University's campus paper for printing an article that Hillel says condoned the murder of eight Israeli yeshiva students.

On March 19, *Excalibur* ran an opinion piece by Lama Aggad titled "Jewish attack not a surprise" that tried to justify the March 6 murder of eight students at Yeshivat Mercaz Harav in Jerusalem.

"This school has direct connections with the Israel Defence Forces (IDF), and its graduating students are those whom are committing a holocaust in Gaza in the Palestinians eyes… and the Palestinians are simply targeting the source of that attack," Aggad wrote.

"Shocked and appalled" by the article, Hillel at York's president Eva Zucker, president-elect Daniel Ferman and vice-president, external-elect Meyer Mechanic wrote a letter to *Excalibur* demanding a formal, written apology.

"As the main news outlet on campus, *Excalibur* has the responsibility to uphold the tradition of academia at York University instead of being hijacked by fringe partisan politics. It is difficult to imagine how *Excalibur* could ever have published these horrendous statements," the letter, which was printed March 27, stated.

"Aggad's naïve level of analysis regarding the terrorist act justifies the murder of eight young students and… we are deeply disturbed by the concept that the death of Jews, or of anyone else for that matter, can somehow be condoned."

The newspaper printed an unsigned apology on March 27, saying that the editors had felt the article "attempted to posit an explanation for why the school was targeted from the alleged perspective of the Palestinian population. At no point did *Excalibur* believe the article was offering a justification for murder."

Excalibur apologized for the headline and for the article's many inaccuracies including the misrepresentation the ages of the victims, for implying that all students of the school serve in the IDF, and for misrepresenting a quote by former Israeli prime minister Menachem Begin.

The following day, Hillel released a statement that said although *Excalibur* apologized for the article's headline and inaccuracies in the story, it denied that the article condoned the killings.

In its statement, Hillel also asked York's administration to speak out against "the newspaper's insensitivity and its acceptance of hateful content."

Noting that "the paper is student-run," university spokesperson Alex Bilyk told *The CJN*: "Excalibur reacted quickly and learned a valuable lesson. York does not condone hurtful comments nor any justification for murder." —*S.S.*

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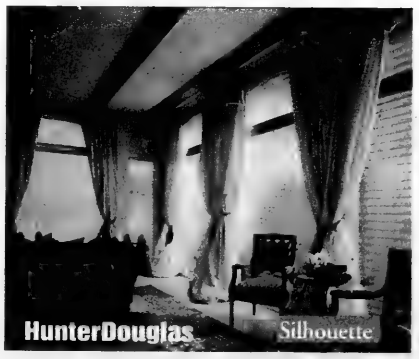

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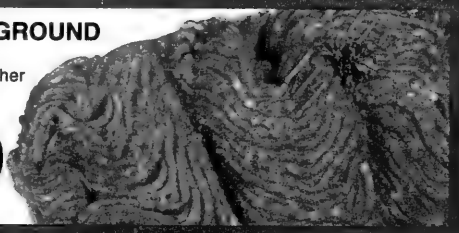

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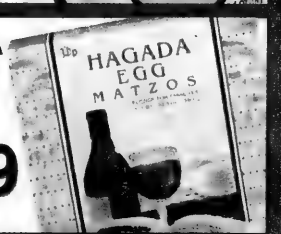

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Ahenakew declines reinstatement to First Nations group

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

David Ahenakew's reinstatement as a senator with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) was scuppered late last week – by Ahenakew himself.

The former native leader turned down a Senate seat with the organization he once headed, and then aimed a broadside at the federal and provincial governments, who he claimed were out "to punish First Nations people. It is shameful that the government would use an individual who has apologized for a grave mistake, to hold hostage the poorest segment of our society," he stated.

Ahenakew was likely referring to a warning from Federal Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister Chuck Strahl that the government would have to reconsider its support of the FSIN if Ahenakew was reinstated as a senator.

"Our government has valued the positive working relationship that we have had with the FSIN; however, based on this decision, we will now be reviewing that relationship. I have given clear instructions to my staff and my department to not participate in any meetings with FSIN in which Mr. Ahenakew is involved.

"Again, I want to strongly urge the FSIN to reconsider this unfortunate decision to have Mr. Ahenakew reinstated," Strahl stated in a news release.

Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall asked FSIN Chief Lawrence Joseph to reconsider its decision. "The decision to reinstate Mr. Ahenakew will place a serious strain on the relationship between our government and the FSIN at a time that we have been making important progress on a number of significant First Nations issues," Wall wrote in a letter to Joseph.

Earlier, the FSIN legislative assembly held a closed door meeting in which it voted 43-3 to reinstate Ahenakew to the senate. FSIN Chief Lawrence Joseph told Canadian Press Ahenakew had suffered enough and should be brought back into the organization's fold.

"I think the Western concept of justice and the First Nations' concept of justice differ in a way that we look at forgiveness and repentance and thereby acceptance and a second chance," he said.

Ahenakew was drummed out of the FSIN after he called Jews a disease and said Hitler's attempt to wipe them out was understandable. He was charged with promoting hate, convicted and fined. On appeal, his conviction was overturned and a new trial ordered. It is expected to commence in the fall.

The FSIN reinstatement was greeted with widespread disapproval. The chair of the FSIN senate, Roland Crowe, resigned in protest.

Glen Hare, deputy grand council chief of the Anishinabek Nation, a 42-member First Nations group in Ontario, said Ahenakew should remain retired from public life. Noting Ahenakew apologized for his remarks, Hare said, "he has to accept that the damage his words caused will not be erased if he tries to pick up where he left off five years ago. It may be true that Mr. Ahenakew made many contributions to Canada as a soldier and political leader, but his racist comments have made him a liability to any organization that gives him a position of authority.

"First Nations citizens fight racism every single day in Canada, but we cannot succeed in our struggles by stooping to the same level as our tormentors," Hare stated.

Chief Marcel Head of Shoal Lake Cree Nation, one of three chiefs who voted against Ahenakew's reinstatement, said Joseph should resign over his handling of the Ahenakew affair.

"[Joseph] has portrayed bad leadership in this whole deal. It worries me. I think something has to be done.

"He should take full responsibility for this. It's a big mess," Head said.

Joseph, who did not respond to a request for an interview, told reporters in Saskatchewan he wouldn't resign as he was acting at the direction of the senators.

Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, credited the public outcry and government statements for Ahenakew's decision to walk away from the senate offer.

"Virtually all segments of society, including First Nations, stood up and said this is not acceptable," he said.

Farber, who has been part of Congress' efforts to forge closer ties with First Nations, said the senate offer to Ahenakew was a mistake. "It was a huge, inexplicable error in judgement," he said.

Congress had received dozens of calls and letters – many from First Nations people – criticizing the move.

"The lesson here for the FSIN is that they were out of touch with their own community," he said.

Correction

"Jewish groups get cash from province, Ottawa" (*CJN*, April 3) included incorrect information. Jewish Family and Child, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services and JVS will be receiving new funds from Citizenship and Immigration Canada. *The CJN* regrets the error.

* * *

Clarification

The article "Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ" (*CJN*, April 3) misrepresented the position of Rabbi Alan Bright, spiritual leader of Montreal's Shaare Zedek Congregation, on commitment ceremonies for same-sex couples. The article should have stated that while Rabbi Bright has no objection in principle to such ceremonies, he has never performed any. To do so would require approval by his synagogue's board, which has never had the issue brought before it.

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Harm from media indoctrination may be irreparable

A recent front-page *New York Times* article provided an in-depth look at an under-reported story: the indoctrination of Gaza's youth with anti-Israel and anti-Jewish propaganda.

"In Gaza, Hamas's Fiery Insults to Jews Complicate Peace Effort," by Steven Erlanger (April 1) examined the extent and depth of hatred being taught and broadcast in Gaza, particularly to young people.

It's a chilling portrait.

Erlanger wrote: "At Al Omari mosque, the imam cursed the Jews and the 'Crusaders,' or Christians, and the Danes, for reprinting cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad. He referred to Jews as 'the brothers of apes and pigs,' while the Hamas television station, Al Aqsa, praises suicide bombing and holy war until Palestine is free of Jewish control."

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The situation is much worse in Hamas-controlled Gaza than in the West Bank, which is governed by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and his Fatah faction.

Erlanger explained: "Such incitement against Israel and Jews was supposed to be banned under the 1993 Oslo accords and the 2003 'road map' peace plan. While the Palestinian Authority under Fatah has made significant, if imperfect efforts to end incitement, Hamas, no party to those agreements, feels no such restraint."

Erlanger interviewed Radwan Abu Ayyash, the PA deputy minister of culture, who ran the Palestinian Broadcasting Company until 2005.

Referring to the "disgusting" content of much of what is broadcast by Al Aqsa, Abu Ayyash denounced Hamas' campaign to indoctrinate children: "[W]hat is not fine is to build up children with a culture of hatred, of closed minds, a culture of sickness... People use one weapon, language, without realizing that they also use it against themselves."

Erlanger described *Tomorrow's Pioneers*, a Hamas children's TV show that has "become infamous for its puppet characters who speak, like Assud the rabbit, of conquering the Jews. Recently, to the show's young hostess Saraa Barhoum, 11, Assud declared: 'We will liberate Al Aqsa Mosque from the Zionists' filth.'"

Erlanger's article included quotes from Palestinian Media Watch and the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI), two Israeli-affiliated groups that bring such incitement to the attention of western audiences through translations into English. Were it not for these groups, much of the hatred preached not only in Gaza but throughout the region would go undetected.

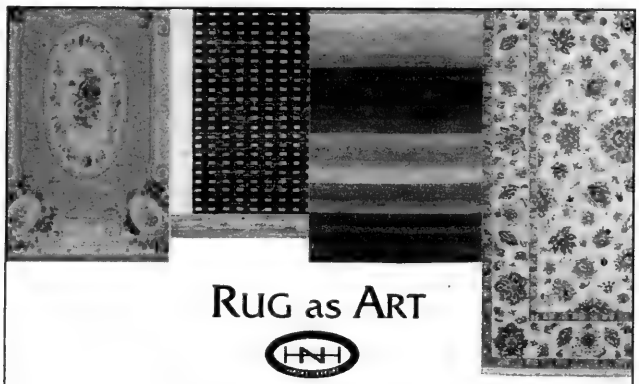
MEMRI recently posted on its website (www.memri.org) a video clip and translation from a March 30 Al Aqsa puppet show. In the video, a child confronted U.S. President George W. Bush.

Bush, along with "the criminal Zionists," was accused of killing Arabs in the "Gaza holocaust," as well as in Iraq, Lebanon and elsewhere.

Bush was not allowed into the White House because, according to the child, it has been "turned into a great mosque for the nation of Islam." The child then proceeded to repeatedly and proudly stab Bush to death.

Given the average family size in Gaza, youth are a substantial percentage of the population. Experts argue that the short and long-term effects of such indoctrination almost certainly guarantee that today's young Palestinians will be even more poisoned against the idea of peaceful coexistence with Israel than previous generations. The harm being done may simply be irreparable.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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Former Ottawan hikes across Israel for Sderot

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Former Ottawa resident Brandon Marlon, who made aliyah this past December, has teamed up with two friends on a 40-day hike across Israel to benefit child victims of terror in Sderot and Jerusalem.

The hike will take Marlon and his buddies Bradley Cohen of England and Jeremy Ziskind of the United States from Tel Dan in the north to Eilat in the south.

The trio plans to "traverse lush green hills of Galilee and the Golan Heights, sweep down through the plains and hill country of Samaria and Judea, descending finally into the rocky terrain of the mountainous Negev Desert," Marlon said, adding that they will rest on Shabbat and spend Passover in Jerusalem.

Their fundraising goal of $10,000 will go to help young terror victims who have been suffering from rocket attacks on Sderot, as well as last month's attack on the Merkaz HaRav yeshiva in Jerusalem.

The money will be funnelled through the Jerusalem-based Kids for Kids, a charity that raises money for such initiatives as Bet Hayeled, a home for abused and abandoned children in northern Israel, and the Forgotten People Fund, which provides food vouchers and education to the new Ethiopian Jewish population in Netanya.

The 28-year-old Marlon grew up in Ottawa, where his parents and younger brother still live. A professional writer, who is continuing to work as a playwright for Ottawa's Odyssey Theatre while living in Jerusalem, he is also investigating work opportunities in English theatre in Jerusalem, and he plans to organize a series of charity events such as nightclub evenings and poetry readings.

The concept of tikkun olam is not new to Marlon. Having participated in birthright israel, he applied for and received a grant for birthright alumni who want to become more involved in their local Jewish communities through various projects. In October 2007, prior to moving to Israel, he organized a special screening of the 2006 film *Footprints: the 20th Century Jewish Exodus from Moslem Lands* at Library and Archives Canada.

"A film night is a much easier way to support Sderot," said Marlon in a telephone conversation "from the road" on day three of the hike.

The trail was very mountainous and proving to be exhausting.

"One step at a time is my motto," he said.

Nevertheless, he was looking forward to the rest of the adventure.

"Doing nothing is not an option," he said. "No private individual should shirk his or her portion of responsibility for their fellow citizens. Children are always society's most vulnerable, and never more so than in these times of terror in Israel."

To sponsor Marlon by donating to Kids for Kids, contact Tyler Golden at Canadian Friends of Kids for Kids, 604-831-9854.

HEARTY TZEDAKAH: Students at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School recently raised more than $7,000 through various "heart healthy" activities for Save a Child's Heart (SACH), an Israeli organization that provides lifesaving pediatric heart surgery to children in developing countries. Each grade also created baskets filled with handmade toys, photo albums, colouring books and games that will be donated to SACH. Pictured, from left, are Noah Letofsky, Nomi Danzig, Jeremy Penn, Gavi Swayze, Hannah Shiller, Aviva Penn, Margaret Rose and Jacob Cappe.

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Jewish numbers declining relative to other groups

Continued from page 1

as mainly religious or show a growing trend of citing "Canadian" only as their origin. Or, the figures may reflect reality.

Perhaps a low birth rate, aging population and levelling off of immigration after the wave of Jews from the former Soviet Union in the 1990s are producing the inevitable results, Shahar said.

Those who had included Jewish in the past as part of a multiple response, but are not truly part of the community, may no longer be doing so. Converts are also not likely to identify as Jewish ethnically.

The question on the 2006 census' long-form, distributed to one in five households, was: "What are the ethnic or cultural origins of this person's ancestors? (An ancestor is usually more distant than a grandparent)." Among the examples provided of some of the possible answers was Jewish. Respondents could name up to four different origins.

Of those listing Jewish, 134,050 did so as a single response, while 181,075 included Jewish among multiple responses.

There was no question on religion in the 2006 census. Identifying Jews by religion is generally regarded as a more accurate measure, said Shahar. However, the responses to the ethnic and religion questions did not vary widely in 2001. In that census, 330,000 people gave Jewish as their own religion (not their ancestors'). That included 190,795 in Ontario and 89,915 in Quebec.

The 2006 Jewish ethnic figures for the other provinces are: British Columbia, 30,830, little changed from 31,280 in 2001; Alberta, 14,755, down a bit from 15,435; Saskatchewan, 2,125, up a tad from 2,090; Manitoba, 13,175, down from 15,130; New Brunswick, 1,355, unchanged; Nova Scotia, 3,345, down slightly from 3,900; Prince Edward Island, 200, up from 165; and Newfoundland and Labrador, 500, up from 370. In the three territories, a total of 295 Jews show up in the statistics.

Jews are also declining relative to the more than 200 different ethnic origins reported, placing 25th nationally. In Quebec, there are now fewer Jews than, for example, those of South Asian and African origins. By contrast, Arabs now number over 202,000, up from 135,750, in the province.

Among cities, Vancouver has the third-largest Jewish population at 21,465; Ottawa-Gatineau at 12,495 has surpassed Winnipeg at 12,210; and Calgary is next at 7,085.

Jack Jedwab, executive director of the Association of Canadian Studies, who has done numerous studies based on census data, is also baffled by the Jewish data.

Jedwab, a past executive director of Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region, finds the drop in people offering Jewish as a single ethnic origin in Canada – about 28 per cent – statistically interesting. The increase in the number of multiple responses including Jewish – approximately 12 per cent – is not enough to offset the overall decline, he said. Younger people were more likely to cite two or more origins, he said.

"Every one of the ethnic groups in the top 25 spots have increased in numbers with the exception of those identifying as Canadian and those identifying as Jewish," Jedwab noted, a trend he attributes to a rise in multiple responses generally. Jews, who ranked 17th overall in Canada in 2001, had by 2006 dropped to 25th place.

If anything, it might be thought that Jews would increasingly identify ethnically or culturally as Jewish, unlike earlier immigrant generations who sometimes considered their national origin, such as Polish or Russian, as their ethnic origin.

In terms of age, the number of Jewish children up to 14 declined from 71,885 to 61,520; the next biggest decrease was among 25- to 44-year-olds (from 85,465 to 75,385). Interestingly, the number of seniors over 65 decreased somewhat from 54,945 to 48,155, although proportionally they're about the same at around 15 per cent.

The next census in 2011 is expected to have a question on religion, but those results will not likely be released until a couple of years after. Shahar said the Montreal community expects there will be fewer Jews than counted in the 2001 census, continuing the trend of more than three decades.

Walk for MS on Apr. 13

On Sunday, April 13, Toronto residents will join 30,000 participants across Ontario as they walk for a cure in the Super Cities WALK for MS. An estimated 3,000 people are expected to participate in Toronto, raising $815,000 in pledges.

Beginning and finishing at Sunnybrook Park, the Super Cities WALK for MS in Toronto is a family-oriented event that combines fundraising with food, prizes, and community spirit. Participants can choose from route lengths of five or 10 kilometres, and a wheelchair-accessible option is available.

Proceeds of the walk help to fund services for people with MS and their families, including providing information and referrals, supportive counselling and mobility equipment. The walk also helps fund the MS Society's national research program.

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Montreal shul fighting income tax sanctions

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A Montreal synagogue is appealing the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) one-year suspension of its charitable status and the imposition of a half-million-dollar fine for allegedly issuing improper tax receipts for the value of membership fees, cemetery plots and the services of its nursery school.

The CRA says such payments cannot be considered gifts for income tax purposes because the person paying is receiving a prohibited benefit.

David Gandall, president of Congregation Adath Israel Poale Zedek Anshei Ozeroff, is saying little more about the matter.

"We do not agree with the tax department's position. It is in administrative appeal and our tax consultants are dealing with it. We are doing whatever we can to resolve this," he said.

The congregation, located in Hampstead, has about 400 member families, he said.

According to documents released by the CRA, an audit it conducted between July 1, 2003, and June 30, 2005, found that the synagogue issued receipts containing allegedly false information totalling $399,244 in the fiscal year ending in 2005.

The penalty of $499,055 was assessed at 125 per cent of the total alleged non-qualified donation receipts. The suspension of the synagogue's receipt-issuing privileges took effect March 19.

The Adath Israel is only the second registered charitable organization to receive such a suspension under new legislative rules regarding what constitutes a gift for income tax purposes. It is the first to be fined.

The synagogue was previously audited in 2002 and warned that it was in violation of the Income Tax Act. The synagogue had promised at that time to conform to the rules. A letter sent last August to Gandall outlined in detail the continuing alleged violations. The letter noted that the CRA's former treatment of a gift for income tax purposes was that the donor could receive no or only a very minimal benefit.

Charitable status suspended for one year for allegedly issuing improper tax receipts

However, the new rules, enacted on Dec. 24, 2002, allow a donor to receive a benefit in return for making a gift, but the value of that benefit must be deducted from the eligible amount entered on the tax receipt.

The CRA found that Adath Israel members have been receiving the benefit of being able to purchase a burial plot in the congregation cemetery. Non-members related to members could also buy plots. But the synagogue offers members a discounted rate for the plots, namely $3,750. Relatives of members must pay $10,000.

The CRA found that the synagogue was issuing tax receipts for the full value of the membership fees, despite members having the additional benefit of the reduced price for the burial plots.

Even if the plots were not bought at a reduced rate, the CRA concluded that "the privilege conveyed by membership, namely, purchasing plots within the synagogue cemetery, clearly constitutes a benefit." In addition, membership fees are mandatory, it noted.

When the plots were purchased, receipts in the amount of $3,650 each for members and $9,450 for non-members were also issued, partially as donations to the cemetery improvement fund. The difference was treated by the synagogue as "income," rather than gifts.

The CRA notes that Adath Israel may pay the penalty to an arm's-length eligible registered charity, although it will not be issued a tax receipt, or directly to the government.

The CRA says it proceeded with sanctions against Adath Israel because it had not received sufficient evidence from the synagogue in its own defence. The synagogue's lawyer met with CRA officials in December. At that time, the synagogue was invited to submit written representations on the issues raised in the August letter.

"On Jan. 31, 2008, the charity [the synagogue] replied expressing its disagreement with the CRA's position and provided no further detail," the CRA documents say.

Correction

"Pay Gazans to leave, right-wing MK says" (*CJN*, April 3) contains incorrect information. Moshe Feiglin is not a member of the Knesset. *The CJN* regrets the error.

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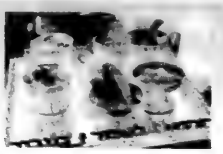
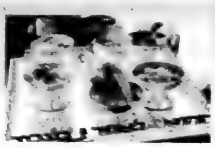


PASSOVER FOOD IDEAS



Kneidlach with a difference

By NOAM LEVY
Special to The CJN

What could be more eastern European than little balls of tasteless dough cooked in a simple broth? I can easily imagine a Jewish Ukrainian housewife many years ago staring at an empty winter pantry right before the seder and desperately asking herself: "What could I possibly make with a little matzah meal, a couple of eggs and some old root vegetables?"

The answer was kneidlach.

The truly curious thing is that we still make kneidlach today, as if we were Ukrainian villagers centuries ago. I love tradition, and I'll probably make my mom's kneidlach for a long time to come, just for the sake of all those warm childhood memories. Yet, putting aside all that Jewish guilt if I didn't follow my family's traditions, I feel that updated, truly tasty kneidlach can be a fun part of every seder.

FLUFFY HERBED KNEIDLACH

The key to really delicate and fluffy kneidlach, not unlike a good cake, is to introduce lots of air into the dough by folding in whipped egg whites. The results are wonderfully light morsels that are a refreshing change from all the other dense Passover fare.

For the dough
1 cup matzah meal
3 tbsp. olive oil
2 cups boiling chicken or vegetable stock (or water)
1 tsp. salt
freshly ground black pepper
3 tbsp. pareve pesto (recipe follows)
2 medium eggs, separated

For the 'pesto'
1 cup fresh basil, parsley or cilantro leaves, washed and picked
2 tbsp. pecans, walnuts or pine nuts
1 garlic clove, peeled
3 tbsp. olive oil
½ tsp. salt and freshly ground pepper

Place a large casserole-type pot filled with salted water to boil.

In a large mixing bowl, combine the matzah meal, oil, stock and salt and pepper. Stir well to combine. Rest, covered, for 15 minutes.

In the meanwhile, make the pesto.

By hand: mince herbs and nuts and combine in a bowl and mix well.

In a food processor: Add the oil and garlic and blitz until smooth. Add the herbs and the nuts and blitz into a paste. Season, mix gently and taste to adjust the seasoning. It can be either be chunky, adding little nut and herb pieces to the texture of the kneidlach, or smooth, leaving the kneidlach delicate and refined.

Stir 3 tbsp. of the pesto into the matzah meal mixture.

In a mixing bowl, whisk the egg yolks for a minute to incorporate some air, and then stir into the matzah meal mixture. Whisk the egg whites to a stable foam, and gently fold into the dough until just combined.

Working quickly, dip the tip of a teaspoon or a tablespoon (depending on the size of kneidlach you want) in the pot of boiling water, and then gently scoop out some of the dough. Use a second spoon to drop it into the water. Repeat with the rest of the dough.

The kneidlach will surface after a short while. Simmer gently for 15 minutes more.

If you plan on storing the kneidlach before serving, cool completely before storing and store in an air-tight container in the refrigerator. Reheat in simmering salted water or in the soup they will be served in.

KNEIDLACH STUFFED WITH SAUTEED MUSHROOMS AND THYME

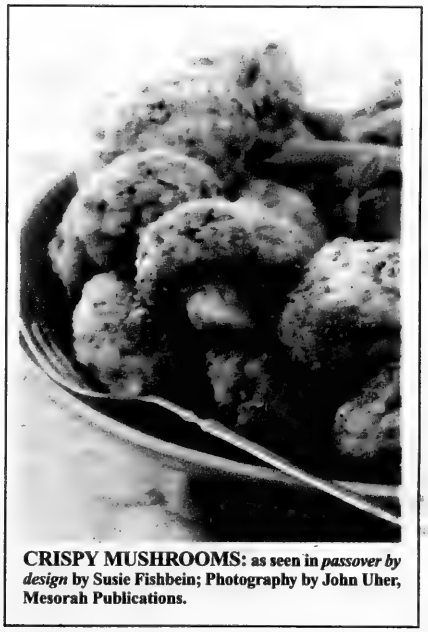
For the dough
7 oz. matzah meal
3 tbsp. olive oil
2 eggs, separated
3 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves, washed and picked, chopped finely
1 cup water
1 tsp. salt
freshly ground pepper

For the mushroom filling
3 cups mushrooms of your choice (Portobello, wild mushrooms, button mushrooms, etc.) – cut into small cubes
4 tbsp. olive oil or chicken fat
3 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves, washed and picked
2 shallots or one small onion, peeled and minced
1 garlic clove, peeled and minced

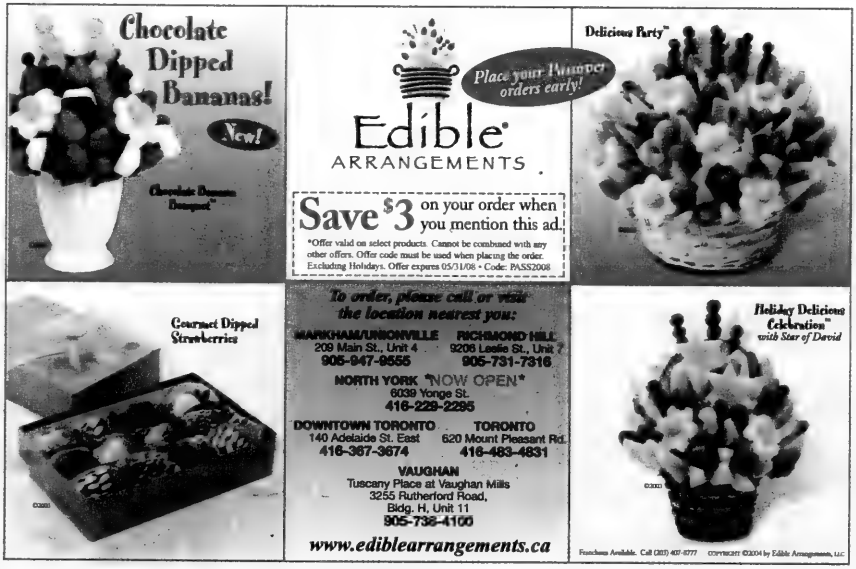
In a large bowl, mix the matzah meal, olive oil, egg yolks, thyme and seasoning. Pour in the water slowly, while stirring. Whisk and fold in the egg whites as described in the previous recipe. Refrigerate, covered, for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, place the oil or fat in a skillet over low heat and sauté the shallots gently to a light golden color. Increase the heat to high and add the mushrooms, thyme and garlic. Sauté until mushrooms are soft and the liquids have evaporated. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Let cool.

With wet hands, form little balls out of the dough. Use your thumb to create a dent in each ball and spoon in (with a teaspoon) some filling. Close the hole and roll again to create an even round ball. Cook in simmering salted water for 20 minutes. Store and serve as described above.



CRISPY MUSHROOMS: as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.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Fruit-based desserts a perfect finish to the seder meal

By DAPHNA RABINOVITCH
Special to The CJN

After a Passover meal of several courses, it's always nice to lighten up dessert with fruit. But let's face it, most of us want (and most of our guests and family expect) more than just a platter of fruit. So, to meet expectations, keep things easy on the hostess and end the meal with the enjoyment it deserves, here are some exceptional fruit-based desserts that are anything but run of the mill.

BANANA WALNUT CAKE

Serve slices of this moist Passover cake with lightly whipped dairy free topping.

9 eggs, separated
1¼ cups granulated sugar
¾ cup mashed banana
1 tsp. vanilla
⅔ cup potato starch
⅓ cup matzah cake meal
½ tsp. cinnamon
pinch nutmeg
½ cup finely chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 325. Using electric beaters, beat egg yolks with ½ cup of the sugar until light-coloured and thickened. Fold in banana and vanilla.

Using clean electric beaters and bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add the other ¼ cup of the sugar, beating until stiff and shiny, but dry peaks do not form.

Sift together potato starch, matzah cake meal, cinnamon and nutmeg. Gently fold egg whites and potato starch mixture, one-third at a time, into yolk mixture, until well blended. Gently fold in walnuts. Pour into ungreased 10-inch angel food tube pan. Bake in centre of preheated oven for 50 to 60 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly pressed. Turn pan upside down and let hang on legs attached to pan or on inverted funnel until completely cool. (Cake can be stored in airtight container for up to 2 days or frozen for up to 1 month). Makes 8-10 servings.

LIME INFUSED ANGEL FOOD CAKE

This towering glory of a cake richly deserves a topping of a citrus flavoured fruit compote. For best results, make this cake the day you serve it.

1½ cups superfine granulated sugar
⅔ cup matzah cake meal
3 tbsp. potato starch
1½ cups egg whites
½ tsp. kosher salt
3 tbsp. grated lime rind
2 tbsp. lime juice

Preheat oven to 350. In bowl, sift together ¾ cup of the sugar, potato starch and matzah cake meal. Set aside.

In large mixing bowl, beat egg whites with salt to soft peaks. Gradually add remaining sugar, 2 tbsp. at a time, beating until stiff and glossy but not till dry peaks form. A quarter at a time, sift potato starch mixture over egg whites, gently folding in each addition until well

Continued on page 38

MELON GRANITAS: as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.

End your seder sweetly

Continued from page 37

blended. Fold in lime rind and lime juice. Pour into ungreased 10-in. tube pan.

Bake in centre of preheated oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until cake springs back when lightly pressed.

Turn pan upside down and let hang on legs attached to pan or on inverted funnel until completely cool. Remove from pan. Slice with serrated knife. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

PECAN MERINGUE SHORTCAKES WITH MAPLE GLAZED APPLES

Be sure to use real egg whites for these meringues. Egg whites sold in cartons will not puff or hold their shape. For the fussier kids at the table, drizzle melted bittersweet chocolate over the meringue, forego the topping and serve as Passover "discs."

4 egg whites
pinch salt
1 cup granulated sugar
½ tsp. vanilla
1 tbsp. potato starch
⅔ cup finely ground pecans

Topping
⅔ cup maple syrup
⅓ cup apple juice
2 tbsp. lemon juice
¼ cup packed brown sugar
1 tbsp. margarine
4 large apples, peeled, cored and sliced
4 tsp. potato starch
1 cup raspberries, blueberries or sliced strawberries

Preheat oven to 250. On two parchment paper-lined heavy baking sheets, trace 18 2-inch circles with pencil. Turn paper over; set aside.

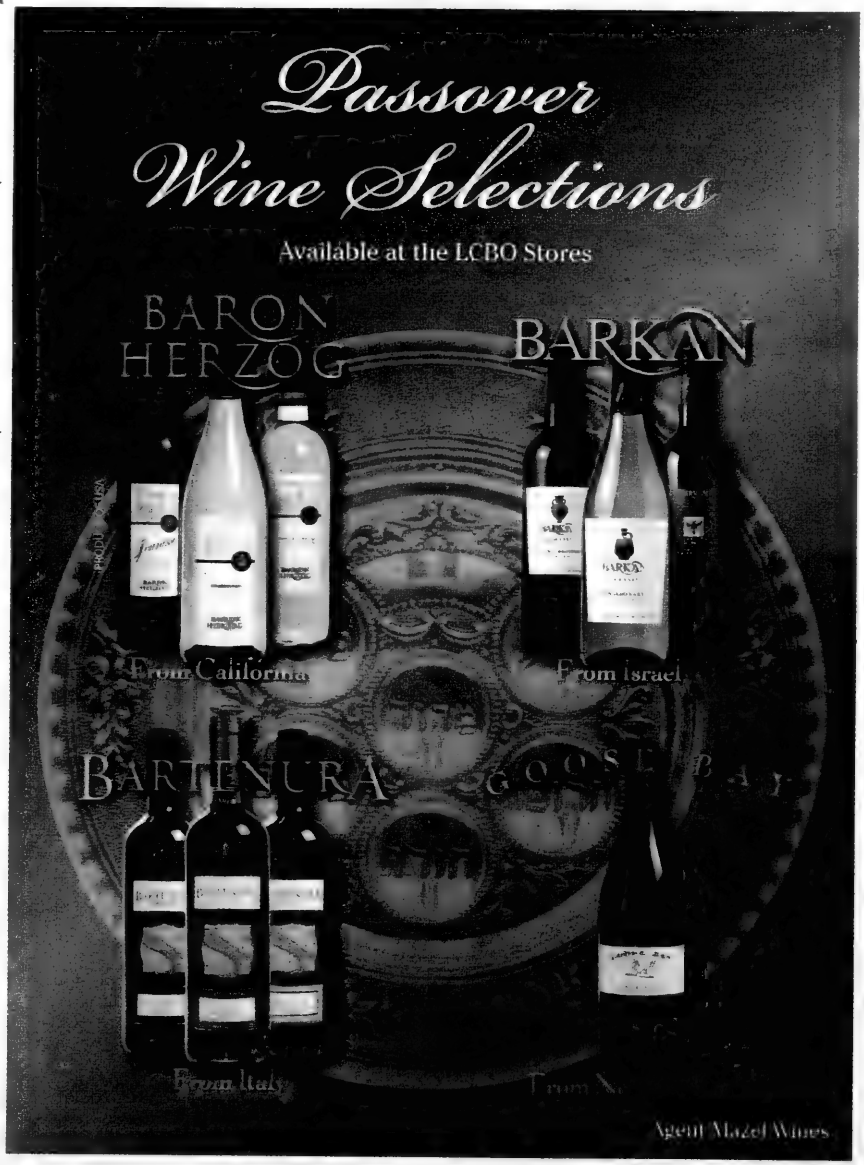
In bowl, using electric beaters, beat egg whites with salt until soft peaks form. In thin steady stream, beat in sugar until stiff glossy peaks form. Fold in vanilla, potato starch and pecans. Spread meringue mixture onto prepared circles, mounding slightly.

Bake for 1 hour or until meringue is firm but still somewhat soft in centre. Let cool completely. (Meringues can be made ahead and stored for up to 5 days in an airtight container.)

In skillet, whisk together maple syrup, apple juice, lemon juice, sugar and margarine; bring to boil over medium-high heat. Boil, whisking for 1 minute. Add apples; cover and cook, stirring once, for about 5 minutes or until apples are tender.

Dissolve potato starch in 1 tbsp. water and add it to skillet. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute or until thickened. Remove from heat; cool slightly. Stir in berries. (Mixture can be covered and refrigerated for up to 2 days. Rewarm gently in microwave).

To serve, lay 1 meringue, flat side up on plate, spoon ¼ cup of apple mixture over. Top with second meringue, flat side over apples. Drizzle 1 tbsp. of honey mixture over top of meringue. Makes 6 servings.



Perfect Passover sweets to please family and friends

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

My friend Jamie Stolper and I often exchange recipes, stories and food memories for the various Jewish holidays. Her website, www.shalomboston.com, is an excellent recipe resource and Stolper, who is the co-founder and food editor, carefully tests the wonderful recipes that appear on the website. She shared this winning recipe for Carol Rosenstock's delicious Passover Chocolate Bars.

Stolper writes, "This is the winner of the Passover 2005 ShalomBoston.com Recipe Contest! It is an easy, delicious bar-style cookie and people will never guess it is kosher for Passover. It tastes just like a crisp butter cookie, with chocolate and nuts – what could be better? Make several batches and freeze them, because they are perfect for any occasion and will be gobbled up by kids and adults alike. (Skip the nuts, if you must.)

"I made this three times, with different size pans, different nuts (walnuts, toasted hazelnuts), and once with all butter. Each time, the results were excellent, although there were differences worth noting. My favourite version was in the 10 x 15-inch pan, using all butter. The base, in fact the entire cookie, was quite thin and crisp, just the way I like my bars and cookies. When I made the bars in a smaller 9 x 13-inch pan (a quarter-sheet pan), the cookie was a little thicker (both the base and the chocolate) and also softer and chewier. They would probably be crispier if allowed to bake a few minutes longer. I brought this batch to a dinner party and got rave reviews for them as well, with no one guessing they were kosher for Passover. When I asked a few key people if they would prefer a thinner base or not, one or two did dare to say yes, while the others were perfectly satisfied with the way they were. So, I would say that you should make this recipe once, any way you like, and then tinker with it to get the exact size and texture that you prefer. All versions will be excellent – all will disappear in a flash!"

Continued on page 40

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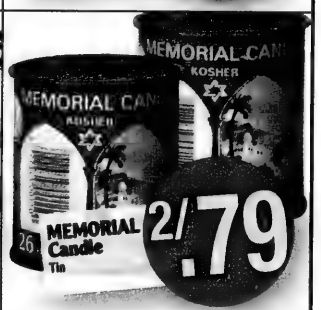

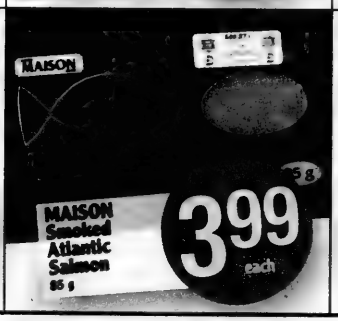

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You won't believe it's a Passover recipe

Continued from page 38

CAROL ROSENSTOCK'S WINNING PASSOVER CHOCOLATE BARS

This recipe was given to Carol Rosenstock of Needham, Mass., a few years ago by a friend. It fools many people who don't believe it is a Passover recipe. Rosenstock always doubles the recipe and uses a half-sheet pan. The squares are very thin and crisp and everyone loves it this way. She uses pecans or walnuts, but almonds would be good, too. These bars can be frozen.

1/4 lb. butter
1/4 pound margarine
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup brown sugar
1 egg yolk
1 cup cake meal
2 tbsp. potato starch
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. vanilla
5 to 6 oz. chocolate chips
1/2 cup ground nuts

Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 9 x 13 x 1-in. pan (quarter-sheet pan), or a 10 x 15 x 1-in. pan.

Cream together butter, margarine, and sugars. Add the egg yolk and blend well.

Mix together the cake meal, potato starch and salt. Add to the butter/sugar mixture. Add vanilla and mix well.

Flatten the dough into the baking pan. Bake 20 to 25 minutes (less for the larger pan; longer for the smaller pan).

Remove immediately and sprinkle the chocolate chips evenly on top. Spread chocolate when melted. (Jamie Stolper's note: Spread gently, so as not to disturb the top of the cookie base. If you do, it's not terrible – cover as best you can with the chocolate. The nuts will hide all faults!) Top with ground nuts, pressing in slightly. Let cool completely before cutting. Makes a lot!

* * *

When I asked Evelyne Singer of Montreal to share one of her special dessert recipes from her cookbook *Sweet Passover Sensations* with my readers, she wrote: "My husband Sid said that my Hazelnut Roll is one of my best recipes – everyone loves it and it's not too difficult to make. My cookbook contains 48 pages with 60 of my favourite Passover recipes, which have been tried and accepted by my family and friends. I'm only selling it so far to people I know, and they in turn are giving it away as presents. I've done my best to keep the cost extremely reasonable, just $8 [plus shipping costs], which covers expenses."

For more information, contact Evelyne Singer at 514-747-9476 or by e-mail at evelynehadida@hotmail.com.

EVELYNE SINGER'S HAZELNUT ROLL

6 eggs, separated
3/4 cup sugar
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 tsp. almond extract
1 tsp. Passover baking powder
pinch of salt
1 1/2 cups finely ground hazelnuts
1 1/2 cups chilled whipping cream
1/4 cup Passover icing sugar, sifted
1 tbsp. kirsch
additional crushed nuts, chocolate shavings or cookie crumbs for sprinkling

Beat egg yolks with sugar for 5 minutes at high speed. Beat in vanilla and almond extracts. Add baking powder, salt and hazelnuts by hand to yolk mixture. (Yes, there is baking powder for Passover.)

Beat reserved egg whites until stiff but not dry and fold into nut mixture. Spread evenly in greased 15 x 10 x 1-in. jellyroll pan (I line my pan with parchment paper instead). Bake at 350 for about 20 to 25 minutes. (Keep checking so it won't burn.)

Take out of oven and spread a damp dishcloth over top of pan and invert it carefully onto parchment paper. Let it cool completely.

Strip the parchment paper off the back of the cake carefully. Roll the cake neatly (with the dishcloth inside) and set it aside.

Whip the whipping cream with icing sugar and kirsch until stiff. Unroll the cake and spread whipped cream on top of cake. Gently roll it back up with the whipped cream inside. Decorate the top and sides of cake with remaining whipped cream, then sprinkle with nuts, chocolate shavings or cookie crumbs.

You can freeze it and serve it frozen, or serve it right away, in nice thick slices. (It is the best – they all love it!) Serves 8 to 10 people.

food Basics

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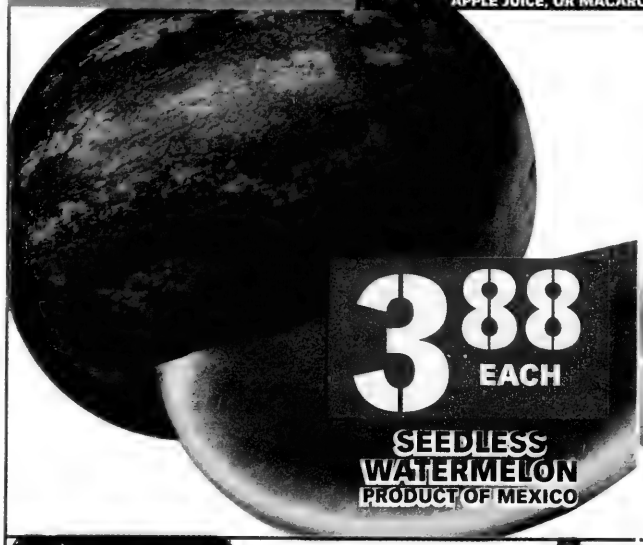
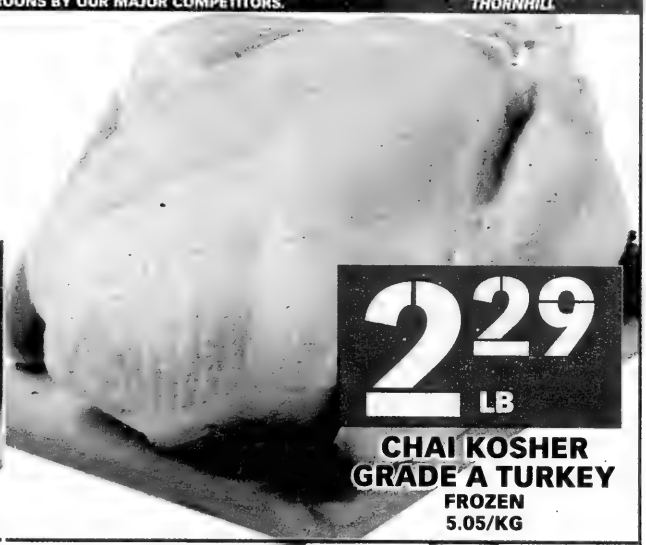


3.88 EACH
SEEDLESS WATERMELON
PRODUCT OF MEXICO

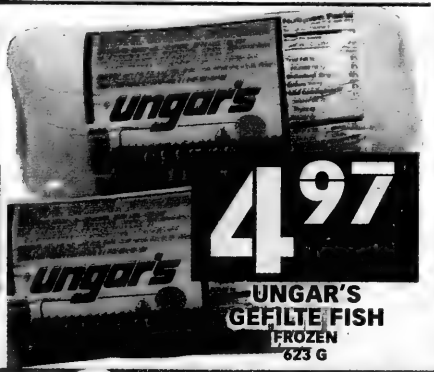


2.29 LB
CHAI KOSHER GRADE A TURKEY
FROZEN
5.05/KG

2/$3
ASPARAGUS
325 G BUNCH
PRODUCT OF MEXICO
OR
STRAWBERRIES
PRODUCT OF U.S.A.
1 LB
OR
BLACKBERRIES
PRODUCT OF MEXICO
5.6 OZ.

1.33
COKE
CLASSIC OR DIET
2 L BTL

1.25
STREIT'S POTATO CHIPS
156 G



4.97
UNGAR'S GEFILTE FISH
FROZEN
623 G

2.49
IRRESISTIBLES ORANGE JUICE
CHILLED
1.89 L

Best PRICES EVERY DAY Best PRICES EVERY DAY

Eggstra, eggstra good recipes!

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Eggstra! Eggstra! Read all about it! Eggs are good for you – yolks and all. And that's particularly good news at Passover when eggs seem to be the staple of so many meals.

For years, health advocates warned against eating eggs because of the yolk's high cholesterol and fat content. People are still wary of eating eggs, even though there has been extensive data extolling the benefits of egg consumption and negating the relationship between dietary cholesterol and high blood cholesterol. Several scientific studies have absolved the much maligned egg, and dietary cholesterol in general, of their role in heart disease.

One of the first studies to restore the egg's reputation was the analysis of 224 dietary studies in 1997 that appeared in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. The analysis concluded that saturated fat rather than dietary cholesterol was responsible for raising blood cholesterol levels. The egg, which has only 1.6 gram of saturated fat, was no longer officially linked to heart disease.

A study published this year in the February edition of *The Journal of Nutrition* noted that daily consumption of three eggs on a low carbohydrate diet elevated HDL (high density lipoprotein) or good cholesterol, while a study in the December 2005 issue of this journal found that dietary cholesterol from eggs did not pose a risk for heart disease for healthy seniors. Several journal articles now support these findings.

Eggs, in fact, provide many health benefits. Aside from being a low calorie source of high quality protein – one egg has 6.3 grams of protein and is about 80 calories – eggs are also an excellent source of vitamins A, B, D and K, and selenium. Egg yolks are also a rich source of choline, a key component of all cell membranes and the fatty mass structure of the brain.

Although we generally associate eggs with breakfast, many people do not have an appetite for eggs in the morning. However, there is no reason why they can't have their eggs for lunch or dinner. There are many creative ways to prepare eggs. The following recipes offer alternatives to eggs over easy or sunnyside-up.

DILLY DEVILLED EGGS

From *The Egg Book* by Jean Pare, Company's Coming Publishing Ltd., 2004

¼ cup finely grated cucumber with peel
¼ tsp. salt
6 hard cooked eggs cut in half lengthwise
¼ cup mayonnaise
2 tsp. chopped fresh dill
pepper to taste
12 tiny fresh heads of dill, or paprika, for garnish

Measure grated cucumber into small bowl. Sprinkle with salt. Let stand for 15 minutes to release liquid. Drain. Squeeze dry between layers of paper towel. Return to bowl and set aside.

Remove yolks from eggs. Set egg white halves aside. Add yolks to cucumber.

Add mayonnaise, dill and pepper to cucumber mixture. Mash with fork until well combined. Makes about ¾ cup filling. Fill each egg white with about 1 tbsp. filling.

Garnish with dill. Chill. Makes 12 devilled eggs.

POTATO CHEESE FRITTATA

Adapted from *The Egg Book*, Pare

2 cups diced cooked potatoes
½ tsp. salt
1 cup, thinly sliced onion
1 cup lightly packed fresh shredded spinach, stems removed
2 tbsp. olive oil
8 large eggs
½ cup milk
¼ tsp. pepper
⅔ cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
2 tbsp. fresh parsley
1 tbsp. chopped fresh chives

Heat large nonstick pan on medium until hot. Add olive oil. Add onion. Cook 5 to 10 minutes, stirring often until softened. Add salt, potatoes and spinach. Heat and stir about a minute until heated through. Transfer to greased 2-quart casserole. Spread evenly.

Beat eggs, milk and pepper with whisk in medium bowl until smooth. Pour over potato mixture. Sprinkle with cheese, parsley and chives. Bake uncovered in 350-degree oven for 35 minutes or until set. Serves 8.

Continued on page 43

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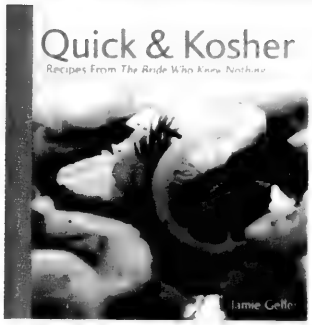
A 'new' way to prepare gefilte fish



By NOAM LEVY
Special to The CJN

Gefilte fish, believe it or not, used to be a glorious Jewish-Polish dish. It was an elaborate production featuring a whole stuffed fish, usually a carp. The skin used to be removed whole, and the meat and bones would be ground together and then stuffed back into the fish, making it look just like new. The fish would then be poached in fish stock and served cold. The stock would firm up when cold, and was served as a jelly to accompany the fish slices. Those were the days…

Today all we get is a boring fish patty. I realize that the traditional stuffing of a whole fish is a bit too much work in today's hustle and bustle. On the other hand, most gefilte fish served today needs some sprucing up. If you think about it, though, gefilte fish could be easily updated and modernized into a show-stopping seder dish.

The fish can be cooked in a flavourful stock, a court bouillon – or poaching liquid. The liquid can then be reduced to create an intensely flavoured sauce-jelly that partners perfectly with the fish. In an effort to combine the old with new, and enjoy the best of the two styles, I'd like to offer a gefilte fish recipe that will be exciting and modern and still make our ancestors proud.

LEMON-FENNEL JELLIED GEFILTE FISH

The recipe sounds challenging, but it really is quite easy and very practical for serving at the seder table. It can be made a day or two in advance, with very little work to be done when serving. If you were looking for a good reason to ask the traditional "Ma nishtana?" (What is different about tonight?), this is it!

2 lb. carp or trout – whole, gutted and washed well or salmon steak (If using salmon, ask for a head as well)
4 medium onions, chopped roughly
3 hard boiled eggs
3 fresh eggs
1 tsp. salt
½ tsp. freshly ground pepper
¼ cup sugar (optional – can be reduced, or eliminated)
5 tbsp. fresh parsley, chopped finely.
3-5 tbsp. matzah meal

Continued on page 45

Eggs make a simple nutritious meal

Continued from page 42

ONION GRATIN

From *Eat Yourself Slim Cookbook* by Michel Montignac, Erica House Book Publishers, 1999

1½ pounds of onions, sliced
5 oz. sour cream
6 eggs
4 oz. grated cheddar or Gruyere cheese
4 oz. Mozzarella or mild white cheese, thinly sliced
3 tbsp. olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

Fry onions in olive oil in a large skillet over gentle heat, stirring continuously. Cook until golden brown.

In a large bowl, beat together the eggs, grated cheese and sour cream. Season with salt and pepper. Using a slotted spoon transfer the onions from the pan to the bowl. Stir until completely mixed. Pour mixture into a shallow pan and bake in preheated oven at 300 for 40 minutes.

Cover egg mixture with slices of white cheese. Place dish under broiler until cheese melts. Serves 5.

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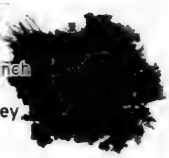

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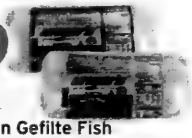

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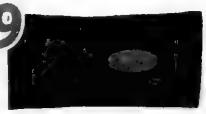

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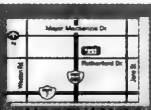
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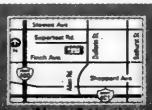
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Although we strive for accuracy in illustration, copy and regulatory requirements, unintentional errors may occur. We reserve the right to correct any errors.

Let fish simmer gently

Continued from page 43

For the court bouillon

4 tbsp. olive oil
1 large onion, chopped roughly
2 carrots, chopped roughly (+ 2 carrots peeled and cut into ½ in. rings for serving)
1 fennel, chopped roughly
1 celery stalk, chopped roughly
4 parsley sprigs with leaves
1 bottle kosher crisp white wine (an Israeli Chardonnay will work well)
4 cups fish stock or water
1 bunch fennel leaves, washed and picked
zest and juice of one lemon

Place a stock pot over medium heat and add the olive oil. Sweat the onion, carrot, fennel and celery for about 10 minutes, until light brown and soft. Avoid any blackening or scorching. Add the parsley sprigs, wine and stock (or water). Bring to a boil.

In the meantime, if using carp, trout or other small fish, cut off the fish's head and fins and remove the skin (or ask the fish salesperson to do it for you). Add the head, fins and skin to the stock when adding the wine and water. If using a fish steak or fillet, such as salmon, add the head you bought separately at this stage, to help the stock gel when cold.

Use a meat grinder (such as the one that comes with many stand mixers) to grind the fish. You might need to cut it into several segments to fit it in the grinder.

Place the ground fish in a mixing bowl and mix in the chopped onion, fresh and boiled eggs, salt, pepper, sugar (if using) and parsley. Pass everything through the grinder.

Stir the mixture well with your hands or with a wooden spoon. It should be rather wet and sticky. The goal at this point is to use as little matzah meal as possible, as it makes the patties tough, yet still use enough of it to create patties that hold together well. Add a tablespoon of matzah meal at a time and mix well until it is absorbed. Try shaping a patty. When you can shape a patty that holds its shape, stop adding matzah meal.

Shape into patties (the traditional shape is oblong, and gently slip into the stock). Make sure not to overcrowd the pot, as the patties will stick to each other. Simmer gently for 30 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, set the fish aside to cool.

Remove and discard all the vegetables. Strain the stock, wash out the pot and return the stock to high heat. Add the carrot rings and lemon peel and cook until the carrot is just tender, about 10 minutes. Remove and set aside, discard lemon peel. Continue cooking to reduce the stock by half. Season to taste with lemon juice, salt and pepper. Cool.

Arrange the fennel leaves in moulds, add a carrot ring or two to each mould and top with a fish patty. Pour some of the reduced stock to just cover the fish. Refrigerate until firm, at least 3 hours. When ready to serve, gently turn out into individual serving plates. Makes 8-10 servings.

A PASSOVER SEDER TABLE: as seen in ***passover by design*** **by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.**

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Passover Dinner Menu

Gefilte Fish, Horseradish
Matzo Ball Soup with Noodles
BBQ Chicken & Brisket*
Potato Kugel or Farfel or Stuffed Potatoes
Carrot Tzimmes
Broccoli & Mushrooms or
Green Beans Almandine
Cole Slaw, Dill Pickles
Matzo
Seder Plate Ingredients
Fruit Salad Bowl
Sponge Cake or Marble Cake
Macaroons

$23.95/per person (10 person minimum)
**Salmon Teriyaki instead of chicken or brisket, add $2.00 per person*

A La Carte

Gefilte Fish - 3.99/piece
Chopped Liver - 6.98/lb.
Charoses - 8.49/lb.
Seder Plate Ingredients - 6.49
Mini Potato Latkes (w/apple sauce) - 9.99/doz.
Matzo Chicken Fingers (w/plum sauce) - 12.99/doz.
BBQ or Honey Garlic Chicken Wings - 11.99/doz.
Sweet & Sour Meatballs - 11.99/doz.
Beef, Chicken or Salmon Satays - 17.99/doz
(minimum 2 dozen each)
Assorted Satay Platter - 69.99/4 doz.
Chicken Soup - 18.99/gal.
with 12 Matzo Balls - 29.85/gal.
Matzo balls - .99/each
Homemade Noodles - 2.99/bag

BBQ Chicken (whole) - 10.49
BBQ Chicken Breast - 4.00/piece
Brisket of Beef & Gravy - 12.96/lb.
Whole Turkey (carved) - 7.99/lb
Whole Turkey (uncarved) - 6.99/lb
(15lb. minimum)
Salmon Teriyaki - 7.99/piece
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HAPPY PASSOVER
5941 Leslie St., North York, Ont.

Look for Passover food ideas in unexpected places

By MARCIE SOMERS
Special to The CJN

In life we are offered several paths that might lead to fulfilment. Some of us are fortunate in knowing that path from a very young age. Mitchell Davis, a Toronto chef, cookbook author and journalist, happens to be one of those people. From the time he was a young boy, Davis was fascinated by food. At three years old, he was making concoctions using condiments from his mother's kitchen cupboards. And while most of his peers were playing with action figures and reading comic books, Mitchell Davis was mesmerized with cooking shows. By the time he was in high school, he had a catering company and was making chicken soup for a local Jewish butcher.

Letting his love of food lead the way, Davis studied Hotel Administration at Cornell University. After spending a semester in Paris, Davis changed the way he thought about food forever.

"I met families for whom food was the most important thing. They would spend all weekend long going from one side of town to the other to get the finest cheese, the highest quality meat – the best of everything. To see that people took food so seriously and that their search for the finest foods was a way of life for them was a real eye opener for me. From then on, I knew that whatever I did in my professional career, I would incorporate that quest to get the best of the best."

Upon graduating from Cornell, Davis spent six months working in Italy's Piedmont region before settling in New York City. He is currently vice-president of the James Beard Foundation, a foundation that celebrates, preserves and nurtures America's culinary heritage and diversity.

Davis has written several cookbooks: *The Mensch Chef*, which catered to people who were kosher as well as to those who weren't but were interested in Jewish food, and most recently, *Kitchen Sense*, a cookbook that provides more than 600 foolproof recipes, along with the guidance you need to become a terrific home cook.

"If you need one cookbook that has it all, this is the one for you," Davis says.

He is also a frequent contributor to magazines such as *GQ*, *Food & Wine* and the *Art of Eating*, and teaches food and theory classes at New York University and Cornell University.

With everything Davis does as a chef, cookbook author and food journalist, he turns to his time spent studying and working in France and Italy for inspiration.

"It's not so much what I cook but the ingredients I use that inspires me. And it's the idea that I can incorporate good food into my daily life. I find inspiration in the simple things, like eating a beautiful heirloom tomato, as well as in the luxuries, like dining at a high-end restaurant."

One of Davis' challenges has always been to continue this inspiration and creativity during the Jewish holidays, especially Passover, which is right around the corner.

"People feel limited at Passover by what they can eat, and get into a rut. They wind up making the same things all the time. There are so many foods appropriate for Passover that people don't think about. Take macaroons, for example. Everyone is familiar with coconut macaroons; however, there are macaroons I've seen in Italy and France that are made with almond paste. These may be eaten at Passover and are just as delicious."

Davis also suggests looking outside of Jewish cookbooks for Passover ideas.

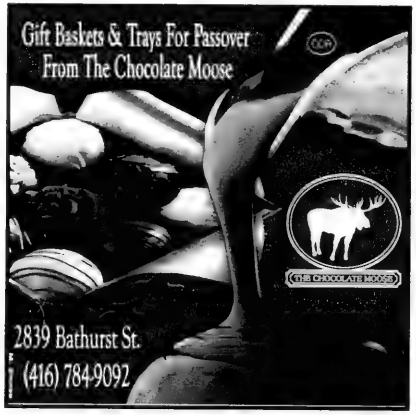
"Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblet, a Judaic scholar, once said, 'There are no recipes in the Bible.' In other words, it's all about interpretation. I think that's a great way to approach the holiday – look at the meal differently and you'll find lots of ideas."

Another tip is to cook with ingredients you have. "The idea that leftovers are the mother of invention is a great attitude to have. One year, I had a lot of charoset left over. It's really just apples and walnuts, so I thought why not just stir it into some pancake batter and make pancakes. They were absolutely delicious!"

Davis has one final suggestion for Passover recipe ideas… look around the world for ideas. "I make a beautiful citrus almond cake from the Middle East. It's made with whole oranges and almonds, and absolutely no flour. It's simple to make and delicious. I often ask myself why no bakeries make it." He laughs. "Perhaps I should start a side business!"

With that comment (and a twinkle in his eyes), he's off to the kitchen to create – what else? – some inspirational dishes!

Continued on page 47



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Latkes for Passover as well

Continued from page 46

FLOURLESS ALMOND AND ORANGE CAKE

From *Kitchen Sense*, Clarkson Potter, 2007

This is an unusual flourless cake, likely of Middle Eastern origin, that incorporates whole citrus (peel, pith and all). I've seen variations of it in books by James Beard, Claudia Roden and Nigella Lawson. But I've made it so many times I feel I can claim it as my own. This version is especially good to make for Passover. The flavour is subtle and the texture is very moist, almost wet; both improve after the cake sits for a day at room temperature. Vary the fruit and the nuts to vary the flavour.

2 juice oranges or large lemons, or 4 or 5 clementines, or a combination (about ¼ lb. or 12 oz. total)
6 large eggs
1 cup sugar (if using lemons, increase this amount to 1⅓ cups)
2 cups (9 oz.) whole, blanched and peeled almonds or hazelnuts, or 1½ cups (9 oz.) ground almond or hazelnut flour
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
pinch salt

Place the citrus in a small saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring to a boil, turn down the heat, and simmer, uncovered, until the fruit is completely soft, 1½ to 2 hours, depending on how thick the skin is. If necessary, add more water to be sure the fruit remains submerged during cooking. Drain and cool. Cut the fruit into halves or quarters and, using the point of a knife or a fork, remove and discard any pits.

While the fruit is cooking, preheat the oven to 375. Lay out the whole or ground almonds on a cookie sheet and set in the oven to toast for 5 to 8 minutes, until you can smell a faint nutty aroma. Remove from the oven and cool. Prepare an 8-in. springform pan by buttering it, lining the bottom with a round of parchment, and buttering it again.

Place the cooled, toasted nuts, whole or ground, in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal chopping blade. Add the sugar and pulse to grind the nuts to a fine flour (if using whole nuts) or just to blend with the sugar (if using ground). Transfer this nut-sugar mixture to a small bowl and set aside. Place the cooked, cooled fruit in the food processor and purée to a smooth pulp, scraping down the sides once or twice. Add the eggs to the fruit, 2 at a time, blending well with on/off pulses after each addition. Scrape down the sides. Add the vanilla and salt and blend. Add the nut flour and sugar mixture all at once and blend, scraping down the sides. Pour this batter into the prepared pan.

Bake in the preheated oven for 45 minutes to an hour, or until the cake has risen somewhat, browned, pulled away from the sides, and a skewer inserted in the centre comes out clean. Remove to a rack and cool completely to room temperature before unmoulding. It will sink a little as it cools. The cake is best eaten the day after it is made. It will keep wrapped tightly at room temperature for four days. Makes one 8-inch cake, good for 8 to 10 servings.

CHEESE LATKES

From *The Mensch Chef*, Clarkson Potter, 2002

It wasn't until the James Beard Foundation started holding latke contests in 1995 (I won the People's Choice Award in 1996), that I delved into latke lore. And there I found out that the first latkes are actually thought to have been made from cheese, not potato. The Chanukah symbolism is not so much about the oil they are fried in (I fry these in butter), but rather has to do with the story of Judith, a widow, who killed Holofernes, the general of the Assyrian army, by giving him cheese, which made him thirsty, and then wine, which made him sleepy, so that she could cut off his head. Regardless, because they are sweet, and buttery, and made with matzah meal, these latkes are a delicious Passover breakfast dish.

1 cup (7.5 oz.) farmer cheese, dry cottage cheese, or drained ricotta
¼ cup (2 oz.) cream cheese, at room temperature
3 eggs
1 cup milk
1 cup matzah meal
1 tsp. kosher salt
¼ cup sugar
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
5 tbsp. unsalted butter, for frying
cinnamon sugar, for dusting

In a mixing bowl, combine the farmer cheese with the cream cheese, mixing with a wooden spoon until smooth. Beat in the eggs, milk, matzah meal, salt, sugar and vanilla. Let sit for 20 minutes, so the matzah meal swells and the batter thickens.

Continued on page 48

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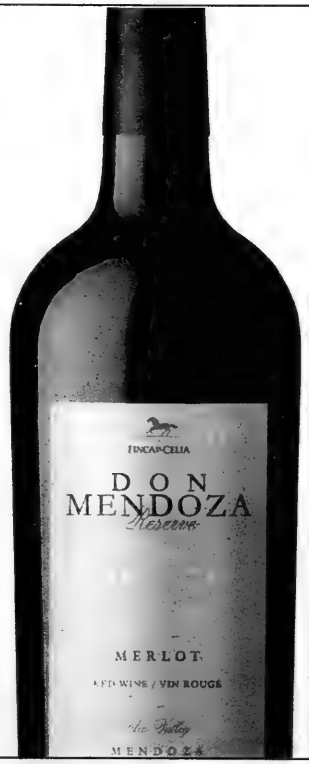

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Spice up your Passover breakfast

Continued from page 47

Heat 1 tbsp. of the butter in a large frying pan (cast iron works best) set over medium-high heat. Drop ¼ cup of batter into the pan to form pancakes, being careful not to crowd the pan. When the pancakes have browned on the bottom and begun to bubble slightly, about 4 minutes, carefully flip them over to cook the second side. They should take an additional 2 or 3 minutes of cooking. Remove to a clean plate or cookie sheet and keep warm. Continue frying the latkes, adding more butter as necessary and being sure not to let the pan get so hot that the latkes burn before they are cooked through. (I take the pan off the heat for a minute or two between batches.) Served dusted with cinnamon sugar. Makes 16 3-in. latkes.

CHAROSET PANCAKES

From *The Mensch Chef*, Clarkson Potter, 2002

Another good Passover breakfast alternative to matzah brei, these pancakes should be made a day or two after the seder if you have any leftover charoset. Our family recipe for charoset is the typical Ashkenazi New York Jewish one, with apples, walnuts, honey and some Manischewitz wine. If the apples in the charoset turn brown, you can still use it.

1 cup charoset
¼ cup whole milk
2 large eggs
½ cup matzah meal
1 tbsp. sugar
pinch kosher salt
2 tbsp. unsalted butter, for frying
cinnamon sugar, for dusting

In a small bowl, mix the charoset, milk, eggs, matzah meal, sugar and salt. Heat half the butter in a heavy frying pan (I prefer cast iron) set over medium-high heat. Spoon the batter into the pan to form 3-inch pancakes. Fry until the edges are browned and the pancakes have set, about 5 minutes. Carefully flip (the pancakes are delicate) and cook the second side, about 3 minutes. Serve dusted with cinnamon sugar. Makes 8 pancakes.

Cooking Jewish – for Passover or any time of the year

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

Judy Bart Kancigor dedicated her best-selling cookbook *Cooking Jewish: 532 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family* (Workman) to her mother, Lillian Bart, with the inscription: "Every daughter deserves a mother like you!"

Kancigor also wrote the following introduction for her Mom's Killer Brisket with Tsimmes: "It's Passover again as we make our annual trek to Brad and Tracey's for their beautiful seder. Airport security is farklempt. Setting off the metal detectors is my Apple Matzah Schalat in Mama Hinda's metal pan. Nestled between the toys for Samantha and Blake are tins of sweets. My mother is shlepping two huge jars of frozen chicken soup, a tray of matzah balls, and, of course, her killer tsimmes. Sheesh! You'd think those airport officials never saw tsimmes before!"

However, Kancigor won't be setting off any metal detectors this year. Her son Brad and his family will be travelling to his parents' home in Fullerton, Calif., to be with the family for the last few days of Passover. Kancigor will only return home from her whirlwind book tourshortly before Passover begins, after appearances in Atlanta, central Jersey, Chicago, New Orleans and other cities. Not to worry – she told me that she's totally ready for Pesach. The cooked brisket is in the freezer, along with the rest of her Passover cooking!

One look at the charming cover will hook you even before you open this memory-packed, recipe-packed cookbook. Mixing warm stories of her family with the treasure of five generations of recipes (532 of them) shared by members of the Rabinowitz family, you'll find Jewish home cooking at its best, along with old family photos that are truly treasures.

During the four years she was writing *Cooking Jewish*, scores of friends, acquaintances and even strangers allowed her to turn every get-together into a recipe-testing event. (Doesn't everyone eat Pesach food in July?)

In the introduction to the Passover chapter, Judy writes: "Cousins, do you remember Papa Harry's wonderful seders with the whole family gathered at the mile-long table whose boards had boards? Good for you. I was never there. We spent our Passovers in the Catskills where my dad, Jan Bart, was working, conducting his magnificent seders, complete with choir (including my mom Lillian's glorious contralto) for 850 people… How proud he would be to see grandson Bradley and wife Tracey's seders today."

In the Passover chapter, you'll find no less than three recipes for charoset, Mama Hinda's Passover Noodles, Matzah Stuffing, Garden Veggie Matzah Schalat (kugel), Passover Fruity Muffins, Estelle's Famous Passover Sponge Cake, Too Good to Call Passover Cake Bete Noire (flourless chocolate cake), Chocolate Fudge Pecan Pie and Judy Zeidler's Farfel-Nut Thins.

Kancigor shared the following recipes for your Passover enjoyment… or any time of year!

CHICKEN SOUP
from Lillian Bart

Open letter to my cousins: many of you claimed that your mother's chicken soup is the best. My mother's made the final cut for two reasons. First of all, this cookbook was my idea, and when you write your cookbook, you can say your mother's is the best!

Second, I am including it because it really is the best, and anyone who disagrees either has never had my mother's chicken soup or is congenitally taste-bud challenged. It is dark golden in colour, intensely flavourful, and, in short, an elixir of the gods. I hoard the leftovers to use on special occasions in recipes calling for chicken stock (the real secret of my stuffing and gravy). You see, my mother adheres to the "if some is good, more is better" school of cooking. While this theory usually spells disaster in the kitchen (notably in her meat loaf!), it is the method of choice in making chicken soup. And this is one case where the method is as important as the ingredients.

Continued on page 49

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Recipes from the Rabinowitz family

Continued from page 48

While her exact ingredients vary as the mood hits her, here is her recipe from a typical day.

Serve the soup with matzah balls and lokshen (thin noodles), or on Passover, with mandlen (soup nuts).

2 chickens (3½ to 4 lb. each) with giblets (no liver), quartered
2 lb. carrots (yes, 2 lb., not 2 carrots)
2 large onions, cut in half
5 large ribs celery with leaves, cut in half
2 large parsnips
1 small sweet potato, cut in half
1 turnip, cut in half
1 rutabaga (6 oz.), cut in half
1 small celery root, cut in half (optional)
½ large green bell pepper, stemmed and seeded
½ large yellow pepper, stemmed and seeded
2 large bunches dill, coarsely chopped (about 1½ cups)
½ bunch curly-leaf parsley (about 1/4 cup)
3 cloves garlic
kosher (coarse) salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
chopped dill, for serving (optional)

Place the chicken in a 16-quart stockpot and add water to barely cover. Bring just to the boiling point. Then reduce the heat to a simmer and skim off the foam that rises to the top. Add all the remaining ingredients (except the optional chopped dill) and only enough water to come within about two thirds of the height of the vegetables in the pot. (Most recipes will tell you to add water to cover. Do not do this! You want elixir of the gods or weak tea? As the soup cooks, the vegetables will shrink and will be covered soon enough. Eight to 10 cups of water total is plenty for this highly flavourful brew.) Simmer, covered, until the chicken is cooked through, about 1½ hours.

Salmon Tataki as seen in *passover by design* by Susie Fishbein; Photography by John Uher, Mesorah Publications.

Remove the chicken and about half the carrots from the pot, and set them aside.

Strain the soup through a fine-mesh strainer into another pot or container, pressing on the vegetables to extract all the flavour. Scrape the underside of the strainer with a rubber spatula and add the pulp to the soup. Discard the fibrous vegetable membranes that remain in the strainer. If you're fussy about clarity (and we're not), you can strain it again through a fine tea strainer, but there goes some of the flavour. Cover the soup and refrigerate overnight.

When you are ready to serve the soup, scoop the congealed fat off the surface and discard it. Reheat, adding more dill if desired (and we do). Slice the reserved carrots, add them to the soup, and serve. Makes about 3 quarts.

SALMON GEFILTE FISH

from Judy Bart Kancigor

For years, I denied myself gefilte fish at holiday time because my kids would turn up their noses. Then I created a variation of Marlene Sorosky's recipe from *Fast and Festive Meals for the Jewish Holidays*, using all salmon and baking the fish as individual "muffins." Good thing I made enough for seconds! It makes a lovely presentation on a bed of greens, surrounded by thinly sliced cucumber, a few grape tomatoes and Uncle Lou's horseradish.

solid vegetable shortening or vegetable cooking spray
2 medium-size onions, cut into chunks
5 medium-size carrots, cut into 1-in. pieces
2 ribs celery, cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup curly-leaf parsley leaves
3 lb. skinless salmon, cut into 2-in. pieces
3 large eggs
⅓ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup sugar, or to taste
2 tsp. kosher (coarse) salt, or to taste
2 tsp. black pepper, or to taste

Place a rack in the centre of the oven and preheat the oven to 350. Grease 24 muffin cups with shortening or cooking spray.

Place the onions in a food processor and pulse until they are minced. Transfer the onions to a very large bowl.

Process the carrots, celery and parsley together until ground. Add to the onions.

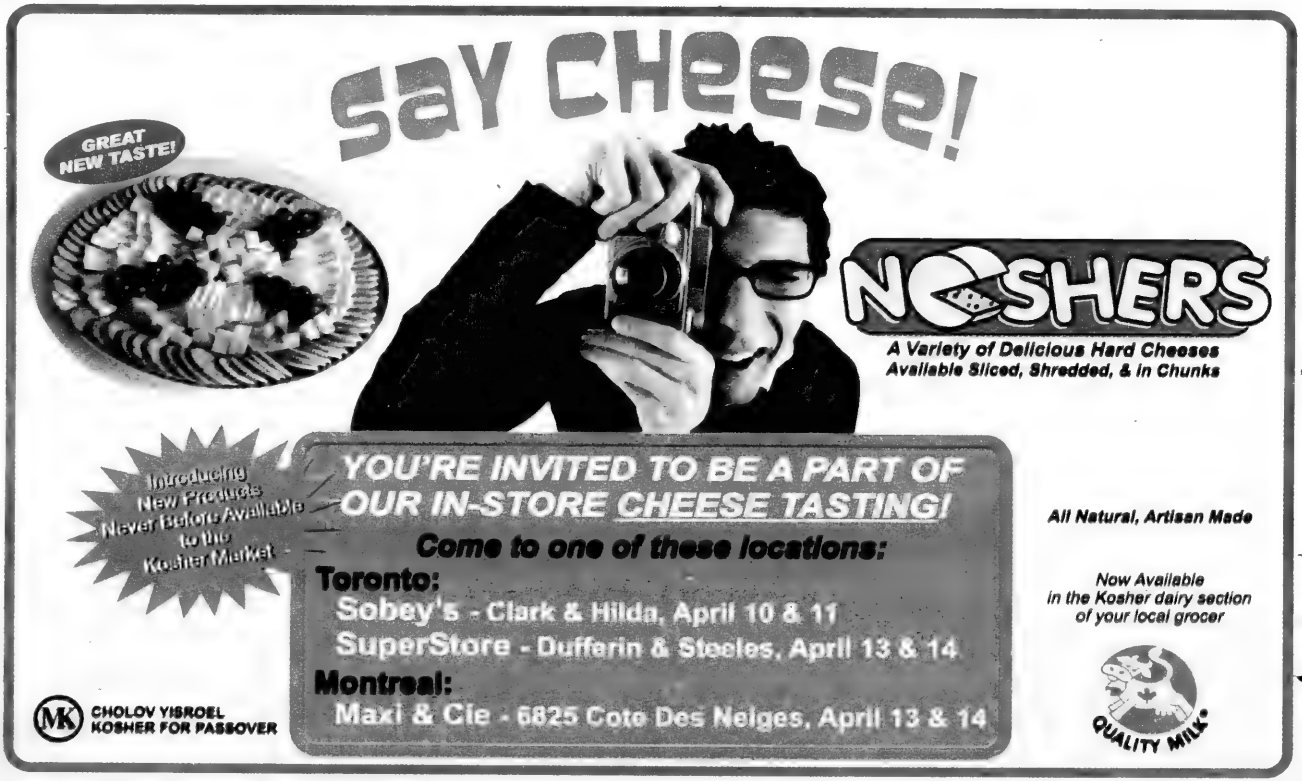
Process about two thirds of the salmon, adding 1 piece at a time through the feed tube until it's all ground. Add the processed salmon to the onion mixture.

Process the remaining salmon, adding it through the feed tube. Then add the eggs, oil, sugar, salt, and pepper, and process until well blended. Add this mixture to the onion-salmon mixture, and combine well.

Divide the salmon mixture evenly among the prepared muffin cups. Bake until the top feels set when touched, 25 to 30 minutes. Let the fish cool in the muffin cups and then unmould.

Serve at room temperature. Makes 24.

Note: These can be made a day ahead and refrigerated. Remove from the refrigerator about 1 hour before serving.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Traditional Passover dishes with a twist

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

There are so many traditions on Passover that you have to be careful about what recipes you use. For example, those who don't eat kitniyot (legumes) on Passover must be careful about recipes calling for any type of legume, while those who don't eat gebrochs (a term used to describe matzah that has become wet and is avoided by some Ashkenazi Jews) must be careful about recipes that call for the addition of water to matzah meal.

There are even customs concerning the types of matzah one eats: some eat only hand-baked shmurah matzah, matzah that has been carefully watched from the time the wheat was cut, to make sure no water dropped on it, while others are just as happy with the regular machine matzah.

Despite all the different customs, at the seder table, everyone joins together to remember the experience of the Exodus. Part of that experience is the wondrous plates of food that seem to go on and on, despite the late hour and drooping eyelids. These memories leave a taste in our mouths and our hearts, that stays with us as long as we live.

Here are some recipes you can try during Pesach.

MATZAH BREI

Everyone has a favourite version of matzah brei and a favourite way of eating it. Some like it with cinnamon-sugar, some like it salty and some like it with jam. I like it with sour cream.

This was my grandmother's recipe, and my family can't get enough of it on Passover. My daughter Amy, who married into a family that doesn't eat gebrochs, always looks forward to the last day of Passover when she can make this dish.

8 pieces of matzah
8 eggs
1½ tsp. salt
⅓ tsp. pepper
3 tbsp. butter, margarine or oil

Break matzah into pieces and soak in warm water until soft but not soggy, about 1 minute. Drain thoroughly. Beat eggs and add to matzah. Add salt and pepper. Melt butter, margarine or oil in a large frying pan. Add matzah mixture and cook, stirring and turning, until dry and crispy. Turn out onto serving dish. Makes 4 servings.

POTATO CHEESE KUGEL

Betty Goodfriend, wife of Cantor Isaac Goodfriend of Atlanta, was the most amazing cook. If you saw her name on a recipe, you knew it would be wonderful. This recipe and the following one are hers. Both can be used year-round or for Passover.

3 eggs
2 cups water
6 oz. potato pancake mix
16 oz. cottage cheese
½ cup sour cream
minced parsley, optional
sour cream for topping

Combine eggs, water, potato pancake mix and let stand until thick. Add cottage cheese, sour cream and parsley. Pour into greased 8-inch square pan and bake at 350 for 1 hour or until brown. Serve topped with sour cream. Makes 9 servings.

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CIC members fired upon while touring Sderot

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Members of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) were among groups of tourists who came under sniper fire last Friday morning while visiting kibbutz Nir-Am in Sderot, Israel.

Among the dozens of tourists – including Jews and Christians – present at the site when the attack began were 16 CIC representatives from across Canada.

The CIC tour group was being led by Israeli Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter and his bureau chief, Mati Gil.

The gunfire erupted while they were stopped at an observation point overlooking the town of Beith Hanoun in the nearby Gaza Strip.

None of the Canadians was hurt, but Gil was wounded. He was brought to Barzilai Hospital in Ashkelon, where doctors said he was in stable condition, recovering from wounds to his abdomen and pelvis.

Speaking to *The CJN* by phone from Israel just hours after the incident, CIC chair Moshe Ronen, who was in the touring party, described the incident this way: "During the visit at the observatory point, we received a briefing from [Dichter] and near the end of his explanation we heard gunfire. We saw the bullets landing at our feet. It was pretty scary. As soon as Mati was hit and started screaming, we realized… we were being fired upon."

He continued: "We were told by the secret service [officers] accompanying the minister to lay face down on the ground. The rapid gunfire lasted for almost a minute, and within five minutes the IDF returned fire. That put an end to the firing on us. We were then evacuated to a nearby IDF fortification, where we and the minister stayed for almost an hour."

The committee members were in the midst of their annual, weeklong board trip to the Holy Land and were scheduled to return to Canada on Tuesday.

Officials for Hamas claimed responsibility for the shooting and said they had advance knowledge of Dichter's visit and prepared for the attack once they saw armoured Israeli vehicles gather near the areas. A range of other terrorist groups also claimed responsibility.

Israeli Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter, left, and CIC chair Moshe Ronen react to the fire directed at them by the Palestinian sniper. [Photo courtesy of the CIC]

"This is to confirm the continuation of our holy war and… the targeting of every Zionist on our pure land," read a claim on Hamas' official website last Friday.

Israeli troops later raided the area from where the sniper fire originated.

Ronen said that in spite of the attack, his group continued with its planned tour of the embattled town.

"We stayed in Sderot. We had our lunch. We met with people who live there, and we're determined to return," he said. "We came in solidarity [with the people of Sderot] and … we also got a taste of the kind of threat they are under daily. The terror that they experience. It's important for Israel and Canada to understand that we cannot tolerate this, and we have to combat this ongoing terror and insecurity."

An April 4 *Canadian Press* report quoted Dichter praising the CIC group's response to the incident, saying they "behaved terrific, as if they are under fire in Canada every day."

Ronen said the CIC was relieved to receive word from Dichter that Gil was recovering well from his injuries.

He said that an hour after the incident, Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper – who was attending a NATO summit in Romania at the time – and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert each called him to declare "solidarity" with the group and express their relief that no CIC members were hurt.

"We really appreciated that," Ronen said.

Maxime Bernier, Canada's foreign affairs minister, issued a statement denouncing the incident last Friday.

"Canada strongly condemns today's attack on a delegation visiting an observation point near Sderot. These attacks targeting civilians are unacceptable, and I wish a full recovery to Mati Gil. I also extend my best wishes to the members of the Canada-Israel Committee," he said.

"I have met with residents of Sderot and heard about their experience living under the constant threat of rocket fire from Gaza. Canada remains deeply concerned about the continuing violence in southern Israel and Gaza."

Though he never expected to be in the line of fire, Ronen said that the experience only served to reinforce the need for the CIC to be more "vigilant in strengthening the bond between Canada and Israel."

"The CIC will continue to bring [Canadian] VIPs to Israel to see first-hand [the security issues]. We're very determined to do this," he vowed.

In Ottawa last Friday, Liberal MP for Mount Royal and opposition human rights critic, Irwin Cotler, called on the government to respond to the attack.

"Today, a Canadian delegation, including constituents of mine, was the target of deliberate sniper fire while visiting Sderot, an Israeli town that has endured seven years of relentless rocket attacks… with the objective of killing Jews because they are Jews," he told the House of Commons.

"We know the surest way to ensure that evil will triumph in the world is for enough good people to do nothing. Let Parliament speak, the international community act and let this culture of impunity end."

Since 2001, Sderot and other southern Israeli border communities have withstood near-constant shelling by Hamas rocket fire, resulting in the disruption of daily life and 13 deaths so far.

With files from JTA and Ha'aretz

Olmert, Abbas renew talks

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas resumed direct talks this week after a more than month-long break.

Olmert hosted Abbas at his Jerusalem residence Monday for their first meeting since Feb. 19.

As part of peace talks revived under U.S. auspices last year, they are meant to hold talks every two weeks.

But Abbas suspended contact last month following a bloody Israeli offensive against Hamas rocket crews in the Gaza Strip. And a Palestinian shooting spree at Jerusalem's Mercaz Harav yeshiva a few days later triggered Israeli calls on Olmert to scrap the negotiations altogether.

The two leaders were joined at Monday's meeting by their chief negotiators, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and the Palestinian Authority's former prime minister, Ahmed Qureia.

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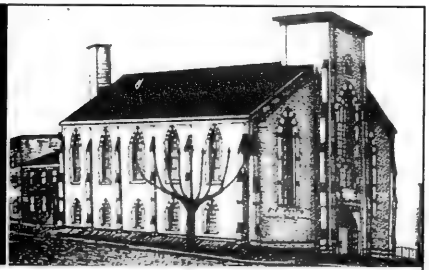

Come say Shalom (hello) to Saint John while we say Shalom (farewell) to Shaarei Zedek Synagogue.

The property has been sold - and this may be your last chance to experience the history of the Saint John Jewish Community in this building that has been our Synagogue for almost 100 years!

A block of rooms is being held at the Delta Brunswick Hotel, Saint John, NB. Call 1-800-335-8233 and ask for "Shaarei Zedek Reunion" or book online at *www.deltabrunswick.com/gdshaa*

For more information on this event, email: *delman@nbnet.nb.ca* or write to: Susan Isaacs-Lubin, 12 Grantham Road Saint John, NB E2K 0B9

Israel would destroy Iran if attacked: Ben-Eliezer

By BARAK RAVID
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — Any Iranian attack on Israel would lead to fierce retaliation resulting in the destruction of Iran, Israeli Infrastructure Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer said Monday.

Ben-Eliezer, a former defence minister, was speaking during a visit to the Infrastructure Ministry war room, which is being prepared as part of the civil defence drill.

"The Iranians won't rush to attack Israel because they understand the significance such action would have and are well aware of our strength," Ben-Eliezer said. "However, Iran continues to aggravate the situation by supplying arms to Syria and Hezbollah, and we must deal with this."

Ben-Eliezer said the civil defence exercise "is not a meaningless spectacle or a fictional scenario. The future reality is likely to be a number of times harsher than that which we recognize now. We are confronted with a situation where the home front becomes the front line.

"In a future war, it will be much safer to live in [the northern towns of] Nahariya and Shlomi instead of Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, since I expect that in the opening attack, hundreds of missiles will strike Israel. There will be no place in the country which is not within range of Syria and Hezbollah's rockets," he added.

Israel and the United States are concerned that North Korea has provided Iran with nuclear know-how, and they are seeking to pressure Pyongyang to end its nuclear co-operation with Tehran.

This is one of the motives behind Jerusalem and Washington's agreement last week to disclose details of the Israel Air Force strike on Syria last September. Foreign press reports say the strike targeted a nuclear installation built with North Korean assistance.

According to information obtained by Washington and Jerusalem, North Korea transferred technology and nuclear materials to Iran to aid Tehran's secret nuclear arms program.

U.S. and Israeli officials agreed last week that the talks between the United States and North Korea scheduled to take place in Singapore this week should be used to pressure Pyongyang to disclose its nuclear co-operation with countries in the Middle East. As a pressure tactic, U.S. officials say they would reveal details of North Korea's co-operation with Syria to the U.S. Congress.

Foreign news sources reported that in addition to helping Syria build the nuclear facility that Israel attacked, North Korea sent engineers and materials to the site. Israel and the United States fear that Pyongyang could be doing even more to boost Iran's nuclear program.

During their talks in Washington with high-ranking officials last week, Yoram Turbowicz and Shalom Turjeman, advisers to Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, agreed that the details of the air strike would be released by the Americans. Israel would continue to decline to comment on the matter, as it has done since September, and would not alter its censorship policy.

Syria claimed that the facility hit was an unused military installation and denied having a nuclear development program. North Korea also denies exporting its nuclear expertise. Iran claims that its nuclear program is for civilian purposes only.

In the past few months, Olmert has met with key world leaders to discuss Syria.

Benjamin Ben-Eliezer

The most important meeting in Olmert's campaign to defend the Israeli air strike and create a united international front against Syria was with Russian President Vladimir Putin. On Oct. 10 last year, about a month after the attack, the two leaders spoke on the phone about Syria and other issues. They agreed that because of the sensitivity of the matter, talks should be continued face to face.

On Oct. 18, Olmert flew to Moscow for a five-hour visit that was announced only the day before. Officials in the Prime Minister's Office said at the time that the Iranian issue was the focus of the talks, and that Olmert planned to present Putin with intelligence on a number of strategic issues.

Ha'aretz learned that Olmert presented Putin with the problems relevant to Syria.

One week later, Olmert flew to Paris and London, where he met with President Nicolas Sarkozy and Prime Minister Gordon Brown, respectively, and filled them in on the operation. While in London, Olmert also met with his Turkish counterpart, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who was also visiting the British capital.

After the air strike in Syria, two detachable fuel tanks from Israeli fighter planes were found in Turkish territory, near the Syrian border. Turkish news reports said this proved that Israeli aircraft had flown over Turkish airspace on their way to their target. Turkey made a formal complaint to Israel and asked for clarifications from Jerusalem.

In his hour-long meeting with Erdogan, Olmert briefed the Turkish prime minister on the situation. A few days later, Olmert informed the cabinet that he had apologized to Erdogan for the fuel tank incident.

"If Israeli planes indeed penetrated Turkish airspace, then it was without prior intent or any intent to infringe upon or undermine Turkish sovereignty, which we respect," Olmert told the cabinet.

JPPS-Bialik

JPPS-Bialik, Montreal, Quebec, a dynamic and innovative, co-educational and pluralistic independent Jewish school system, committed to academic excellence, is accepting applications for teachers in the following areas.

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- Tanach
- Hebrew Language
- Mathematics Resource—to work with small groups of students who experience difficulty in math
- Science Resource—to work with small groups of students who experience difficulty in science

Quebec teaching certification is required. Interested candidates, please send your CV to ddk@bialikmtl.ca or by fax to 514-483-6391 by May 1, 2008.

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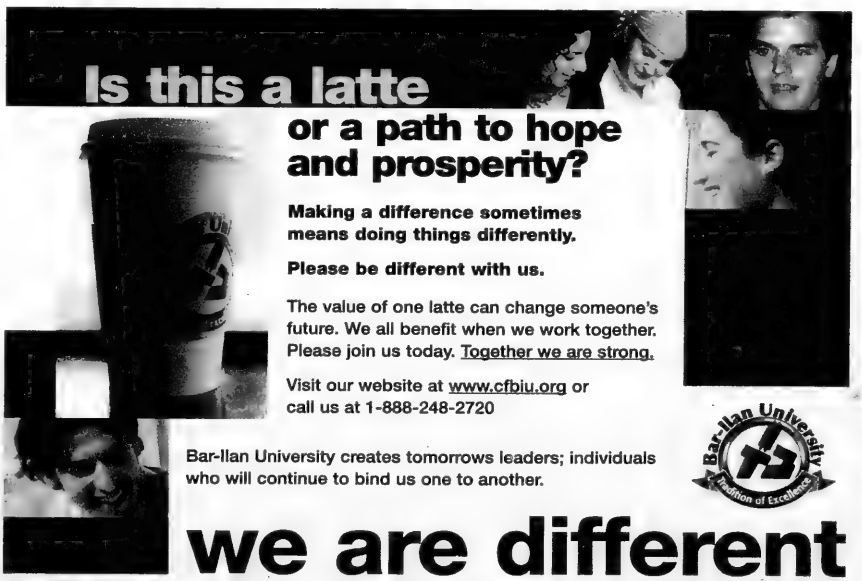
Quebec teaching certification is required. Interested candidates, please send your CV to laurence.f@jppsbialik.ca or by fax to 514-731-0343 by May 1, 2008.

We thank everyone who applies, but only candidates eligible for an interview will be contacted.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Iran helps Syria 'listen' to Israel

Syrian officials confirmed reports that Tehran has been building listening stations in Syria to intercept Israeli military communications. A Syrian member of parliament, Mohammed Habash, told the pan-Arab daily *al-Sharq al-Awsat* last Thursday that the listening stations in Syria were no secret. "Syria is doing all it could to defend its territory and is turning to military experts for help," said Habash, who heads parliament's Syrian-Iranian relations committee. "We are still at war with Israel. We have the right to defend our borders with all means within international law," Habash added.

Israelis favour 'Palestine' for Arabs

Three in four Israeli Jews favour the idea of including their Arab compatriots in a future Palestinian state, a poll found. According to a survey commissioned this week by the Knesset Channel, 76 per cent of Jews in Israel believe all or selected Israeli Arab communities should be included within the borders of "Palestine" when it arises. Some of those favouring the idea proposed that Arab citizens deemed loyal to Israel be given the option of staying.

Twenty-four per cent of respondents were opposed to the proposed "transfer." Arabs comprise 20 per cent of the Jewish state's population, and long-simmering tensions have been pushed to the boiling point by the past eight years of Palestinian violence. Many in the Israeli Arab sector openly identify with the Palestinians, including their radical anti-Zionist elements like Hamas. Israeli demographers also note that the relatively higher birthrate in Arab communities poses a long-term threat to the Jewish majority. The poll had 668 respondents and a 3.7 per cent margin of error.

Firm recognized for ethics

An Israeli firm was named as the most ethical foreign company that works with the U.S. government. Elbit Systems was the choice of Ethisphere when the American journal, which tracks international business practices, issued its annual assessment of government contractors this week. Elbit, which specializes in defence technologies, topped the list of the five best foreign companies with a grade of 74.59 per cent satisfaction. The other four companies are British.

Hamas chief: Holocaust 'exaggerated'

Hamas believes the Holocaust was "exaggerated," its supreme leader said. Khaled Meshaal said in a Sky TV interview that the numbers were embellished to justify the existence and actions of Israel. "We don't deny the Holocaust, but we believe the Holocaust was exaggerated by the Zionist movement to use as a whip," the Palestinian faction's leader said. "We don't deny the fact but we don't accept two issues. We don't accept the exaggeration of numbers and we don't accept that Israel uses this to do what it wants."

– *JTA*

The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem announces the appointment of

Mr. YARON ASHKENAZI as Executive Director

In a joint venture with Yad Vashem, Israel, Yaron Ashkenazi was recently appointed Executive Director of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem. Yaron was born and raised in Israel. He served in a special paratroop unit of the Israeli Defense Forces and as an officer, for a decade, in the Personal Protection Unit of the Israeli Shin Bet – General Security Services. Yaron headed the team that protected then-Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, and Security Minister Yitzhak Rabin, as well as many other cabinet ministers.

After completing his Law degree at East London University, England, Yaron practiced commercial law. In 1997, Yaron was appointed Executive Director of the Israel Society for Yad Vashem, a fundraising division, which he raised to a dominant, active part of Yad Vashem's global fundraising efforts. Yaron established a large range of activities that resulted in raising substantial funds for many of Yad Vashem's educational and commemorative programs.

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The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
The Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority

The Parliament of Canada honours

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PARLIAMENT HILL OTTAWA

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3:00 P.M.

National Holocaust Remembrance Day Event Chair
Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
Dr. Joel Dimitry

Executive Director
Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
Yaron Ashkenazi

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Jewish Federation of Ottawa
Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre

Buses will be available from Toronto and Montreal.
Reserve your seat as soon as possible.

For more information and bus reservations
Please contact Gillian Weintraub
The Canadian Society for Yad Vashem
416.785.1333 Toll Free 1.888.494.7999
gillian@yadvashem.ca

Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Activist founds basketball tournament to help Ethiopian Jews

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

While he is only 25, David Goodman has already become an innovative leader within the Jewish community, both in Toronto and abroad.

Goodman, a University of Western Ontario and George Brown College graduate, has always been active in the community. He has volunteered for the Birthright Alumni Community (BAC) in conjunction with Canada Israel Experience (CIE), the leading Israel tour organizer in Canada.

He also volunteered to deliver food packages to people living below the poverty line on some of the High Holy Days through Jewish Family & Child of Toronto.

But his largest contribution to date came last year when he founded Hoops 4 Israel, a charity basketball tournament that has transformed the lives of Ethiopian-Israeli at-risk youth in Kiryat Moshe, Israel.

Having grown up in a Reform family, Goodman had visited Israel when celebrating both his and his brother's bar mitzvah. Yet it was his first Taglit-birthright israel trip in February 2006 that deepened his connection to the Holy Land.

"The experience was phenomenal," he said. "I went on the trip with some of my closest friends. We took in a lot from the culture and the people – especially the soldiers on our trip with whom we bonded," he said.

"Our tour guide, Yael Goodman, was Israeli and made the experience deep for me. That made a huge difference in me becoming more passionate about the land and ready to give back when I returned to Canada."

Following the trip, although he had a full-time job in marketing, Goodman sought a volunteer opportunity that would allow him to manage a large-scale initiative. He volunteered for CIE and decided to contribute to the UJA Federation of Toronto's project of fundraising for the community in Kiryat Moshe.

Most of the 10,000 residents of Kiryat Moshe are Ethiopian immigrants. About 95 per cent of them live below the poverty line, and in some cases, there are eight or nine children in one family.

"The investment that the Israeli government has made to bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel and help them integrate into the society is huge, but we also have to provide help from the Diaspora," said Goodman. "We don't want a black social underclass to go on for another generation, especially in a place like Israel that has a great democracy. We can't let that happen to our own people – it's part of our Jewish morals."

David Goodman, founder of Hoops 4 Israel, sits in front of a banner made by young Ethiopian-Israelis from Kiryat Moshe to thank the Toronto Jewish community for its support.

The idea for Hoops 4 Israel, which is held in conjunction with the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and BAC, was inspired by Goodman's love of sports and his desire to get his friends and other young Jewish adults involved in a fun social advocacy program that could benefit Israel.

For further assistance, he formed an event committee comprising more than 15 Birthright alumni.

"I love basketball and play it with my friends," said Goodman. "So I thought, 'Why not use that toward something more purposeful?'

From left, Yitzhak Adgo, Fran Sonshine, a UJA Federation of Toronto volunteer, and Yisrael Desta took part in this year's Hoops 4 Israel. Adgo and Desta were brought to Toronto from Kiryat Moshe to participate in the tournament.

"My close friends had not been advocating for Israel on a public scale. They might be Zionists, but they don't necessarily express that to their networks and friends. My event committee and I made it a policy that each participating team would do some fundraising," he said, adding that he hoped that would help influence other people to involve themselves in events that support Israel.

The event began to grow in popularity, so Goodman decided to quit his marketing job, and since February 2007, he has been working full time on the development of Hoops 4 Israel.

In its first year, with the help of more than 90 participants and numerous corporate sponsors, Hoops 4 Israel raised over $100,000. The proceeds were used to fund the building of an outdoor sports court at a community centre in Kiryat Moshe that is a popular hangout for the residents.

Funds were also used to sponsor youth soccer and track teams, a performing arts program, a computer comprehension program and a cognitive skills education program. The soccer team is now among the top youth soccer teams in Israel.

"The youth in Kiryat Moshe don't have the same privileges that we do," said Goodman. "Some resort to crime or drugs, because they don't have a sense of purpose, coupled with nothing to do after the regular school day or on weekends," Goodman said.

"The sports programs help instil confidence, purpose, and leadership skills in the youth. As a result, their learning curve also grows tremendously, and the youth know they have to do well in school in order to stay on the sports teams."

Last July, Goodman received a Charlie Award for his efforts with Hoops 4 Israel. Named after late philanthropist Charles Schusterman, the award annually recognizes the achievements and innovative leadership of birthright alumni from around the world.

Goodman and the 14 other award recipients that year enjoyed a weeklong leadership seminar in Israel, where they interacted with high-ranking leaders from the business and non-profit sectors and refined their managerial and strategic skills.

Last September, Goodman was hired full-time as the outreach co-ordinator for the BAC. He has so far led two birthright trips, and he took the participants to Kiryat Moshe to see how the community has benefited from the contributions. He also brought along some donated goods for the underprivileged youth, including basketballs.

The second annual Hoops 4 Israel tournament, held in Toronto last month at HoopDome, a multi-court basketball facility, attracted 132 volunteer participants.

Two teenagers from Kiryat Moshe, 17-year-old Yisrael Desta and 19-year-old Yitzhak Adgo, who have excelled at school and the sports programs, were brought to Toronto to participate in the tournament. Goodman also took them to various tourist sites across the city.

The tournament raised more than $130,000. In addition to funding the ongoing sports programs in the northern town, the proceeds will go toward the renovation of a community centre for indoor sports and possibly weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs.

For more information, visit www.hoops4israel.com.

Class Acts

FOOD DRIVE: Members of Chai Tikvah Foundation's Simcha Club, for adults with mental health problems, and Grade 6 students from Netivot HaTorah Day School helped pack Passover boxes for the National Council of Jewish Women Toronto section's Passover Food Drive. Boxes containing necessary items for the seders and Passover week will be delivered to those in need on April 13 from Council House on Bathurst Street.

KIDS COLLECT FOR SHELTER: Junior kindergarten, Grade 1 and Grade 7 students at Leo Baeck Day School's Atkinson campus collected toiletries for the Salvation Army's Florence Booth House, a women's shelter in downtown Toronto. From left are Melody Masauda of the shelter, teacher Bonnie Gremont and her daughter, Grade 1 student Kailey Gremont.

PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST AT USDS: United Synagogue Day School, Bayview campus, held its annual public speaking contest in a packed assembly hall. Three students from each grade participated. The winners, from left, are Michelle Soicher in Grade 8, Jason Brown in Grade 7, Dana Potashner in Grade 8 and Sydney Kerzner in Grade 6.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

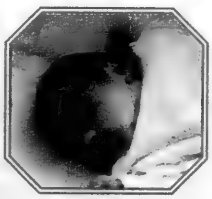
As featured on onlysimchas! Celebrating Jewish Life www.onlysimchas.com

Mazel tov to Alison Lavner & Chaim Basch on your recent engagement.

Mazel tov on the recent marriage of Sarah Jacobs & Neal (Chaim) Adelstein.

Mazel tov on the recent wedding of Tzvi Meir Yaakov & Shifra Shoshana Lefkowitz.

Mazel tov to Anna Rotenberg & Moshe "Momo" Grunfeld on your recent engagement.



Mazel tov on the birth of Chaya Miriam, daughter of Shimi & Freydi Traurig.

Mazel tov on the upsherin of Mendel Kahn.

Mazel tov on the recent wedding of Nathan Spitalny & Penina Horowitz.

Mazel tov to Yehoshua Chaim Rothman & Avigail King on your recent engagement.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments,
1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205,
North York, ON. M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

Become a Fan of HEEBONICS on Facebook

WHAT'S NEW DEADLINES: Friday, April 18, is the deadline for the May 1 issue and Monday, April 28, is the deadline for the May 8 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, April 10

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION

Rabbi Michael Skobac discusses "Jewish Home Improvement: Learn How to Create a Solid Spiritual Foundation." 8 p.m. at the Lodzer Centre Congregation. Free. Info, 905-761-0040.

Saturday, April 12

B'NAI SHALOM SERVICES

Join B'Nai Shalom of Halton-Peel, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue in the Mississauga, Oakville, Burlington and area for our monthly Shabbat service followed by kiddush and conversation. 10 a.m. For info visit www.bnaishalom.ca or call 905-901-9889.

PARSHA DISCUSSION

Henry Alkin will discuss the weekly portion, *Metzora*, 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

SHABBAT HAGADOL

Rabbi Moshe Stern will deliver the annual Shabbat Hagadol Drasha on "Lessons to Learn from Ancient Egypt to Modern Day Israel" at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation at 6:15 p.m.

Sunday, April 13

REENA FOUNDATION SALE

Reena Foundation, the second largest provider of comprehensive residential and support services for people with developmental disabilities in Ontario, will host its first annual spring sale to raise funds to support Reena's respite and enrichment programs. Get health and beauty products at great prices, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 7887 Weston Rd., unit 21. Info, www.reenafoundation.org.

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project offers a healing service with **Rabbi Martin Berman** and **Yehudit Shier Weisberg**. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green, room 421, 4600 Bathurst St. Wheelchair access. 416-944-3359.

60 YEARS, 7 FILMS

The First Narayever film series in honour of Israel's 60th anniversary continues with *Yanna's Friends*. Set during the 1991 Gulf War, the film tells the story of a newlywed immigrant and her relationship with an Israeli filmmaker and neighbour, while awaiting her husband's return from Russia. Note: adult content. 3 p.m. No charge. 416-927-0546

FAMILY/SCHOOL SEDER

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism hosts its annual family/school Passover seder at St. Andrew's Jr. High School, 131 Fenn Ave. 4:45 p.m. Adults $15, students $7, children ages 4 and under $4. All welcome. RSVP, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc. for an evening of bowling at Lucky Strike Lanes, in Vaughn Mills Mall. 5:30 p.m. For info and RSVP, walkand talketc@hotmail.com.

YOM HASHOAH PROGRAM

Temple Sinai Congregation hosts "Salonika, City of Silence," a Yom HaShoah program with **Marcia Haddad Ikonomopoulos**, curator, Greek Jewish Museum, New York, outreach director for Salonika Jews living in North America and Co-ordinator for the Salonika newspaper. 7:30 p.m. $5, non-members $7. 416-487-4161 or E.education@templesinai.net

ACTING GREEN

Join architect, **Les Klein**, and members of Darchei Noam's building design, construction and envi-

Continued on page 57

"the world's greatest ballet dancers"
Amoryn Engel, National Post, Saturday, May 26, 2007
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The list of performers may be subject to change
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What's New

Continued from page 56

ronment committees for "Thinking, Designing and Acting Green," a presentation and discussion on how a synagogue community can model environmental responsibility. 7 p.m.416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca.

ON BEING A RABBI

Join Temple Kol Ami at Indigo Richmond Hill, Yonge/Hwy #7, as **Rabbi Daniel Gotlieb** discusses "10 Things I Love Best About Being a Rabbi." 7:30 p.m. www.templekolami.com

SINGLES GAME NIGHT

Join singles for an evening of board games and bingo. Early bird bingo 7:30-8 p.m. at Beth Torah Synagogue. $8. Call **Mollie** for info, 416-733-3634.

Monday, April 14

CHUG HATANACH

Rabbi Wayne Allen will lead a discussion of *The Book of Ezra*, chapter 9. 8 p.m. at Beth David Beth Am Congregation. All welcome.

Other news

PRE-PESACH SUPPER

No mess, no fuss. Why cook when you can join Beth Tzedec Men's Club for a pre-Pesach drop-in pasta supper, Thurs. April 17, 5:30-8pm. $10/adult (14+), $5/child (4-13), children under 3 free. Deadline for reservations Fri. April 11. Call, 416-781-3511.

BURNING YOUR CHAMETZ

The Beth Radom Congregation invites everyone to join in a communal "burning of your chametz" in our shul parking lot, Friday, April 18, right after morning services and *siyum b'chorim*. Bring along your raw shankbones to roast for your seder plate. 416-636-3451

VE'AHAVTA SEDER

Ve'ahavta invites the community to the 9th Annual "Passover: A Modern Day Road to Freedom." Guests will participate in a warm, spiritual evening full of good food, laughter and learning. Sunday, April 20, 6 p.m. at Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. To register contact **Katie**, 416-964-7698, ext. 20.

THIRD SEDER

The Winchevsky Centre annual secular community third seder with Yiddish singer and cultural activist **Adrienne Cooper.** Sunday, April 27, 4:30 p.m. at Villa Columbo, 40 Playfair Ave. $45, children $35, $30 for students/low income individuals. Tickets must be purchased in advance. For reservations, contact 416-789-5502, mws@on.aibn.com or visit www.winchevsky.org.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias-toronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafes: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Both Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group. For more information call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

JF&C GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215 for info and registration.

Birthdays, Hockey Games and Holidays: Making It Work After Divorce. A parents' workshop on issues around children's life cycle events. Monday, April 14, 7 to 9 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, suite #313.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts a presentation on Jewish Community Seniors' Camp, the Pocono Mountains, culture, recreation, fitness, lake, walking trails, round trip transportation. Thursday, April 10, 1:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

The Association of Jewish Seniors' second seder, Sunday, April 20, 7 p.m. at the Bernard Betel Centre. Reserve by April 14, tickets $20, call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458 or at 530 Wilson Ave. 4th floor.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, Apr. 30. Sunday dance, April 13; Bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Info, Tues.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Is There Life after George Bush?" with **Hugh Innis**. Tuesday, April 15, 10 a.m. $3, $6.

Mix and Mingle. Wednesday, April 16, 1:30 p.m.-2:30 p.m. Free.

Friendly visitors needed to visit seniors in their homes. To volunteer call **Bev**, ext. 134.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Learning Experience offers Jewish History of Toronto as told by RCAF Navigator WWII veteran **Sid Gladstone**, Tuesday, April 15, 1-2:30 p.m. in room 211. Free.

Springtime Luncheon, Tuesday, May 13, 12:30 p.m. $5. Tickets are on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

Tickets still available for Stratford trip May 20 to see *The Music Man*, and Shaw festival, June 4 to see *Wonderful Town*. Tickets, ext. 235.

Learn to play the recorder, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m. starts May 7. Info call Janet, ext. 259.

Koffler Centre of the Arts presents "Stars of the 21st Century," Sun. May 4. This international ballet gala is a showcase of extraordinary talents of the foremost dancers in the world. Tickets, www.kofflerarts.org.

Support the BJCC's Centre Camp. See *Jersey Boys* the first night of the hit in Toronto, Thursday, Aug. 21 at the Toronto Centre of the Arts. Tickets, ext. 240.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Stars on Spadina, a musical gala celebrating the MNjcc with **Daniel Barnes, Andrew Craig, Ron Davis, Mary Lou Fallis, Jacques Israelievitch, Amanda Martinez, Adrianne Pieczonka, Jackie Richardson, Theresa Tova, Bora Kim, Laura Tucker,** and **Bruce Dow**. Tuesday, April 15, 7:30 p.m. $180, includes post show dessert reception. Tickets, ext. 0.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *James' Journey to Jerusalem* with guest speaker **Kay Armatage**. Sunday April 13, 4-7:30 p.m. Ext. 606.

Myriam Nafte in the Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space, extended to April 30. Info, ext. 0.

2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition submission deadline May 31, 2008. For info and guidelines contact **Esther Arbeid**, ext. 606 or esthera@mnjcc.org.

Volunteers needed

PASSOVER FOOD DRIVE

National Council of Jewish Women need people to help deliver Passover food, April 13, 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m., at 4700 Bathurst St. Call 416-633-5100 to volunteer.

SEDER HOSTS NEEDED

If you would like to welcome a family new to Toronto to your seder table contact Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

LEAD A SEDER

The Reena Foundation is looking for individuals to lead a seder, Saturday, April 19 or Sunday, April 20 at a group home for individuals with developmental disabilities or invite a Reena client to your home. Call, 905-889-2690, ext. 2111.

HOME RESPITE PROGRAM

The Bernard Betel Centre offers family caregivers 2-3 hours per week while a trained volunteer visits with their family member who is unable to be alone. If you would like to join their volunteer team, contact **Beverley Nemeroff**, 416-225-2112, ext. 134 or email beverleyn@betelcentre.org.

D.A.N.I. GALA HUGE SUCCESS: D.A.N.I. recently held its 2nd Annual Gala at the Toronto Centre for the Arts with performances by Peter Bloom and Band, Justin Hines, Cantors Marshall Loomer and David Edwards, Aaron Schwebel, David Sisson and Robbie Wulfsohn. Close to 800 people attended the evening. The organization works to develop opportunities for young Jewish adults with physical and/or cognitive challenges to participate in the community in meaningful ways. From right: Vaughan mayor Linda Jackson, Chaya Perman and Susie Sokol, D.A.N.I. volunteers. [Photo: Twins Photo and Video]

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 60

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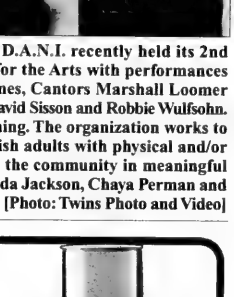

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OBITUARIES
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BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Ester Izrailskaya	Mar 23/08	8 Bayhampton Crescent
Bubi Schmid	Mar 24/08	202 Betty Ann Drive
Corinne Cole	Mar 24/08	18 Lower Village Gate
Ty Reiman	Mar 26/08	29 Zircon Court
George Friedmann	Mar 26/08	85 Skymark Drive
David Kachuck	Mar 26/08	355 St. Clair Ave. W.
Jerry Sky	Mar 27/08	B-24360 Thorah Park Blvd.
Al Silverberg	Mar 27/08	4 Forest Laneway
John Simon	Mar 27/08	2185 Marine Drive
Helen Kleinberg	Mar 27/08	34 Carscadden Drive
Zimi Halpern	Mar 27/08	447 Wellesley Street, East
Eve Appell	Mar 27/08	6 Forest Wood
Percy Levy	Mar 28/08	3560 Bathurst St (Apotex)
May Marx	Mar 28/08	447 Walmer Road
Stephen Tobin	Mar 28/08	463 Palmer Avenue
Mary Black	Mar 29/08	1101 Steeles Ave. West
Rose Dancyger	Mar 29/08	412 Old Muskoka Rd. S.

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Shterenberg, Berta M.	Mar. 19/08	Private
Aliman, Hilda	Mar. 21/08	Private
Zeligman, Leon	Mar. 22/08	1 Emerald Lane
Hana, Zinaida	Mar. 22/08	
Kleiman, Freda Dworja	Mar. 23/08	225 North Meadow Cr
David, Ignac	Mar. 24/08	135 Antibes Dr
Gould, Leon Joseph	Mar. 25/08	7250 Yonge St
Dubrofsky, Phyllis	Mar. 25/08	21 Khedive Dr
Domowicz, Bella	Mar. 25/08	Private
Mukasei, Esther	Mar. 26/08	4455 Bathurst St
Samel, Rifka	Mar. 26/08	518 Sheppard Ave. W.
Applebaum, Paul	Mar. 26/08	Private
Avner, Marina	Mar. 27/08	Private
Sos, Charles	Mar. 27/08	343 Clark Ave. W.

HEBREW BASIC FUNERAL

Lottie Slotnick	Mar 27/08	3560 Bathurst St (Apotex)

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The Family of

Helen Shiff ל"ז

would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our extended family and friends for the support and sympathy shown during our recent bereavement.

Your kindness and compassion was greatly appreciated by the family during this very difficult time.

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Belle (Butovsky) Zipursky ל"ז

Belle (Butovsky) Zipursky passed away on February 16, 2008 with her family by her side at St Paul's Hospital in Vancouver. Belle was born in Winnipeg on September 9, 1921. She is survived by her children Sheldon (Judy), Gerry (Nancy), Debby (Ken), and Arnie (Fern), and grandchildren Mande (Jason), Josh, Sam, Simona, Michael, Max, Sharla, Bonnie, Dayna, and Farah. She is survived by her sister Faye Packer in Winnipeg.

Belle was predeceased by her parents Sam and Dora Butovsky and her brother Mike Butovsky. Most recently December 2007 she was predeceased by her loving husband of 65 years, Abe. Belle successfully balanced work and family most of her life. Family was most important and she took great pride in her children and grandchildren. In her early years she worked as a bookkeeper for Silpit Industries and once her children were old enough to be on their own, she returned to work and became a buyer for Clifford's lady fashion stores in Winnipeg. Upon their retirement in 1988, Belle and Abe left Winnipeg and moved into Richmond BC and in 2005 moved to the Weinberg Residence in Vancouver.

As much as she was loved by her husband, children, and grandchildren, she was loved and respected by so many who knew her. For many she was often a "second mom" and for others a confident and a trusted friend. She loved life, and never wanted to miss anything, and took every opportunity to travel and go places with her children.

Belle was the "glue" that held the family together and leaves a valuable legacy and that is the meaning of family!

She will be truly missed by so many.

Donations in her memory can be made to the Belle (Butovsky) Zipursky Memorial Fund at the Weinberg Residence 5650 Osler Street, Vancouver, BC V6M2W9

Bigel, Mark (1941-2008) ל"ז

Passed away suddenly at home in Milton, Ontario, on Thursday, March 27, 2008. A private memorial was held on Friday, March 28, 2008 at **McKersie-Kocher Funeral Home, 114 Main St., Milton, 905-878-4452.** Mark will be lovingly remembered by all those whose lives he touched. He *"will dwell in the house of the Lord forever".*

Donations in his memory may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Letters of condolence may be left for the family at **www.mckersie-kocher.ca**

LEVINE, JACK B. (1941-2008) ל"ז

Suddenly on March 24, 2008. Loving husband of Paula, adoring father of Sheri Beth Levine & Jennifer Lyn Levine, father-in-law of Marc Feigen & grandfather of Annabel Rose & Julia Feigen, brother of Elaine (Mitch) Greenberg, brother-in-law of Barry Rich & dear Uncle of Hannah Farrow Rich and Amy & Aaron Greenberg. Jack was an extraordinary man; a man of passion, a genius, a lover of the world, but most importantly, a man who cherished his wife & daughters. His capacity to love & express love were boundless; every day in every way he shared his love with us & those around him. He was generous in ways the world will never know, but those who knew him, best knew his selflessness. Proud & humble at the same time, adored by all who knew him for, above all, his compassion, unbelievable sense of humor, & ability to connect & listen to the important people in his life. He was Daddy, Uncle Jack & Zaidi to everyone & we will all miss him every day for the rest of our days. Donations can be made in Jack Levine's memory to Temple Beth Sholom, 4144 Chase Avenue, Miami Beach, Florida, USA 33140. To visit this Guest Book Online, go to: **www.MiamiHerald.com/obituaries**

Israeli, Canadian disease experts develop partnership

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — Dr. Eitan Yefenof, chairman of the new Institute of Medical Research (IMR) of Hebrew University, was here recently as part of a research partnership being developed between Canadian experts in the infectious diseases field and the IMR.

Yefenof was to meet with Dr. Frank Plummer, who is internationally known for his 17 years of research into HIV/AIDS in Kenya, said Sheryl Rosenberg, president of the local chapter of Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University.

"My research is about using science to solve major global health problems. I am certainly not the only one who has spent time in Africa doing this [research], but I am unique in Canada in doing it for as long as I did in Kenya," Plummer said in an interview.

Plummer is director general of the Centre for Infectious Disease Prevention and Control in Ottawa; chief scientific adviser of the Public Health Agency of Canada; and scientific director general of the National Microbiology Laboratory in Winnipeg.

The IMR is conducting research into some diseases that are of interest to Plummer's team in Winnipeg.

"There are about 100 different people in the laboratory in Winnipeg working on research in infectious diseases, including one Israeli researcher, Dr. Yoav Keynan, who is working in the area of HIV and influenza," Plummer said.

The IMR is the largest institute for medical research in Israel, with six departments, one of which is infectious diseases. Fourteen research groups examine infectious diseases that are transmitted virally, are bacterial induced or are parasitic.

"We have one group that is focusing on the West Nile virus and other groups that are working on developing vaccines against influenza, which are areas of interest to Dr. Plummer's team," Yefenof said. "These are areas of possible collaboration between our two countries."

The IMR shares Plummer's interest in trying to combat HIV. We have about 20 people researching HIV at our institute," Yefenof said. "It is a virus, but there are many other factors involved in the disease, not all of which are known."

Plummer noted that another general area of possible collaboration is research into "viral hemorrhagic fevers, which are very severe viral infections that cause bleeding and potential death."

Yefenof said that the main goal of the IMR is to contribute to the international effort of combating diseases that have emerged over the past 50 years. The IMR is attached to the Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center, a leading teaching hospital in Jerusalem, so that its research has practical implications and accessible clinicians.

Yefenof, who is also chairman of the Lautenberg Research Center for General and Tumor Immunology at Hebrew U, said that one of the reasons IMR was formed "was to encourage interdisciplinary research among different medical departments as we believe this is needed to combat complicated diseases."

The Winnipeg chapter of the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University presents the Scopus Award to Plummer at its Celebration of Global Research gala dinner on May 14 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. The event takes place exactly 60 years from the date that David Ben-Gurion declared the birth of the State of Israel at the United Nations.

The funds raised by the gala will be used to accelerate collaboration between researchers at the IMR and Winnipeg in the areas of HIV/AIDS, West Nile disease, influenza and tuberculosis, as well as the development of protective vaccines.

"We hope that Dr. Yefenof's visit here will be the first of many opportunities for top researchers to move between Winnipeg and Jerusalem as they develop and share their expertise," Rosenberg said.

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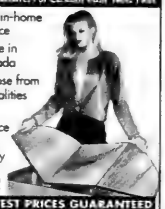
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Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto
NOMINATION NOTICE

In accordance with Article VI of our Constitution, the Nominating Committee of Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto has prepared a list of ten (10) candidates for election to the Board of Directors for the ensuing term.

Ita Kleiner Baranek	David Nadler
Morley Conn	Sheldon Parker
Clara Gordon	Joanne Perlmutter
Stephen Handelman	Barry Sacks
Jay Heller	Jonathan Zepp

Additional nominees will be accepted in accordance with Article VI if properly received no later than 5:00 p.m. April 24, 2008. For further information please contact Arthur Landa, Executive Director, at (416) 494-7666, Ext. 200.

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Obituary

Toronto community leader also a 'gifted musician'

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Businessman and community leader Leon Gasner died last week of pancreatic cancer. He was 78.

Gasner was born in Toronto, the son of noted communal leader Meyer W. Gasner, a founder and first lay chairman of the Kashruth Council of Canada, and his wife Goldie.

Leon Gasner's son, Robert, said that his father wanted to study at the University of Toronto's faculty of engineering, but he was rejected because of its then-quota on Jewish students and entered medical school instead.

But his time there was short-lived.

"He was lucky: the Jewish guy who was accepted into engineering quit, and my father could take his place."

In 1952, Gasner graduated as a mechanical engineer and went to work with the Avro Arrow fighter plane project. When that was cancelled by the Diefenbaker government, he went first into the auto parts business, and then into shelving.

"When he couldn't find proper shelving for his auto parts businesses, he decided to manufacture his own. He founded Triple-A Manufacturing, which produced shelving, racking and storage systems," Robert said.

He sold shelving in many parts of the world, and he donated shelving to organizations in Canada and Israel.

Gasner was heavily involved in Jewish communal life. He was on the board of governors and house committee of Mount Sinai Hospital. He was also active in United Jewish Appeal, and in raising funds for the Jerusalem College of Technology and Bar-Ilan University, where he and his father dedicated a building in 1980. In addition, he was a founder of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, and he carried on the Gasner family's involvement with Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

Leon Gasner

But his real love, Robert said, was the Canada-Israel Gesher Foundation, an organization dedicated to bridging the gap between the secular and religious world in Israel.

A jazz fanatic, Gasner was "a gifted musician," his son said, playing the piano and mandolin.

"He even played trumpet in the Lady Godiva Memorial Band," a popular and somewhat wacky marching band made up of U of T engineering students.

Gasner was also an avid skier, and a lover of boating and canoeing.

He is survived by his brother Stan and his wife Diane; children Myra and Nathan Mechanic; Brenda and Brian Lass; Robert and Julea Gasner, and Jon and Ellise Gasner; grandchildren Rachel and Jason Swirsky; Meyer and Deborah Mechanic; Melissa, Jordan and Shira Lass; Orly, Kayla and Elisheva Gasner; Micha, Rafi, Zev, Noah, Avishai, Nadav, Atara and Yakira Gasner, and great-grandchild Chana Rivka Swirsky.

Corrections

In the obituary on Sam Sable ("Community stalwart worked to age 95," *CJN*, Mar. 27), his wife's date of death was stated incorrectly. She died 12 years ago, in March 1996. *The CJN* regrets the error.

* * *

The March 26 story "Survivor's sculptures exhibited at Hamilton art gallery" contained two errors. Sculptor Ora Markstein uses marble and alabaster, not soapstone. Also, it was Markstein's sister-in-law who played the violin in Auschwitz, not her sister. *The CJN* regrets the errors.

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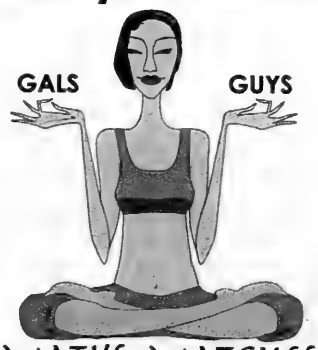

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All contest entries received by 3 p.m. on **Friday, April 18, 2008** are eligible. The winning entries will be randomly selected at The CJN offices on **Tuesday, April 22, 2008**, at 10 a.m. Winners will be notified the same day. Odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. One entry per person! *The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants.*

Send your entry to: ***"My Fair Lady"* Contest,**
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Employees and family members of The CJN, Toronto Centre for the Arts and Dancap Productions are not eligible to enter.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

דער וואַרשעווער געטאָ אויפֿשטאַנד און דער יום־טוב פּסח

(צום 65טן יאָרטאָג פון העלדישן אויפֿשטאַנד)

פֿון אַלעק סילווער

עס איז א צופֿאַל פֿון גורל, וואָס די ביידע דאַטעס פֿאַלן זיך הײַ־יאָר צונויף אין דער זעלבער צייט. די ערשטע סדר־נאַכט איז 2008 פֿאַלט אויס דעם 19טן אפּריל. דאָס איז דער זעלבער טאָג און די ערשטע פּסח־נאַכט ווען עס איז אויסגעבראָכן דער העלדישער וואַרשעווער געטאָ־אויפֿשטאַנד אין 1943 — מיט 65 יאָר צוריק. צווישן געשעעניסן, וואָס האָבן צו טאָן מיט דער פֿרייהײַט פון ײדישן פֿאָלק.

יציאת מצרים מיט 3320 יאָר צוריק איז שטענדיק פֿאַרעכטן געוואָרן ווי דער ערשטער פֿרייהײַט קאָמף פֿאַר דעם ײדישן פֿאָלק. ווי אזעלכער וועט דער יום־טוב געפֿײַערט יעדען יאָר מיט ספּעציעלע מאכלים, צערעמאָניעס און סימבאָלן. די געשיכטע וועט איבערגעריזלט יעדעס יאָר פון דור צו דור, כדי מיר זאָלן דעם קאָמף קיין מאָל נישט פֿאַרגעסן.

מיט 65 יאָר צוריק איז צונעקומען א צווייטע נע־שיכטע — האָט געמוזט קעמפֿן א צאָל מלחמות פֿאַר איר פֿרייהײַט. דער וואַרשעווער געטאָ־אויפֿשטאַנד וועט טאָקע פֿאַרגליכן צום אויפֿשטאַנד פון בר־כוכבא, צו די קאָמפֿן פון די חשמונאים און, לויפֿנדיק פֿאַראויס, צו דעם העלדישן פֿרייהײַט קאָמף אין 1948 פֿאַר דער עקזיסטענץ פון מדינת ישׂראל.

דער וואַרשעווער געטאָ־אויפֿשטאַנד איז אָבער מער ווי די אנדערע קאָמפֿן און קען נישט פֿאַרגליכן וועלן צו אלע דאָזיקע פֿרעדיק. וועלן מען נעמט אין באטראַכט, צום ביישפּיל, די קאָמפֿן אין די ײַנטן פון בר־כוכבא, אדער אין די ײַנטן פון די חשמונאים, שטעלט עס פֿאָר אַן אנדער בילד. דאָס זײַנען טאָקע גע־וען מלחמות פֿאַר דער פֿרייהײַט פון דעם ײדישן פֿאָלק און דער ײדישער רעליגיע. אָבער אין ביידע פֿאַלן איז עס געווען אַן אויסגעשוועטע מיליטעריש ארמיי, מיט געווער, וואָס האָט זיך געקענט פֿאַרמעסטן מיטן שׂונא, כאָטש זיי זײַנען געווען אין אַ גאָר קלײנער צאָל. אויך זײַנען, לויטן מדרש, די חשמונאים קאָמפֿן אָנגעאָנגען אַרום 400 יאָר.

די קאָמפֿן אין 1948 פֿאַר דער פֿרייהײַט פון מדינת ישׂראל האָט אויך געהאַט אַ מיליטעריש ארמיי — אַ קליינע און שוואַך־באוואָפנטע. אָבער זיי האָבן געהאַט אַ שׂונא וועמען זיי האָבן געקענט קוקן אין פּנים אריין בשעת זײערע קאָמפֿן. אין די פֿרײַרדיקע מלחמות זיי־נען די קאָמפֿן באמת געווען פֿאַר דער פֿרייהײַט פון דער ײדישער אומה.

אין די קאָמפֿן אין וואַרשעווער געטאָ איז אָבער די סיטואַציע געווען אַן אנדערע. די דאָזיקע קעמפֿערס האָבן געוווסט באַלד פון אָנהייב, אַז זייער קאָמף קענען דעם שטאַרק־באוואָפנטן שׂונא קיין זך אנדערש נישט ענדיקן ווי מיט פֿאַלן אין די שלאָכטן אויף די חורבות פון געטאָ. די אויפֿשטענדלער האָבן געוווסט, אַז זיי וועלן נישט דערגרייכן די פֿרייהײַט פֿאַר זייער פֿאָלק, אדער די פֿרייהײַט פֿאַר אנדערע פּעלקער. האָבן זיי אויפֿגעקלײבן אַ קאָמף פֿאַרן ײדישן כבוד, כדי צו ווייזן דער וועלט, אַז אויך יידן קענען שטאַרבן העלדיש אויפֿן שלאַכטפֿעלד און מיט דעם בריינגען אייביקן כבוד צום ײדישן פֿאָלק. און ווי אַזאלכע וועלן מיר זיי שטענדיק געדענקען און זיי אָפּגעבן דעם געהעריקן כבוד, וואָס זיי האָבן פֿאַרדינט.

Books & Authors

Journalist traces genesis of Christian Zionist movement

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

When Israel announced plans to withdraw from the Gaza Strip unilaterally, there was an uproar from right-wing circles in Israel. Christian Zionists, particularly in the United States, joined these voices of opposition, surprising no one.

In common with most religious Jews in Israel and abroad, Christian Zionists maintain that the Jewish claim to the territories captured in the Six Day War is divinely ordained, that there can never be a Palestinian state and that a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians is impossible.

Indeed, in keeping with biblical prophecy, some Christian Zionists go so far as to say that Israel's borders should stretch from the Nile River in Egypt to the Euphrates River in Iraq.

Christian Zionists are a force to be reckoned with, commanding attention, if not a measure of apprehension.

Victoria Clark, a seasoned British journalist, has written a book about them. *Allies for Armageddon: The Rise of Christian Zionism* (Yale University Press) charts the history of this evangelical movement in the United States and Britain and its influence on U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

To Christian Zionists, Israel's existence is proof that the world is hurtling toward Armageddon and the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. As far as they are concerned, two prophesied steps in God's plans have already been fulfilled. The Jews have been restored to their ancient homeland after an exile of about 2,000 years, and Israel has miraculously survived Arab onslaughts.

Now, Christian Zionists await the cataclysmic Battle of Armageddon in Megiddo, Israel, during which two-thirds of all Jews who have refused to accept Jesus as their personal saviour will be slain in a final battle. With the defeat of the Antichrist, a 1,000-year era of peace and prosperity will be rung in.

As wacky and dangerous as this prophecy is, 31 per cent of Americans believe that Israel should have all of the Promised Land to facilitate the Second Coming, judging by a survey she cites.

Christian Zionists, therefore, are hardly on the fringe of American politics, Clark says.

In essence, Christian Zionism is grounded in a creed known as millennarianism, whose roots she traces back to 16th-century Britain.

Among its proponents was a London goldsmith, Thomas Tany, who proclaimed himself a Jew and declared his intention to lead Jews back to Jerusalem.

Clark, whose previous books have been on Christianity, says that the heyday of British-syle millennarianism occurred from the late 18th century to the the mid-19th century.

It was during this period that a graduate of Oxford University, Lewis Way, appeared on the scene. Way, a lawyer and a major figure in millennarianism, was persuaded that the mass conversion of Jews would bring about the restoration of Israel.

According to Clark's research, no fewer than 50 books on the subject of the Jews' return to Palestine were published between 1796 and the end of the century.

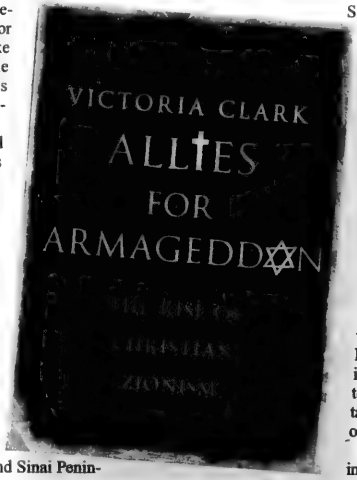
She credits a British aristocrat, the Earl of Shaftesbury, with being the first millennariast, or restorationist, to blend the biblical interest in Jews and their ancient homeland with the cold realities of foreign policy. Thanks to him, she notes, Britain's foreign secretary appointed the first British consul in Jerusalem in 1839.

Not surprisingly, Arthur James Balfour, after whom the 1917 Balfour Declaration is named, was a restorationist. So were two other British statesmen, Winston Churchill and Lloyd George.

"We Zionists represented to them a great tradition for which they had enormous respect," wrote Chaim Weizmann, the future president of the World Zionist Organization.

Shifting her focus, Clark writes that the Puritans, the forerunners of the first British colonists in the New World, identified with the sufferings of the Israelites during their Babylonian and Egyptian captivities and modelled themselves after Jews.

Fast forwarding to the 1940s, Clark says that Harry Truman, the U.S. president who recognized Israel after it declared independence, shared Balfour's reasons for backing the Zionist project. Like Balfour, he was consumed by the emotional conviction that the Jews were entitled to return to their ancestral homeland.



By the age of 14, Truman had read the Bible five times, and was partial to Psalm 137: "By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion…"

Clark says that Menachem Begin was the first Israeli prime minister to forge relations with Christian Zionists in earnest. He appointed a special representative to their community, and soon Christian fundamentalists such as Jerry Falwell were signing full-page ads in major U.S. newspapers affirming their belief in biblical prophecy and Israel's right to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, Golan Heights and Sinai Peninsula.

She notes that Begin's campaign to shore up evangelical Christian support for Israel went hand in hand with his courting of Orthodox Jews, a constituency that regarded the building of settlements in the territories as a solemn religious duty.

Clark credits Falwell – the recipient of the first Vladimir Jabotinsky medal ever awarded to a gentile – with converting Jesse Helms to the cause of Christian Zionism. A conservative Republican senator from North Carolina, Helms was chairman of the Senate's powerful foreign relations committee.

She adds that when Benjamin Netanyahu was Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, he took care to cultivate Christian Zionist luminaries.

Clark sketches pen portraits of the most important ones, from Pat Robertson and John Hagee to Hal Lindsay and Benny Hinn (a Palestinian by origin).

She also describes the activities of the International Christian Embassy in Jerusalem, a Dutch initiative, and takes note of the Chicago-based International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, an outfit run by Rabbi Yechiel Eckstein. In her view, no one has done more than Rabbi Eckstein "to accustom American Jews to the novel notion of teaming up with Christian fundamentalists for the greater glory and safety of America and Israel."

Although Clark is usually objective in her treatment of the Christian Zionist movement, she claims, rightly or wrongly, that these latter-day restorationists exacerbate the Arab-Israeli conflict and pour more fuel on the Muslim world's grievances against the West.

The jury is still out on her claim, but in the meantime, *Allies for Armageddon* is a useful primer on a historic and influential movement.

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Play is a testimony to a Righteous Gentile

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Before a recent sold-out performance of *Life in a Jar* at Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, director Norm Conard and writers-cast members Megan Stewart-Felt and Jessica Shelton-Ripper spoke to the audience about the play's heroine – Irena Sendler.

The writers first heard of Sendler in 1999, when Conard, their Grade 9 teacher at a school in rural Kansas, assigned a year-long project for a National History Day competition. Conard's main goal was for his students "to meet the classroom motto – he who changes one person, changes the entire world."

Searching for a project on the Holocaust, Stewart-Felt, Shelton-Ripper and two friends, Elizabeth Cambers and Grade 11 student, Sabrina Coons, leafed through the teacher's newspaper clippings until they came across an article from 1994 on Sendler, a Polish Catholic woman who saved 2,500 Jewish children from the Warsaw Ghetto. Shelton read it in disbelief, thinking the statistics were incorrect, perhaps a typographical error. How was it that Sendler saved so many lives, yet they hadn't heard of her? Aren't all great heroes recognized, she thought.

The students' research uncovered the story. A slight woman, Sendler was in her 30s when she stood up to the Nazis and risked her life countless times to save the children. She formed a network of people who arranged for the children to live with non-Jewish families, in convents or in orphanages. Fearless, Sendler would conceal sedated babies in bags, boxes, wooden crates or in ambulances. Older children, also sedated, were smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto by a driver.

Promising their parents to reunite them after the war, she put the children's names on tissue paper in glass jars to ensure they would know their true identities and buried the jars under the apple tree in a friend's backyard, steps from Nazi barracks.

Tragically, in 1943, Irena was arrested and tortured by the Nazis, but she refused to provide details of the children's whereabouts or those she worked with. About to be executed, she was miraculously saved by Zegota, the code name of the Council for Aid to Jews, which bribed a prison worker to release her.

Irena Sendler

Moved by her story, the four students wrote *Life in a Jar* nine years ago to commemorate Sendler's selfless acts of bravery. After communicating with Sendler by mail, the young women from Uniontown, Kan., and their families travelled to Poland to meet Sendler in 2001. They remain close to the 98-year-old, who grew up with the belief that if someone is drowning you must jump in to save them, even if you can't swim.

Stewart-Felt and Shelton-Ripper took *Life in a Jar* on the road with their teacher, Conard, who inspires others to "jump in" and "repair the world." Money raised from the production is sent to Sendler and other elderly rescuers in Poland who have limited resources.

Sendler, recognized by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations, was a nominee for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize, but lost to Al Gore, former vice-president of the United States.

Life in a Jar: The Story of Irena Sendler has received media coverage in *USA Today* and the *Ladies Home Journal*, and on *The Today Show* and CNN.

The play was brought to Toronto by the Miles Nadal JCC and the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation. The powerful story of Sendler includes a portrayal of a Jewish mother, played by Jaimie Walker, who agrees to give her two children to Sendler to save their lives.

The simple set says it all – a representation of the entrance to the Warsaw Ghetto and a banner that reads "Tikkun Olam… one person can make a difference."

For more information about Irena Sendler, visit www.irenasendler.org.

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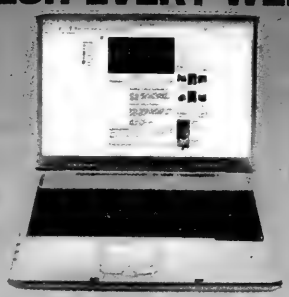
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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

WINCHEVSKY CENTRE PRESENTS SONGS FROM THE LODZ GHETTO

An upcoming commemoration of the 65th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising at the Winchevsky Centre features some lesser-known songs by **Yankele Herszkowiczs**, a street singer in the Lodz Ghetto. The commemoration includes *For a Song: The Price of Truth* in Yankele Herszkowiczs Lodz Ghetto repertoire.

A tailor before the war, Herszkowiczs began singing in the Lodz Ghetto to secure food in an atmosphere of starvation and squalor. He is remembered for his spontaneity, incisive wit, and his ability to speak the truth through his songs, which offered a view of ghetto dwellers and ghetto life that resonated.

The presentation features **Mitchell Smolkin** and draws on original material not performed publicly since the early to mid-1940s; the **Toronto Jewish Folk Choir** performs songs of resistance. The program is based on research by **Irena Kohn**, a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto.

Free admission. Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. (north of Lawrence, east off Bathurst). Sunday, April 13, 7:30 p.m. 416-789-5502, www.winchevskycentre.org

* * *

Nikki Yanofsky

Chana Rothman Homecoming: Koffler Centre of the Arts presents **Chana Rothman** in performance as well as the Canadian launch of her debut CD, *We Can Rise*, an album that has been getting rave reviews. The Brooklyn-based Rothman was born and raised in Toronto, and it was here that she first began gathering inspiration for her unique bilingual (Hebrew and English) mix of folk, reggae, hip hop and rock.

"Chana's roots-driven message of unity and empowerment resounds with the Koffler's mission to bring people together through arts and culture to create a more civil, global society," said Koffler executive director **Lori Starr**, explaining that the evening is the first of many downtown performances that the Koffler intends to produce as it plans for a major enlargement of its facility on north Bathurst Street.

Rothman performs at the Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W. on April 10; doors open 8 p.m. $10 in advance; $15 at the door. 416-636-1880, ext. 222. e-mail: info@kofflerarts.org; website: www.chanarothman

* * *

Toronto Jewish Film Festival: Slated for May 3 to 11, the 16th Toronto Jewish Film Festival will screen about 90 feature films, documentaries and shorts from 12 countries. Films run the gamut of interests, including sports, art, music and comedy. A program called "The Many Faces of Israel" features the Academy Award nominee *Beaufort*, *The Secrets*, *My Father My Lord*, and the festival's opening night film, *Noodle*. Also included are the Israeli documentaries *Champagne Spy*, about one of Israel's most successful spies; *Rabin-Peres*, which traces the lifelong rivalry between two titans of Israeli politics; and *Paying For Justice*, a hard-hitting exposé of impoverished Holocaust survivors in Israel.

Comedy on Wry – The Mavericks is a series on comedy trailblazers such as **Lenny Bruce**, **Sid Caesar**, **Danny Kaye**, **Mike Nichols**, **Elaine May** and others. A complete schedule should be posted this week on the festival website (www.tjff.com), and brochures should be available in the *Toronto Star* and at select locations throughout the city. Festival Hotline, 416-324-9121.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• In keeping with the designation of April as poetry month, the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and Israel's Judaica present Poetry @ the J, with **Ron Charach**, **Ruth Panofsky** and **Rafi Aaron**. $6 includes a light breakfast. MNjcc, Sunday April 13, 11 to 12:30 p.m. harrietw@ mnjcc.org or 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

• Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *James' Journey to Jerusalem* (*Massa'ot James Be'eretz Hakodesh*). Young James makes a pilgrimage from an African village to the Holy Land but finds it is not the place he imagined. "A bitter, sweet and charming exploration of the desire to do good and be good in an imperfect world." With speaker **Kay Armatage**. Rush seats on sale 15 minutes before screenings: $15 ($10, ages 18 to 29, 7:30 screening only). MNjcc, Sunday, April 13, 4 and 7:30 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org, 416-924-6211, ext. 606

• Yiddish singer **Adrienne Cooper** performs at the Winchevsky Centre's third annual secular community Passover Seder at Villa Columbo, 40 Playfair Ave. (in the Lawrence-Dufferin area). The event also features singer **David Wall** and pianist **Marilyn Lerner**, as well as a Passover play, *The Case of the Mysterious Cracker*. $45, $35, $30. Sunday, April 30, 4:30 p.m. Includes full-course Passover dinner. Tickets must be purchased in advance. 416-789-5502, mws@on.aibn.com. An order form may be downloaded from www. winchevsky.org.

• Pianist **Fern Lindzon** plays jazz piano and signs CDs at Indigo Manulife, 55 Bloor St. W., Thursday, April 10, 7 to 8 p.m. She's at the Free Times Café with **Tony Quarrington** and **Jonno Lightstone** on April 13, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and at the Gladstone Hotel with the **Sisters of Sheynville**, Thursday, April 17, 7 to 9 p.m. If you miss these shows, catch her at the Rex Jazz Bar, 194 Queen St. W., on any of the next three Wednesdays (April 16, 23 and 30) from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

• **Nikki Yanofsky** and **Mike Ruby** are among the various artists performing at the National Jazz Awards at Toronto's Palais Royale on April 8. www.nationaljazzawards. com

• **Alef-Bet:** New works by **Myriam Nafte** are on view in the Jacobs Lounge, Miles Nadal JCC, until April 30.

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Israeli composer-singer promotes peace through music

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

Popular Israeli composer and singer Yair Dalal is known not only for his ethnic Middle Eastern music but also for his activism in fostering dialogue between Jews and Arabs.

"My activities in this field started a long time ago. Even before I started making music, I was working with Palestinians trying to dialogue, sharing views, trying to find solutions for the conflict on a human level," he says.

Given this, it was no accident that years later, in 1993, Dalal was chosen to perform at the signing of the historic Oslo accords and at the Nobel Peace Prize gala concert in 1994 honouring then-prime minister Itzhak Rabin, then-foreign minister Shimon Peres and former Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat.

Born in 1955 to Iraqi parents who were new immigrants to Israel, Dalal was trained in classical European violin. He says he became a professional musician in 1982.

"This was after I had the opportunity to play with Bedouin musicians in the Sinai. The experience ignited a desire in me to explore my own Middle Eastern [musical] roots."

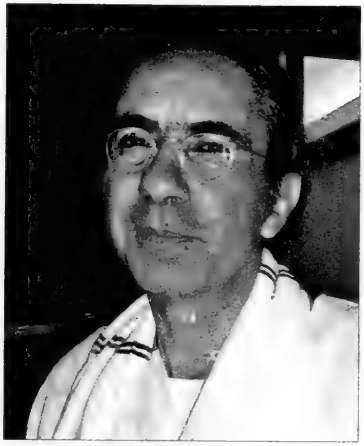
Dalal developed the ability to improvise, a skill that is one of the prerequisites in performing the *maqamat* (the arrangement of tones, of which there are more than 70 patterns) of classical Arab music. His affinity for the Bedouin and the pace of the desert is expressed in many of his songs.

Dalal has been nominated for a Grammy Award as part of Jordi Savall's ensemble and for a BBC Radio 3 World Music Award in 2003 as best artist from the Middle East.

Most recently, a concert that the Yair Dalal Trio gave in Winnipeg at the Rady Jewish Community Centre was aired on March 12 by CBC radio. Dalal, who sang and performed on violin and oud, was supported by Erez Mounk on darbuka, tabla and percussion; and jazz musician Eli Benecot on electric wind instrument.

"The combination of the oud, which is the most ancient instrument and the electric wind instrument, used in modern jazz, is very unique. My trio is the only group which fuses these two together," says Dalal, who has released 11 albums over the past decade.

Dalal, who has performed all over the world, has always woven Jewish and Arab traditions in his powerful compositions. His lyrics are sung in Hebrew, Arabic or Aramaic, and one of his most poignant songs is *Prayer For Peace* (from *Slichot* for Yom Kippur) on the *Asmer* album.



Yair Dalal

Erez Mounk, left and Yair Dalal playing the oud.

In addition to collaborating with Arab and Jewish artists, Dalal has recently pioneered an Arab/Jewish music school in the mystical city of Tzfat.

"We just opened [in November 2007] We have five teachers who teach 35 Arab and Jewish students. The students learn both Jewish klezmer music and Arab music," he says

It is not unusual to hear Dalal "teaching an Arab song to my Israeli Jewish students." But, as of yet, Dalal says he has never heard his Arab counterparts teaching a Hebrew song to Arab students.

"When an Israeli Arab musician teaches his Arab students a Hebrew song, then I'll know that things will be good. I haven't seen it happen. I hope to see it. If I see it, then I'll know things have gotten to a different level," he says.

Dalal's studio is in the heart of Jaffa, where he says there are a lot of social problems.

"Jaffa has lots of criminals, drugs, undeveloped roads, poor education, and is not an integrated Arab, Christian and Jewish city. In Jaffa, you see very rich Jews living next to very poor Jews, and very poor Arabs, families with many children walking barefoot," he says.

Before the second intifadah, Dalal says he used to perform with Palestinians in the territories quite regularly.

"I used to go to Jericho, Ramallah and Gaza. I still have close friends there, but it's very difficult to get there now and I don't. I have Palestinian Christian friends in Gaza, who are very afraid of Hamas. My Palestinian Christian friends in the West Bank are very worried of Hamas gaining power there, too," he says.

Dalal performs regularity at a three-day music festival in Neve Shalom, a village jointly established by Jewish and Arab Palestinian citizens of Israel as a symbol of coexistence.

"There Arabs and Jews get together and everyone is talking. The performances are beautiful... When this happens, I see hope... But I don't gather with people who don't want peace,' he says

Dalal adds that on a practical and political level, he isn't under any illusions. "I don't know if the two-state solution is so relevant now... Hamas is in Gaza. Things in the West Bank are mixed up. With Hamas in power in Gaza, I don't see a solution now."

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Arts & Travel

Actor relishes challenging role in *Beyond Mozambique*

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Like many actors, Dmitry Chepovetsky admits he gets a little nervous before the curtains lift on a new theatre production.

But the 38-year-old, soft-spoken Toronto thespian is excited about his current role in the George F. Walker play, *Beyond Mozambique*, which opened last Thursday, April 3 at the Factory Theatre Mainspace (125 Bathurst St.) and runs until May 4.

One of Walker's earlier works – he penned it in 1974 – the play is described as a tragicomedy wherein "six haunted individuals hide out in a remote African outpost and try desperately to escape their pasts", according to the playbill.

Its eclectic cast of characters includes an Italian Nazi collaborator doctor who performs medical experiments on the dead, a porn star and an RCMP officer.

Chepovetsky has perhaps one of his most challenging and twisted roles as the corrupt Greek manservant, Tomas, who steals corpses for the doctor's machinations. And with very little in the way of actual lines, Chepovetsky's role relies mostly on physical acting.

"It is a challenge. I don't have a lot of dialogue to fall back on. I have to be very in the moment for this role. They find [Tomas] in a platoon of dead soldiers, wearing an apron and with a bullet in his head," he told *The CJN* last week while reclining on a sofa at the theatre's actor's lounge.

Dmitry Chepovetsky
[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

"And the [doctor] is always doing surgery on him to cure him. But everyone in the play is so haunted. Without giving too much away, every [character] in the play has its own agenda."

Chepovetsky was born in Lviv, Ukraine, but his family left in 1976 along with waves of other Jewish emigrants bound for Israel. Along the way, his family experienced an eight-month stopover in Italy while awaiting their travel visas. They then decided to change course for Regina, where his uncle lived.

But it was in Italy where Chepovetsky first acquired his taste for acting, he said.

"When I was six years old in Italy, my brother worked at a gas station. I was a chubby kid and I'd entertain the people [who came by]," he recalled. "And just hearing people laugh, I just loved it so much. That's where the acting bug bit."

Chepovetsky acted in his first musical at the age of 14 while in high school in Regina, then began acting in local community theatre "and it just went from there," he said.

Thinking briefly about a different career path, he was accepted to the University of Toronto on a scholarship for its commerce program. "But that lasted about three weeks," Chepovetsky said. "I dropped out to work as an elf at Casa Loma and then worked a whole bunch of jobs until I got to Ryerson theatre school."

Since then, Chepovetsky has spent the better part of the last 20 years bouncing between Toronto and Vancouver on various projects, though he's called Toronto home for the last eight years, happy to be close to his older brother and nieces.

"My mother used to call me 'My son, actor-waiter.' Now she says, 'My son, actor-gypsy'," Chepovetsky laughs, imitating his mother's Russian accent. He added that his parents were lamenting the fact that he won't be able to go home for Pesach this year due to his commitment with *Beyond Mozambique*. "They can't shut down production for me," Chepovetsky said, shrugging his shoulders.

Aside from his numerous acting credits, among them stints on critically acclaimed TV shows and feature films such as *The X-Files*, *Lucky Number Slevin* and *Stargate*, Chepovetsky is likely best known for his recurring role on The Movie Network's hit mystery show, *Regenesis*.

His character, Bob Melnikov, the show's resident head of biotechnology and a person with Aspberger's syndrome, is beloved by fans. The role has garnered him two Gemini Award nominations for best actor in a dramatic series; once in 2005 and another in 2007.

Now in its fourth and final season, *Regenesis* wrapped shooting in December and Chepovetsky said he relished his time on the show.

"It's been awesome," he said. "The thing about playing a character with Aspberger's [described as a high-functioning form of autism] is once in awhile I'll get a forwarded e-mail from the production office that says 'My son and I both have Aspberger's and it's been so great to see your character played with such honesty'. The show has reached 120 countries in over 18 languages and it's been a gift. It's been great."

Now that it's over, Chepovetsky said he's looking forward to branching out on new projects and in taking on new, challenging roles such as the one in *Beyond Mozambique*. He said he also doesn't rule out another change of locale, referring to a potential move to the United States for more exposure and to further his career.

"I haven't written off moving there. I've been quite fortunate because I've had steady work for the last 14 years. But it is hard [being a Canadian actor]. We don't generally support our own as much," he said. "It's always nice to have a steady job. But my options are completely wide open right now. Whether that brings L.A., New York or furthering things here, I have a clean slate. First, I want to get through the next five weeks on this show."

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85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. AVAIL.
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147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
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170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
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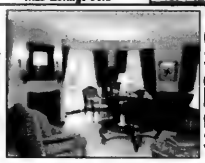

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Israel & the Jewish World

Bill urges president to highlight fate of Jewish refugees

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill last week that would bring the plight of Jews expelled from Arab countries to the forefront at international gatherings that address Palestinian refugees.

Resolution 185 – a bipartisan bill that passed the House with a show of hands – urged the president to instruct U.S. representatives to "make clear that the United States government supports the position that, as an integral part of any comprehensive Arab-Israeli peace, the issue of refugees from the Middle East, North Africa and the Persian Gulf must be resolved in a manner that includes recognition of the legitimate rights of and losses incurred by all refugees displaced from Arab countries, including Jews, Christians and other groups."

Legislators from both congressional parties hailed the resolution for at long last correcting the historical record and giving proper consideration to the 850,000 Jews who were displaced as a result of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"The resolution is [intended] to bring light upon an issue that has been swept under the carpet," said Representative Joseph Crowley, a Democrat from New York and one of the bill's co-sponsors.

"Today the House has helped shed light on the plight of Jewish refugees in the Middle East," said Representative Jerrold Nadler, also a New York Democrat.

"Their suffering is real and demands recognition. American must reaffirm that it embraces a just and comprehensive approach to the issue of Middle East refugees. The forced exile of Jewish refugees from Arab lands must be a part of the public dialogue on the peace process. By seeking justice for those who suffered, we can help establish a strong and lasting peace."

Nadler and Crowley were joined as sponsors of the bill by Republicans Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (Florida) and Mike Ferguson (New Jersey).

Ferguson told a telephone news conference that the United Nations has failed to recognize the plight of displaced Jews. "It's completely unacceptable and long overdue," he said.

Jews who were "forcibly expelled" or became hostages of their anti-Israel governments must be compensated if there are any hopes for a long-term peace settlement, he said.

Joining the American congressmen in the news conference were Malcolm Hoenlein, executive vice-president of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; Stanley Urman, executive director of Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC); Regina Bublil-Waldman, a Libyan refugee now living in San Francisco; Sylvain Abitbol, co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress and a refugee from Morocco, and Eric Fusfield, director of legislative affairs for B'nai Brith International.

Hoenlein said "the failure during all these years to recognize other refugees, compounded the indignation and the suffering and the deprivation of Jews in Arab countries. There was a systematic process of expulsion which the Arab governments engaged in."

Hoenlein was likely referring to a 1947 Arab League document uncovered late last year by JJAC researchers that outlined a policy of expulsion and robbery of longtime Jewish citizens of Arab states.

The Arab League's proposed law was approved by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq and implemented by other nations. It provided that Jews would be considered "members of the Jewish minority of the state of Palestine" and have their bank accounts frozen and used to finance "resistance to Zionist ambitions in Palestine… Jews believe to be active Zionists would be interned as political prisoners and their assets confiscated."

JJAC "found a paper trail that showed the displacement of up to one million Jews in Arab countries did not occur by happenstance," Urman said when the findings were released. "It was state organized, state collusion led by the Arab League as a weapon in their struggle against the State of Israel."

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Beliveau heads up inductees into 'Y' hall of fame

MONTREAL — Montreal Canadiens legend Jean Beliveau will be among a group of championship athletes inducted into the YM-YWHA Alex Dworkin Montreal Jewish Sports Hall of Fame on April 30.

Other inductees include:

• the 1936 "Y" Canadian senior water polo championship team;

• barefoot water skiing champion Beth Leboff;

• Albert Schneider, Canada's first Olympic boxing gold medalist, 1920 welterweight champion;

• 1992 Canadian PGA ladies champion Terrie Brecher-Weisse;

• basketball star Robert Habert.

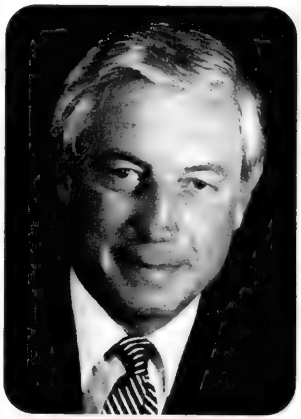
Beliveau is being inducted into the Hall of Fame's Yakeir Category – which honours "persons of value, people, regardless of race or religion, who make a difference" – in recognition of his long association with the Maccabi organization that fields the team that represents Canada at the Maccabiah Games in Israel.

Beliveau was chef de mission for the team at the 1985 and 1997 games. In addition he took the athlete's oath at the Jewish Community Centre's Maccabi Youth Games hosted by the Montreal JCC in 2003. He will be inducted by bodybuilding legend Ben Weider, who himself was inducted into the "Y" Hall of Fame in 2006.

"Le Gros Bill," as Beliveau was affectionately known, played in 1,287 NHL games, including 162 playoff contests, scoring 586 goals and 809 assists. He tallied 25 or more goals in a season 12 times, racked up 80 game-winning goals and 21 hat-tricks.

Beliveau, who has been named to the Order of Canada, served as captain of Les Canadiens for 10 seasons, was named to the NHL all-star team 10 times, appeared in the playoffs for a record-setting 16 consecutive years and helped lead the Canadiens to 10 Stanley Cup victories.

The water polo team won seven straight Canadian senior championships between 1932 and 1939, but the world-ranked 1936 squad was selected for induction because it was picked to represent Canada at the Olympics in Berlin that year. The team did not go to Berlin because the games were being held under the Nazi banner.



Jean Beliveau

Team members were Lionel Caplan, Abe Feinholz, Max Goldstein, Henry Pesner, Abe Ofshitzer, M. Rabinovitch, Ben Silverman, Abe Sohmer, Abe Tafler and Larry Tucker. Morris Brucker was the team's coach, Oscar Holzberg, the manager, and M. Weinstein, the chairman. All members of the team have passed away and they will be inducted posthumously.

Schneider was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and moved to Montreal with his family when he was nine. He took up boxing in high school and became a club welterweight champion. He never lost a bout during his amateur career and became the Canadian welterweight championship while still a U.S. citizen.

Schneider was picked to represent Canada in the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp and fought Alexander Ireland of Great Britain in the welterweight gold medal match. The fight ended in a draw after three rounds. The referee called for a fourth round, and Schneider pummelled his opponent to win the first gold for Canada in boxing. Schneider, who is a member of the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame and the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame, turned pro after the Olympics, fighting more than 75 bouts in a seven-year career. He died in 1986.

Leboff, who now lives in Davie, Fla., had an outstanding national and international career in barefoot water skiing between 1988 and 1993. She finished first in the jump category at the 1992 World Championships in England and was Canadian national overall champion that same year. At the Canadian championships in 1991, she was first in the slalom and finished second overall.

Leboff was the Quebec Water Ski Federation's athlete of the year in 1991 and 1992, and was inducted into the Water Ski Hall of Fame in 2004.

Montreal-born golfer Terrie Brecher-Weisse, who now lives in Fort Myers, Fla., won the Canadian PGA ladies championship in 1992 and the Florida Women's Open in 1990. She also won individual and team gold medals at the 1985 Maccabiah Games in Israel. She also won many other tour events in the United States and Canada.

Habert, who was born in Alexandria, Egypt, and now lives in Toronto, was on numerous national, Quebec, city and university championship teams with the "Y," University Settlement and Sir George Williams University from 1961 ro 1969. He was also a member of the Canadian squad at the Maccabiah Games in Israel in 1961 and 1969.

His 1961 University Settlement team won the Canadian junior championships, while the Sir George Williams team three conference championships between 1961 and 1965. He was named athlete of the year by both organizations.

The induction ceremony will be preceded by a gala reception, with proceeds designated for the YM-YWHA youth development program and to support the team sports program. Both programs provide scholarships for needy youth.

The Montreal Jewish Sports Hall of Fame is dedicated to Montreal athletes and teams who have recorded outstanding accomplishments, as well as builders and benefactors whose contribution to sports is acknowledged in Canada and internationally.

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Everyone's a critic. Yikes!

ALMOST FAMOUS
BY JACOB MEDJUCK

"Who cares what I personally think of a movie?" bellowed Robert Wilonsky, staff writer for the *Dallas Observer* and alternate host on television's Ebert and Roper. I met Wilonsky on a panel recently at the AFI Dallas International Film Festival. He's a formidable presence and a towering Jew, oddly more Goliath than David.

"Everyone has an 'opinion' these days," he said. But he went on to explain a key difference between opinion and literature. Ranting is not writing. Classical critique focuses on the analytical dissection of themes and structure, as well as technical execution, style, art, editing and direction. Journalism is literature. Prose. And that's the job he prides himself in.

"The best writers, even in film reviews, are poets," he said. "Their images vivid, colourful, and entertaining. An educational experience."

He continued: "And maybe, after all of that, I'll add whether or not I liked a film."

Then he concluded with this fair question that animates his work: "How are my tastes relevant to yours?"

Thanks to the Internet, countless people have the opportunity to weigh in on film and television. What does it mean when anyone with a laptop has the ability to present themselves as an expert and critic? Our panel set forth to discuss the shifting paradigms of film criticism today, and how it affects the films you see and how they're made.

Also on the panel with me was Michael Speier, managing editor at *Variety*, and Steven Rae, who received a best actor Oscar nomination for his role as an IRA gunman in 1992's *The Crying Game*. The coincidence that Speier and Wilonsky went to Hebrew school together fuelled a full hour of raw entertainment.

Drowning in their resumes, I was lost as to why I was sitting alongside them. Steven's vast body of work, spanning decades, has been widely reviewed and criticized, whereas my one barely finished feature film has, so far, been reviewed and criticized only by my father.

Ridiculous. But it was still great fun to participate.

The consensus was that sensational "opinions," although loads of fun to read, are neither constructive nor "journalism."

I remember as a child being panicked even by positive feedback. A teacher's kind comment – "That's so good" – once sent me spiralling into a fearful, tearful panic when I got home, after it hit me that I didn't know how I'd really created the work she'd complimented. I'd just painted thoughtlessly, for fun. A huge expectation now existed amongst my peers – that I had the capacity to paint "a perfect red apple."

I was terrified I'd never be able to elicit that kind response anew, because I had no idea how I'd done it, or even what I'd done. It's hard to define intuition. But we do followed patterns, and formed patterns hone skill. Regarding any performance – be it sport, art or work – technical analysis makes all the difference between fluke and intention.

I'm amazed at the way my sister parents her son. She consistently offers comments in classical critique form, devoid of judgment and clearly defined. She rarely says, "You were so good today." Instead, she'll say something like, "It really helped me when you cleaned up your toys." That's a concrete observation, useful and repeatable. It actually helps my nephew understand his actions. My sister is a genius.

Mere opinion may be the lesser of all criticism, and it may even be more stirring and fuel future creation, but it seems that pure understanding and clear analysis of what's out there is what really advances our work.

I once had a design teacher who gave me the following endlessly helpful advice: "If you can describe what you're seeing in words, you can recreate it."

So, whether you're designing a poster, a paper or a tiny person, keeping critiques journalistic and clean, and less emotional, will help structure sharper works to come.

But that's just an opinion.

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Pie:
• 1 1/3 c semisweet chocolate chips
• 1/4 c white sugar
• 1/4 c heavy cream
• 1/2 c unsalted butter, at room temp.
• 4 egg yolks
• 1/2 tsp vanilla extract
• 1/3 c semisweet chocolate chips
• 1 tbl brandy

CRUST: Preheat oven to 375°. In medium bowl, mix together pecans, 1/3 c sugar, 1/4 c butter, chocolate chips. Press into bottom and up sides of a 9" pie plate. Bake 8-10 min. in preheated oven. Cool completely.

PIE: Combine 1 1/3 c chocolate chips and 1/2 c butter; melt in 20 second increments in microwave. Stir occasionally until melted and smooth. Remove from microwave; stir in vanilla. In food processor, beat egg yolks with 1/4 c sugar until thick and pale, at least 3 min. Stir into melted chocolate. Process until thick, 3-4 min. Pour into cooled crust and smooth the top. Heat heavy cream in small saucepan. When warm, stir in remaining chocolate chips until melted. Remove from heat and stir in brandy. Pour over truffle filling. Refrigerate several hours to set before serving.

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My advice is a stretch

FITNESS CORNER
BY FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

Stretching, in my opinion is one of the most neglected components of fitness. It takes so little time, yet it gives the body so much.

Stretching improves flexibility, increases circulation, releases tension from muscles and relaxes the body. When you stretch, you release lactic acid from your muscles, and you circulate fresh oxygen throughout your body, which in turn makes you feel great. Stretching also helps to reduce delayed-onset muscle soreness from exercising and prevents injury. Looser muscles perform better and recover faster during and after a workout.

Stretching is very important after any prolonged activity, such as walking, dancing, biking, bowling, swimming and yes, even golf. One of the biggest arguments I have with my clients is about how important it is to take three minutes and stretch after a golf game or any weekend sport.

Most people think stretching before helps, but actually, if you're not warming up for at least five minutes before you stretch, you aren't doing very much for your muscles, and not stretching after makes everything worse. It's much more important to warm up, perform the exercise or sport and then stretch for three to five minutes after you finish.

Not stretching after a prolonged activity can cause your muscles to become too tight and over time can cause problems with circulation and movement. I always tell my clients that it's very important to keep your legs loose, since large amount of lower back problems come from very tight quads, hamstrings and buttocks.

So stretch the front and the back of your legs after any activity that you do for 20 minutes or longer. I also strongly suggest to my clients that they stretch their backs, especially after such activities as long walks, tennis, golf or even a long plane ride. This doesn't mean you have to get on the floor, but it does mean stretching the largest muscle in your back by hanging on to a fence or pole and leaning back.

So go ahead, give yourself a stretch.

E-mail me with questions, or if you'd like more information, at felycesfitness@rogers.com.

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

We should honour our own giants

URBAN WRITER

In Part 1 of my series about recognizing our Jewish professionals, I wrote that the Toronto Jewish community is likely the only large community that doesn't pay homage to its Jewish professionals.

Why is that?

I think that we Jewish professionals don't think highly enough of our own work. From discussions with many colleagues, I've learned that Jewish civil servants don't seem to be evolved enough yet to recognize our contributions to our own community, and we likely harbour some of the residual effects of the old days, when fundraisers were considered schnorrers and Jewish professionals were stigmatized as people who couldn't find other work.

Clearly, that is not the case, nor ever was. One only has to look at the archives of the Canadian Jewish Congress to discover some veritable giants in this field.

Consider Saul Hayes, who was the acting director for the United Jewish Relief Agencies of Canada after graduating from McGill University in 1932 with a law degree. Saul became executive director of Canadian Jewish Congress in 1942 and worked with Congress until his death in 1980. Throughout these years, Saul was a representative to the United Jewry Delegations, Second Conference of UNRRA, 1944; the San Francisco Conference on International Security, 1945; and the Paris Conference on Peace Treaties, 1946. Saul Hayes was one impressive Jewish community worker, deserving of our remembrance and accolades. His work helped to secure our future.

If you were to look carefully at the cadre of Jewish professionals today, you would find dozens of individuals at all levels who are loyal and committed to the growth, prosperity, soul and security of our community.

One such person is Bernie Farber, the national chief executive officer of Canadian Jewish Congress. Reading Bernie's CV, one recognizes how fortunate we are to be in the hands of such a driven and committed individual, especially in the area of community security and interfaith relations.

Bernie has spent more than 20 years with CJC, battling hatred and racism and strengthening relationships with police services, government and other ethnic and faith communities across the country. He has also fought bravely and regularly against the spread of neo-Nazis in Canada. For his efforts, he was targeted by the Heritage Front, had his name included on an assassination list, and relied on police protection to keep his wife and family safe.

Bernie speaks internationally and has been published in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and the *National Post*. He also has a mantel-full of awards from prime ministers, premiers and police chiefs.

Like most good leaders, Bernie says his achievements have come because he stood on the shoulders of giants. The giant he most often singles out is Ben Kayfetz, who held many professional titles with CJC throughout his life. About Ben, Bernie thoughtfully said, "He was the essential Jewish Canadian and the heart and soul of the CJC for 50 years."

Bernie is gutsy. He is a great lover of the Jewish people.

The CJC is not the only place where we might find nominees – living or otherwise – for an annual Jewish professional's award. The March of the Living, Baycrest, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the *Canadian Jewish News* are a few others. I chose CJC staff as examples because of the prestigious nature of the organization, my personal desire to pay homage to them, and the availability of archival information.

When I worked for UJA Federation, I presented a proposal every year for three years straight that would have rewarded the brobdingnagian successes of our Jewish civil servants. The idea was consistently rejected. It's time, however, that the Toronto Jewish community recognizes those people who close down the building once everyone has left the meeting – our Jewish professionals.

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This Week

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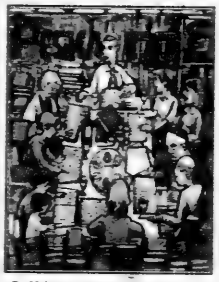
National

Baycrest creates 'brain fitness' research centre. *Page 3*

Dion promises $75 million to ethnic communities for security. *Page 6*

Passover Greetings



***CJN* readers** contribute to our 12th annual literary supplement. *Section B*

Arts & Travel

Hot Docs festival preview. *Page 58*

Canadian artists' vision of Jerusalem on exhibit. *Page 59*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 23
What's New 36
Obituaries and Notices 38
On Campus 40
Passover Food Ideas 42
Health 46
Heebonics 50
Israel & the Jewish World 51
Arts & Travel 58
Books & Authors 62
Classified 63

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Freedom's first joyful moment

The young woman above, whose face is deliberately hidden from the camera, is entirely enfolded in the arms of her older relative. She had just arrived in Israel, one of 40 Jews from Iran.

Their embrace is the full-strengthed twining of two hearts that have travelled from trembling hope to soaring happiness.

Their embrace is the young, weary immigrant's first joyful moment of freedom in the land of her ancestors.

Not quite like the 40 years of wandering by her forebears, hers, however, was also an indirect route to the Jewish homeland.

The passports of Jews in Iran are stamped with the warning that the "bearer of this document is forbidden from travelling to Israel." This woman's aliyah and that of her 39 fellow olim was, therefore, necessarily covert and dangerous. The Jewish Agency brought them to freedom through an unnamed third country. It was the largest group to move to Israel from Iran since the Islamic Revolution in 1979. They left behind all their property and all their possessions, not to mention family as well.

Editorial

Despite public pronouncements by Jews in Iran – made, obviously, out of a sense of vulnerability and fear – that Iran protects them and their religious practices, many have recently left, or tried to, because of the persecution and discrimination by the government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Before the Islamic revolution, an estimated 100,000 Jews lived in Iran. About 25,000 live there today.

Rabbi Yehiel Eckstein of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, whose group has assisted the Jewish Agency in the rescue of Iranian Jews, says he believes Iran's remaining Jews are in danger.

"Many of the Jews there think that this will pass, meaning Ahmadinejad and the mullahs," he told the media in Israel. "But our feeling is that this is very similar to the situation of Jews in Germany in the 1930s. By the time they realize it's not going to blow over, it'll be too late."

The journey and the courage of the group of 40 recent arrivals in Israel are a vivid, chilling passageway for us to the Pesach holiday that we will be celebrating this week.

Continued on page 8

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The News in Brief

Canada

Kosher Food Coming

CALGARY — Kosher food will be available for the first time in Calgary hospitals by the end of this month or the beginning of May, local community leaders say. The Calgary Jewish Community Council has partnered with Sari Shernofsky, a hospital chaplain in the Calgary Health Region, and local mashgiach Phil Wolfe, to help bring kosher food to the hospitals, the *Calgary Jewish Free Press* reported. The impetus for the change was a request from a man whose father was ill in hospital and his family had to provide him with kosher food. Shernofsky said pre-packaged kosher meals will be flown in from Vancouver to Calgary's Rockyview Hospital and distributed from there.

Pearlson Fund Set Up

TORONTO — Ben-Gurion University of the Negev has set up a fund in memory of Temple Sinai's founding rabbi, Jordan Pearlson. The Jordan Pearlson Scholarship Endowment Fund will help worthy and needy BGU undergraduates, the Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev announced earlier this month. Rabbi Pearlson, who died Feb. 23 at 83, was involved with BGU since its founding and served as president of the Canadian Associates of BGU for 10 years.

Rwanda Remembered

OTTAWA — A motion to recall the 1994 Rwandan genocide, introduced by Mount Royal MP and Liberal Human Rights Critic Irwin Cotler, passed unanimously April 7 in the House of Commons, 14 years to the day after the killings began. "No one can say that we did not know," he said. "We knew, but we did not act, just as we know today about [Sudan's Darfur region], and are not sufficiently acting." Some 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were murdered in Rwanda over a three-month period in 1994.

World

Hagee Responds

JERUSALEM — The leader of Reform Judaism has a "troubling disrespect for the truth," Pastor John Hagee said last week. His comments came after a call this month by Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, for Jews to dissociate themselves from the evangelical leader. Rabbi Yoffie said Rev. Hagee, founder of Christians United for Israel (CUI), advocates hardline policies against territorial concessions that "would lead [Israel] to diplomatic isolation, increased violence and the loss of Israel's Jewish majority." Rabbi Yoffie misrepresented his views, Rev. Hagee said, adding that it's up to Israelis to determine their own future. At an April 6 CUI rally in Jerusalem calling for the capital to remain united under Jewish control, Rev. Hagee said his group would give $6 million (US) to 16 Israeli causes.

Seoul-ful Emissaries

SEOUL — A Lubavitch emissary couple arrived in Seoul earlier this month to establish the first Chabad House in South Korea. There is currently no shul in the country. Chabad said Israel's ambassador to South Korea asked three visiting Lubavitch yeshiva students last year to arrange for permanent Chabad emissaries.

Bombers Escape

RABAT — Nine men involved in suicide bombings in Casablanca in May 2003 escaped from jail March 7. A Jewish community centre and cemetery were among five sites hit in May 2003 by a banned Islamist group linked to Al Qaeda. The bombings, among the deadliest in Moroccan history, killed 45. The escape occurred at the start of a one-day hunger strike by 1,000 Islamists in Moroccan jails.

More Schools Join Human Rights Program

WINNIPEG — Nineteen new junior high and high schools from Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland will be joining the Asper Foundation's human rights and Holocaust education program this year.

Some 1,200 participants from 30 Canadian cities and nine provinces will travel to Washington, D.C., to see freedom memorials and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in five separate trips that began April 6 and run until May 28.

The foundation has funded more than 6,000 participants of many faiths and backgrounds in 101 cities, representing every province and territory, since the program began in Winnipeg in 1997.

The program includes an 18-hour education program on human rights and the Holocaust, with added emphasis on U.S. history, the civil rights movement and the situation in the world today. Students must also volunteer in their communities on public projects when they return.

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Baycrest creates Centre for Brain Fitness

First of its kind in Ontario

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

A $10-million grant to Baycrest from the Ontario government is earmarked for the creation of the province's first Centre for Brain Fitness.

One of the goals of the centre, which will be part of Baycrest, is to develop and commercialize a range of innovative products aimed at improving the brain health of Ontario's aging population.

In announcing the grant at an April 7 press conference held at Baycrest, John Wilkinson, minister of research and innovation, said research talent is one of the province's greatest strengths. "Our government is proud to support Baycrest and its invaluable work, which is already leading to the discovery of important new tools and approaches to treating brain diseases associated with aging," he said.

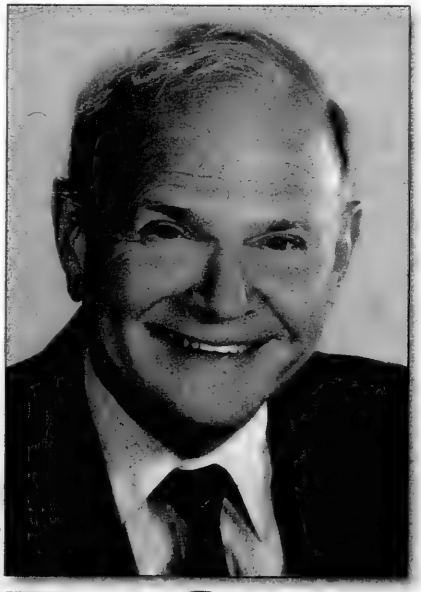
Mike Colle, MPP for Eglinton-Lawrence, where Baycrest is situated, said the grant demonstrates the government's "commitment to research and innovation as a means of building a stronger, healthier Ontario, by both improving our quality of life and health care here at home, while producing new tools for diagnosis and treatment that we can market to the world."

Products to be developed at the centre will be aimed at early detection and prevention of neurocognitive decline, repair and rehabilitation of function in response to disease, and maintenance of cognitive abilities to help aging adults live independently as long as possible.

A new diagnostic tool – called a "brain fitness tablet" – displayed at the press conference provides simple and rapid measurements of memory and processing in people who have had a stroke.

Continued on page 20

Ontario Minister of Research and Innovation John Wilkinson, left, tries out the "brain fitness tablet" with Dr. Jon Ween, medical director of the Louis and Leah Posluns Stroke and Cognition Clinic at Baycrest. Ween hopes the tablet, still in development, will be a standard assessment tool in doctors' offices in five years. [Gary Beechey photo]



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How the mighty BBC has fallen

From the editor's desk

The mighty BBC – England's venerated, stentorian voice of news and public affairs – has itself been in the news lately, but not for reasons the corporation would want to broadcast.

The corporation has had to apologize to the public for significant inaccuracies in two recent reports regarding Israel.

As reported by JTA, the BBC apologized last month for falsely reporting on March 7 that Israel had bulldozed the home of the man who attacked Mercaz HaRav Yeshiva in Jerusalem and murdered eight of its students. The murderer's home, in fact, had not been bulldozed. The film footage of a bulldozed home telecast by the BBC was unconnected, except by the wishful thinking of the corporation, to the Mercaz HaRav attacker.

The corporation apologized a second time last month for falsely reporting on its website on March 14 that Israel had deliberately targeted Palestinian civilians in Gaza during a military incursion to destroy Qassam rocket launchers. It also reported that UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon had characterized the Israeli action as an attack on civilians.

In truth, of course, Israel had not targeted civilians. In addition, the quotation attributed by the corporation to the secretary general was a selective partial quote from a more comprehensive statement that Ban had made in the UN Security Council some two weeks prior to the date of the BBC report.

In this apology, the BBC admitted the impropriety of attributing to him a selective, incomplete portion of a larger statement.

"We accept we should have made reference to what [Ban] said about Palestinian rocket attacks as well as to the 'excessive use of force' by Israel."

And with its scorpion's tale hanging limply between its legs, the corporation also effectively admitted the lie in its assertion that Israel had been attacking civilians.

"We have amended the report," the corporation added, "also *removing the reference to Israeli 'attacks on civilians* [my emphasis]."

One month earlier, the BBC apologized to its public for equating former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri and Hezbollah terror chief Imad Mughniyah as "great national leaders."

The corporation issued the apology after Don Mell, the Associated Press' former photographer in Beirut, filed a letter of complaint condemning the comparison made by BBC correspondent Humphrey Hawkesley as "an outrage" and "beyond belief."

In his letter, Mell wrote: "For you to refer to former prime minister Rafik Hariri and Imad Mughniyah as 'great national leaders' in the same sentence is beyond belief. One was an elected leader who spent years and millions of his own money rebuilding his country. The other was probably the world's second-most notorious terrorist, who was responsible for, in addition to running a major criminal enterprise, destroying the U.S. Embassy, the French and U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983; the hijacking of TWA 847; the bombing of the Israeli cultural centre in Buenos Aires, [and] the kidnapping and murder of many westerners in Lebanon, including Terry Anderson, Terry Waite and John McCarthy."

Mell's indignation toward the corporation was not only righteous, it was founded upon frightful, personal experience. He had been held at gunpoint by Mughniyah's men in 1985 when AP's chief Middle East correspondent, Terry Anderson, was kidnapped in Beirut.

The reports of these various apologies provide some measure of context to the bizarre, yet still troubling, report last week that a BBC World Service survey found that Israel was considered to be the world's second-most unpopular nation.

According to the JTA report on the BBC survey, the poll was conducted between October and January among 17,457 respondents in 34 countries. No margin of error was given.

Some 54 per cent of individuals polled "voiced negative views about Iran's influence on global" affairs, with Israel next at 52 per cent." Pakistan was the third-most poorly rated country.

To the extent that individuals who responded to the survey even based partial opinions of Israel on news reportage by the BBC World Service, is it any wonder they hold negative views of the Jewish state?

Hebrew University Prof. Robert S. Wistrich recently told a Jerusalem audience that "Britain has become the centre point for the meeting of anti-Semitic trends in Europe."

As reported by the *Jerusalem Post*, Wistrich noted that "today's British media had taken an almost universally anti-Israel bias, especially but not exclusively on the BBC, with context removed from description of Israeli military actions and Islamic jihadist activity such as suicide bombing never connected to ideology…Under no circumstance will a Palestinian act of terrorism be referred to as terrorist. They are militants similar to the floor-shop dispute in Liverpool whose workers have decided to go on strike. Palestinian terrorism is portrayed as a minor pin prick compared to 'massive' retaliation of this 'rogue' state Israel."

The BBC's coverage of Israel is notoriously biased against Israel, and there is no prospect on the horizon, alas, that it will become unbiased.

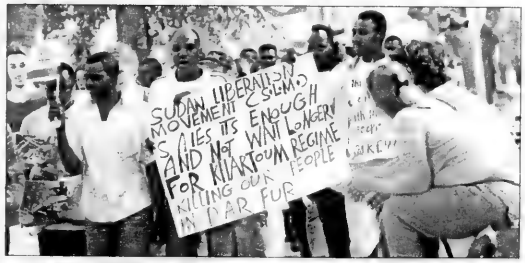
How the mighty have fallen.

— *MBD*

SeeJN

DAY FOR DARFUR

Almost 2,000 people gathered at Toronto's Nathan Phillips Square on April 13 for a rally hosted by STAND Canada and Project Equity. The rally brought together speakers, musicians and activists to raise awareness about the plight of children in the Darfur genocide. Speakers included Liberal MP Glen Pearson; Debbie Bodkin, a sergeant with Waterloo Regional Police; and Ismail Adam, a representative from the Darfuri Association. David Berkel, co-founder of Project Equity, said that instead of the traditional moment of silence for victims of the genocide, he wanted the crowd to scream for Darfur. Yoni Levitan, executive director of STAND Canada, urged the crowd to pick up their cellphones and dial the prime minister's office. "We want to jam the phone systems [in order] to let them know how concerned Canadians are about this issue." Inset are photographs of a recent Day for Darfur rally in Tel Aviv. [Carolyn Blackman (bottom right) and Israel Sun photos (top and bottom left)]



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Dion promises $75M to communities at risk

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

In what could be construed as pre-election campaigning, Liberal opposition leader Stéphane Dion paid a visit to the Toronto area's Jewish and Islamic communities last week to discuss his party's vision of how to help ethnic communities at risk of hate crimes.

Speaking to the media and flanked by both Jewish and Muslim community members at Temple Har Zion, Dion announced that, if elected, the Liberals would make $75 million in funds available to ethnic communities across Canada to help beef up their security.

The announcement came as a result of suggestions by the Liberal Caucus Task Force for Security Funding for At-Risk Communities, launched last June and chaired by Thornhill Liberal MP Susan Kadis.

"The task force heard about attacks on mosques, synagogues," Kadis said in introducing Dion. "It was heartening to hear that most opinions were the same [that] what hurts one community, hurts us all. The needs of at-risk communities warrant a response."

Criticizing the current Conservative government for its own project to fund communities at risk of hate crimes – announced last year as the Security Infrastructure Program, a $3-million fund to be dispersed to non-profit and other provincially recognized community groups that want to augment security infrastructure – Dion said, "We don't need a pilot program. We know what the problem is. It is clear that the $3 million… is insufficient to address the security needs of these institutions."

Liberal leader Stéphane Dion, flanked by Thornhill Liberal MP Susan Kadis, left, and Rabbi Cory Weiss, speaks to the media last week at Temple Har Zion.
[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

Dion said his program would be retroactive to 2005, the last time the Liberals were in power, "so the years that have been lost, have not been lost."

Communities will have to apply for the funding. A maximum of $250,000 will be given to any one "ethno-cultural" organization based on "audits by professionals in the department" of public security, he said.

Expenses covered would include costs for security hardware, renovations and training, Dion added.

"I tell [ethnic communities] to start planning for this now, because hopefully, when we will be the government, we will be there implementing this program," he said.

Dion added that ethnic communities are disadvantaged financially because their institutions "have to spend more… on protection, and less on the core programs you need to deliver to your community."

Saying racism is still a problem in Canada, Dion recalled the firebombing of Montreal's United Talmud Torahs St. Laurent campus – located in his riding of St. Laurent-Cartierville – in 2004 and a more recent fire at a Hamilton mosque.

He said when he heard about the UTT incident, he felt as if his own children were "under attack."

"I would like to conclude with something that will give us hope. In each faith, you will find the same, universal message," Dion said as he wrapped up the press conference. "I want to quote from the Jewish faith 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.' Well, you have the echo in the Muslim faith that reads, 'None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother, what he wishes for himself.' *On va gagner*! [We will win!]"

Len Rudner, Canadian Jewish Congress' regional director for Ontario, was pleased by Dion's announcement.

"I think what it means… is the hope of greater resources to be applied to a problem that every community at risk knows is out there," Rudner told *The CJN*. "The funding would represent an increase over the Conservatives' pilot program. Certainly, it would be a positive development. That said, this remains, I suppose, a work in progress by the Liberal Party of Canada. However, security for the Jewish community is also a work in progress, and we will continue to work with all our partners on this."

Answering questions from the media afterward, Dion brushed aside suggestions that his party, by voting with the Conservatives on parliamentary confidence motions in recent months, was scared to trigger an election by bringing down the government.

"We will choose our time [to trigger] an election," he responded. "Because in order to replace [the Conservatives]… it's not enough to protest the government, I need to maximize the likelihood" that the Liberal party can win.

Dion then took a tour of Temple Har Zion, guided by Rabbi Cory Weiss, and was brought onto the bimah for a viewing of the shul's Torahs.

The Liberal leader then walked over to the adjacent J'affari Islamic Centre for another tour and reception.

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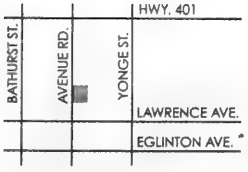

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Echoes of Haggadah

Continued from page 1

"Hashata avdei; l'shana haba'ah b'nai chorin," we proclaim at the seder table. "Now we are slaves; next year, free human beings." Could any words more poignantly convey the significance of their arrival in Israel?

Could any holiday more poignantly lead us to a deeper appreciation of their courage and a deeper understanding of their freedom?

In his prodigiously instructive work *Haggadah and History: A Panorama in Facsimile of Five Centuries of the Printed Haggadah* (The Jewish Publication Society, 2005) Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi writes: "As evening descends in succession over five continents, Jews have gathered in their homes for the seder, the one great liturgical celebration entrusted, not to the public worship of synagogue, but to the intimacy of a family meal. Even before the well-rehearsed questions are asked by the youngest present, all are intuitively aware of the distinctiveness of this night.

"Passover is pre-eminently the great historical festival of the Jewish people. Here the memory of the people is annually revived and replenished and the collective hope sustained. The ancient redemption of Israel from Egypt is recounted and relived, not merely as an evocation from the past, but above all as prototype and surety for the ultimate redemption yet to come… The participant is adjured to regard himself literally 'as though he himself had emerged from Egypt,' and in that phrase lies the latent power of the Haggadah to move the hearts of Jews."

Pesach is, therefore, a celebration that must inspire in us the hope at least, if not the certainty, that all Pharaohs, all oppressors, ultimately will be vanquished.

And as Yerushalmi points out, the latent power of the manner of our celebration – namely, through the Haggadah – is that it conscripts us to the hope – more correctly, to the belief – that it is not just in ancient times that the oppressor is defeated, but in our time, indeed, in all time, as well.

The journey and the courage of that group of 40, in a vivid and chilling echo of the words of the Haggadah, also remind us, alas, that there is no shortage of modern Pharaohs.

"Sheloh echad bilvad amad aleinu l'chaluteinu…" "For more than once have they risen against us to destroy us; in every generation, they rise against us and seek our destruction. But the Holy One, blessed be He, saves us from their hands."

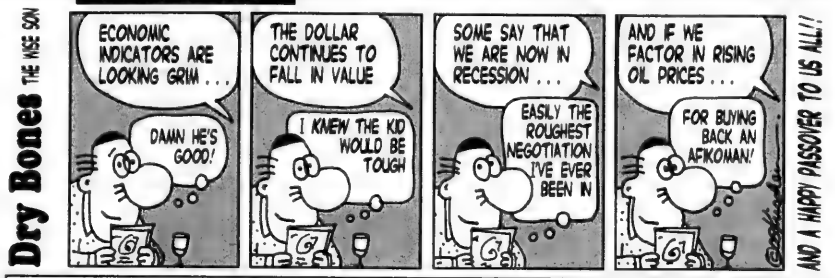
In his famous letter to the troubled Jews of Yemen in 1172, the sage Maimonides wrote the following words of encouragement and hope: "Be strong and of good courage… It is your duty, brethren of Israel, who are scattered over the whole earth, to strengthen one another. The older should encourage the younger, and the prominent men, the multitude. The nation should be united… rear your children to understand that great event [on Mount Sinai]… hold fast to the covenant and be steadfast in your faith."

Maimonides' words are as true for us as they were more than 800 years ago. And the holiday of Pesach, with our children, grandchildren and other brethren around the seder table, is where that duty is most manifest. Chag samayach.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Canadian Jewish Congress president Irwin Cotler reported a 1982 budget deficit of nearly $150,00, which was predicted to increase in 1983. Steps decided upon by organization officers to deal with the shortfall included managerial and fiscal controls, scaling down activities and a hiring freeze.

Editorials & Letters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DAMN HE'S GOOD!
THE DOLLAR CONTINUES TO FALL IN VALUE
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Under fire near Gaza border

On April 4, the board of directors of the Canada-Israel Committee came under sniper fire near the Gaza border while receiving a briefing from Israeli Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter ("CIC members fired upon while touring Sderot," *CJN*, April 10). The incident, in which Dichter's bureau chief, Matti Gil, was injured, was widely reported in both Israel and Canada. I would like to share a few reflections on what happened.

The CIC board includes Jews and Christians from across Canada. Our annual study visit to Israel was intended to provide our directors with a first-hand appreciation of local perspectives. In that sense, the attack was highly instructive. Our brief experience on one of the front lines of Israel's ongoing battle to protect her citizens was but a small insight into what the families of southern Israel live with on a daily basis.

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MOAN!
MOAN!
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X30 = W
HMM-MAYBE I SHOULD REVISE MY WANDERING IN THE DESERT CALCULATION FROM 30 TO 40 YEARS?

But there are other insights, too, some less obvious, from our experience, that deserve comment as well.

The attacker did not distinguish between Jew and non-Jew. Nor did the response by the board members to his attack show any differentiation between Jew and non-Jew. Though shaken, we unanimously decided to continue with our itinerary, which included lunch and shopping in Sderot. It was a very heartening demonstration of support for the Jewish state.

We must always remember this.

Support for Israel, whether in Canada and beyond, is not confined to the Jewish community alone. Our delegation received expressions of concern and support from all segments of Canadian and Israeli society, including from prime ministers Stephen Harper and Ehud Olmert and the leader of Canada's opposition, Liberal leader Stéphane Dion.

None of us will ever forget our experience on the Gaza border, nor will we ever be deterred from our support for Israel. Israelis, and indeed Canadian Jews, need to know that they are not alone in their search for peace and their commitment to Israel's security.

Moshe Ronen
Chairman
Canada-Israel Committee

* * *

Conservative movement and USCJ (1)

I wish to add a point of clarification to the article "Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ" (*CJN*, April 3). While some of the personalities mentioned in the article raised the issues of ideology and philosophy, these matters were never actually put on the table for discussion. Rather, the points of deliberation centred around governance, autonomy, and finances.

While most of the Toronto-area congregations are more traditionally based in many areas of ritual as compared to other Conservative shuls in the eastern Canadian region, everyone I know of validated the importance of pluralism, mutual respect and inter-community co-operation toward building a strong Canadian brand of Conservative Judaism.

Regardless of how individual synagogues determine their institutional affiliations, I hope and pray that the current mix of congregations will continue to share an affinity with each other and strive to work effectively with our neighbouring Orthodox, Reform and Reconstructionist congregations as well.

Rabbi Howard Morrison
Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue
Toronto

* * *

Conservative movement and USCJ (2)

In the article "Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ" (*CJN*, April 3), there are a number of conflicting opinions expressed by rabbis about how they feel about the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) and its value to certain Canadian congregations. Most have commented ideologically. Interestingly, the ideological debate was lost in the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) and the Rabbinical Assembly (RA). Theological/ideological policy was made there and not by the USCJ. If that is the case, why is the debate focused on congregational membership in the USCJ now?

The unexpressed subtext of this debate and the reason for this, I believe, is the discomfort that some local rabbis have with their own decision-making body, the RA, and their continued membership in it. The USCJ is an easier target for them and attracts little personal risk. However, their influence on decisions that congregations make will make a significant difference to the congregation.

I would venture to guess that if congregants knew what was really at stake to the movement – nothing less than its long-term survival as a meaningful stream of Judaism, and to the congregation, among other things, a setting of itself apart from an international movement of millions of similarly minded Jews, with identified and admired ethical and Israel- focused principles – they would choose to have a say in the decision. As well, they might be very upset that their rabbi – who has no love for the USCJ or the movement and its direction – and their board would presume to speak for them without a presentation to the membership at a general meeting, where matters of such grave consequence ought to be considered.

Ron Hoffman
President
Canadian Foundation of Masorti Judaism

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Perspectives

What Israel must do to secure its future

By LESLIE SUSSER

When David Ben-Gurion declared Israel's independence 60 years ago, the army had just 29,000 soldiers, no tanks and four Messerschmitt fighters.

As seven Arab armies prepared to invade, the renowned British general Bernard Montgomery predicted that the Jews would not be able to hold out for more than a few weeks. Ben-Gurion's own generals put the country's chances of survival at just 50-50.

Israel today has a standing army of 187,000 with an estimated 450,000 reserves, hundreds of front-line tanks and state-of-the-art aircraft. Its military is bigger than that of Great Britain and considered by most experts to be the strongest by far in the Middle East. And although Israel has never admitted it has a nuclear arsenal, it is said to be a nuclear power.

Clearly, there is no comparison between Israel's military power then and now.

But is the state that was supposed to be a haven for the Jews more secure today than it was on May 14, 1948, when Ben-Gurion read out Israel's proclamation of independence at the Tel Aviv Museum?

Israel's array of impressive military, diplomatic and economic achievements notwithstanding, the country still faces grave existential threats.

The most obvious comes from Iran. A radical Shi'ite regime in Tehran armed with nuclear weapons would constitute a greater threat than Israel has faced at any time in its history.

But there are also more subtle dangers. For example, should Israel fail to reach a two-state solution with the Palestinians, demands for one man, one vote in a single Israeli-Palestinian state could undermine the fundamental Zionist idea of Israel as a Jewish state.

Some Israelis see grave domestic dangers.

To a large extent, Israel's stunning achievements were due to relatively high educational standards and strong manpower. But major crises in higher education and the school system could put these at risk.

In comparative tests over the past several years, Israeli schoolchildren have fared worse than most of their western and Asian counterparts. For example, in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) 2006 PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) rankings, Israeli 15-year-olds finished 39th out of 57 countries.

Soldiers of the Nachal Brigade of the Israel Defense Forces conduct a military drill earlier in the year. [Israel photo]

Moreover, cash-strapped universities have been cutting professors' jobs and research budgets, accelerating an already worrying brain drain. According to Prof. Dan Ben David of Tel Aviv University, 25 per cent of academic lecturers in Israel leave the country, compared to a figure of 1.5 percent to four per cent in Europe.

"This is the real existential threat to Israel," says Avishai Braverman, a Labor Knesset member and former Ben-Gurion University president.

So far, the Israeli economy appears to be holding firm. Israel has registered annual growth of more than four per cent for each of the last four years – more than any other developed western nation – despite the intifadah, the withdrawal from Gaza and the Second Lebanon War. But can it be sustained, given the brain drain and the cuts in research?

Some leading Israeli scientists, such as the Technion Institute's Zeev Tadmor, argue that Israel is not geared for the next generation of probable growth areas, such as biotech, nanotechnology and alternative energy, and is not investing enough in cutting-edge research. The government's research allocation for all seven of Israel's top universities is just $100 million a year, compared to a U.S. federal budget for the Massachusetts Institute of Technology alone of $950 million.

Other figures, however, tell a different story.

In 1950, annual exports from Israel totalled $18 million. Today, the figure is $48 billion. According to figures published in 2000, Israel was second only to California's Silicon Valley in high tech development, third in the number of university graduates per capita behind the United States and Holland, and first in the number of scientists per capita, with 135 per 10,000 inhabitants, compared to 85 in the United States.

Moreover, reflecting the extent of its high-tech success, Israel is third in the world in Nasdaq-listed companies behind only the United States and Canada. And despite effects from the U.S. subprime mortgage crisis and other economic woes, the forecast for Israel's economic growth this year is still more than three per cent.

The security threat to Israel's future is more tangible. Although it emerged victorious and strengthened from the second intifadah, Israel has been unable to find a formula for peace with the Palestinians. The main achievement of the Oslo process was to give the Israeli-Palestinian conflict a soluble territorial dimension. But the takeover of the Gaza Strip last year by the radical Hamas could transform the conflict into an intractable cultural and religious clash.

The Israeli-Iranian standoff is of a similarly uncompromising character. However, the difference between this and Israel's past confrontations with absolutist opponents is that the West now seems to be on Israel's side, fighting a similar battle against fundamentalist Islamism.

Israel's performance in the face of these weighty strategic challenges will depend to a large extent on the quality of its political leadership, but since its inception, the state has been plagued by an increasingly dysfunctional system of government. Unwieldy coalitions forced to accommodate a plethora of parties and interest groups have made it difficult for embattled Israeli leaders to take the tough decisions the country needs on peace, security and the economy.

But Israel's leaders are aware of the country's problems and have been acting to deal with them.

Israel is helping to build an international coalition against the Iranian bomb, is accelerating efforts to cut a peace deal with moderate Palestinians and is in the process of instituting educational reforms.

Moreover, Israel is working on amendments to the system of governance that will make elected representatives more accountable and, at the same time, provide future governments with more power to govern. Detailed legislation already has been prepared in the Knesset's law, constitution and justice committee.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert may well want to bring some of these initiatives to fruition soon as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations.

Although Israel at 60 has much to be proud of, the country cannot become complacent and concerns about its future cannot be dismissed. Then again, just as it did in 1948, Israel time and again has confounded the prophets of doom.

Peres: "We're in a new age," and other notes of optimism

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — Shimon Peres says Israel and the world are entering a new era that is equal parts dangerously uncertain and rich in possibility.

"Our problems today are the problems of the world," Peres said in an interview with *JTA*. "Who is going to win, terror or peace? Who is going to win, Iran or [the] nations?"

For Peres, who began his political career as an aide to David Ben-Gurion and at age 84 is capping it as Israel's president, says his country's current challenges are dwarfed by those of earlier eras.

"In 60 years we overcame more difficult periods," he said.

Of the confrontation between sponsors of terrorism and pursuers of peace, Peres said, "I think we shall win it."

Peres says the Palestinian-Israeli conflict has moved beyond a territorial dispute between two peoples and become part of a broader paradigm that pits backward-looking fundamentalists, including the regime in Tehran, against moderates in the Middle East.

Perhaps Israel's most famous optimist, Peres says he sees the silver lining through the gloom, and he dismisses the notion that a window for peacemaking is closing due to rejectionist groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah.

"I don't think we can close a window because we don't live in a closed house," he said. "The fanatics are also losing to growing strength of freedom and modernity."

Driven by his vision for a more open and collaborative world, Peres is assembling a star-studded guest list for an upcoming conference called the Face of Tomorrow that will discuss the future of Israel, the Jewish world and the globe as part of Israel's 60th anniversary celebrations.

A combination of celebrities, business tycoons and world leaders past and present are expected to attend the conference, including U.S. President George W. Bush; former world leaders Tony Blair and Mikhail Gorbachev; entertainment figures Barbra Streisand and Steven Spielberg; media mogul Rupert Murdoch and Google founder Sergey Brin.

The guest list is a testament to Peres' own star power, especially abroad, where the Nobel Peace Prize laureate is embraced as an elder statesman.

Peres says he hopes the part of the conference devoted to the "Jewish tomorrow" will help enhance and alter relations between the Diaspora and Israel.

"I think we live in a new age, and we need to adapt ourselves to the new age, which is basically scientific, intellectual and artistic, and less material and less financial," he said. "I think we are blessed with a great deal of talents and opportunities to make use of it and to be a contributing nation to the world.

"We are too small to be a market, too small to be an industry," he said of Israel. "But we are able enough to serve as a world laboratory for new ideas."

Peres says Diaspora and Israeli Jews have to find ways to be more creative together to become what he called a "contributing people." In the past, he said, Israel's needs were more material. Today they are more intellectual.

The president singled out the field of renewable energies as one area in which Israel can help bring progress to the world. Peres has lent his backing to a program to make Israel a laboratory for mass use of electrically powered cars.

Likewise, Peres is touting a joint Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian Peace Valley initiative in the Jordan Valley to cultivating environmental and tourist projects along the Jordan River.

"I think Israel can be a green pioneer," Peres said. "You see, the greatest enemy of humanity today in my judgment is oil, because oil creates pollution and finances terror, and I prefer Israel hang on the sun rather the oil," he said.

"The sun is more permanent, the sun is more democratic, and the sun is not a member of the Arab League."

Opinions

Students, faculty mobilize on campus

In the span of just a few days in late March, there were two separate incidents of anti-Semitic graffiti at the University of Western Ontario. Also at Western, some professors have continued to pressure university president Paul Davenport to pull out of the Jewish National Fund's upcoming Negev Dinner in London, where he will be the honoree.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

Meanwhile there has been persistent unrest at York University. The group "Students Against Israeli Apartheid" (SAIA) barricaded the university's senate chamber on March 27, demanding an immediate meeting with York president Mamdouh Shoukri. On the same day, SAIA supporters clashed with Jewish students, while on March 31, these agitators again sowed discord, this time by disrupting an address by former Israeli cabinet minister Natan Sharansky.

At McMaster University, a backlash against the university administration was expected in response to its actions to tone down offensive slogans that had characterized "Israeli Apartheid Week." We didn't have to wait long. Under the guise of a "free speech forum," an ugly hate-fest directed against Israel and Zionism was held in late February.

These incidents, and others like them, speak to an enormously troubling escalation in acts of intimidation against Jewish students and faculty on Ontario campuses. That Jewish interests are being threatened should be obvious. Yet there are those in our community who think otherwise and who would have us believe that those who draw attention to this mounting onslaught are alarmist or just plain uninformed.

Nonetheless, there has been a reaction to these events – and it has come mostly from the grassroots. At McMaster, for example, it's been students who have led the charge in bringing these matters – and their concerns – to the attention of the university administration, law enforcement and the public at large. They, and others like them at York and elsewhere, have sent a powerful and unambiguous message: enough is enough. Our rights are being eroded. We will not put up with being bullied. We will not stand idly by while our values, our identity and our support for the State of Israel are under attack.

Moreover, what has begun to emerge, much more resolutely than before, is a coordinated Jewish faculty voice on campus. At Western, Jewish academics have been quick to rally to Davenport's side, commending him for his decision to still accept the JNF award. Faculty groups at McMaster and the University of Toronto have also been very actively engaged in countering the vilification of Israel and Jews on their campuses.

It's evident that students and faculty are playing an essential role in Israel advocacy. How this meshes with the views of our communal leaders will be explored in my column next month.

One of my most important IDF missions

As an officer in the Israel Defence Forces' Military Advocate General's Corps for 23 years, I held various noteworthy positions, but one of the most significant experiences I had during this period had nothing to do with my legal career.

Yair Lantsteen in Jerusalem

In December 2006, a few months before ending active duty in the military, I was chosen to be among a group of 180 IDF officers who travelled to Poland on a six-day mission appropriately named *Edim Be'Madim* (Witnesses in Uniform).

For some years now, the IDF has been sending several such groups to Poland and other parts of eastern Europe every year, and while similar important projects exist, such as the March of the Living, there is something unique about *Edim Be'Madim*.

The IDF takes these missions seriously. Each is commanded by no less than a brigadier general and is joined by family members of eight fallen IDF soldiers, who become integral members of the group. In the months before our journey, we took part in extensive preparations. There were several day-long sessions at Yad Vashem, and another at Ben Gurion College in Kibbutz Sde Boker, reflecting, among other things, on whether the Jews of Palestine did enough for those in Europe during the war years and how Israelis treated survivors when they arrived in the nascent state. Missing any required training meant being scratched from the mission.

Joined by an inspiring survivor of Auschwitz, we flew in uniform into Krakow's airport on an Israeli Air Force jet and spent the entire trip in that attire (excluding Shabbat in Warsaw, when we were allowed civvies). We proudly displayed tags with the Israeli flag on our arms wherever we went.

It was a rigorous journey, both physically and emotionally. Each day began at 6 a.m. and ended near midnight. We visited Krakow, Lublin and Warsaw, Auschwitz-Birkenau, Majdanek and Treblinka, and many more Shoah-related sites.

Several of the scheduled events made this (and other similar IDF missions) exceptional. We held five full military ceremonies at different sites. Singing *Hatikvah* in IDF uniform, while saluting our flag, on the ruins of the crematoria and gas chambers in Birkenau is certainly a posthumous victory.

At the end of one particularly long and emotionally trying day, we held a moving ceremony in memory of each of the fallen IDF soldiers whose family members had joined us. Several of the latter were themselves children of Holocaust survivors who had buried their own children, killed defending Israel. There was not a dry eye among all the hardened officers on the mission.

Early the next morning, we travelled to Auschwitz. In one of the most emotional moments of the trip for me, we marched in full military parade into that horrific place, with our Holocaust survivor leading the way, followed by several officers bearing Israel's flag and IDF banners. Proudly marching through the "Arbeit Macht Frei" gate, I was once again brought to tears by the symbolism of our act.

On the last day of the mission, we visited the village of Tykocin, a shtetl whose population was once more than half Jewish. In August 1941, the Germans rounded up all the Jews and marched them for many hours to a clearing in nearby Lopochova Forest. They lined them up before three huge, freshly dug pits, and, for a day-and-a-half, they systematically machine-gunned all 2,100 people. We marched in silence into that clearing and surrounded the mass graves, lighting memorial candles that we had brought with us from Israel. The silence was deafening.

Returning to Israel that same night on an air force jet, I couldn't wait to land. While this country has many problems and is far from ideal, it is home. Alighting from the plane, I was never prouder to be an officer in the IDF, an army attuned to its nation's past and understanding its role and responsibility for ensuring that no further catastrophes befall us.

The mission didn't end with our return. It took quite some time to recover. My thoughts often returning to the sights and sounds we had encountered. A month or so after coming back, and as part of the *Edim Be'Madim* follow-up, our group met again to reflect on our common experiences and discuss how they'd shape our future behaviour – as citizens, commanders, parents or just plain human beings.

The journey was seminal and has yet to be concluded. The attempt to comprehend the utterly incomprehensible will continue.

Is Canada funding 'human insecurity'?

"Human security" is one of those politically correct, new-age terms that sound good, but are often without content and readily exploited to promote conflict. And in at least one important case, this is the result of Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs fellowship program with this title, run out of the University of British Columbia's Centre of International Relations.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Its March 2008 newsletter features Charmaine Stanley, a PhD candidate in political science at the University of Toronto working under the supervision of Prof. Paul Kingston. Her research, we are told, "lies at the nexus of information and communication technology (ICT), civil society and peacebuilding."

With her fellowship, Stanley, who has worked with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Cairo and has received the Bronfman Award in Israeli studies, went to "Israel/Palestine" for her field research. Actually, she went to Bil'in, the site of the ongoing propaganda war against the Israeli separation barrier. Weekly violent protests, organized by Palestinians and a few Israeli anarchists, seek to provoke confrontation in order to provide the media with more clichéd images of Israeli "brutality" and Palestinian "victims." The apparent academic content of this activism is based on studying the use of e-mails and mobile phones in these staged confrontations.

In her essay describing this experience (posted at humansecurity.moonfruit.com), and justifying the use of a government-funded fellowship for so-called "participant observation," there is no mention of Palestinian incitement and terrorism. There are also no Israeli victims of suicide bombings, no grieving families, no Hamas or Al Aqsa Brigades, no rockets or snipers, and no morality. Therefore, according to Stanley's personal concept of "human security," there is no justification for building a barrier to prevent such attacks against Israelis – either Israelis are not human, or they aren't entitled to security.

Like other propaganda, this article erases context, providing only a brief mention at the beginning of the basis for the conflict and the need for "peacebuilding." The violent Arab rejection of the 1947 UN Partition Plan is presented simply as "the first Arab-Israeli war" which, as she notes, resulted in "Israeli independence, the Palestinian naqba (catastrophe) and the dispersal of the Palestinian refugees." The deaths of 6,000 Israelis in that war, and more than 26,000 in the past 60 years, is not part of her "human security" agenda. And from 1948, she jumps to "the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip by Israel in 1967" – as if this took place in a vacuum.

In a cursory acknowledgement of academic norms requiring balance and emotional neutrality, Stanley acknowledges that there may be two sides to this story. (She used this ploy in a 2002 article promoting the anti-Israel "boycott Caterpillar" campaign, citing Human Rights Watch and other biased NGOs.) She asks, rhetorically, "Who was responding to whose violence at Bil'in? I know that I saw the [Israel Defence Forces] use force before any stones were thrown, but is that what the IDF saw? Did things look different from the other side of the fence?"

But she doesn't show evidence of any inclination to actually investigate these questions, to spend equal time and emotional commitment on the Israeli side of the barrier. If she had, she might have seen the violent provocations at Bil'in or acknowledged that in preventing Palestinian terror attacks, the barrier has saved hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of lives.

Instead, she invokes post-modern jargon, claiming that "reality is not always balanced, and balance cannot be equated with a faithful portrayal of events." And in any case, she says that "from a human security perspective," attacks by Palestinians are merely a response "to structural violence" in the form of "the dispossession of their lands and livelihood."

Pending a comparison of the activities of the other human security fellows, I am reserving judgment on the extent of the abuse. Among this year's fellowship recipients, Nevin Aiken's report on Northern Ireland seems to be free of double-talk and post-colonial ideology.

But even if Stanley's case is unique, those responsible for approving this "research" should be held accountable.

The Kirshner File

14th-century Sarajevo Haggadah inspires a novel

It all began, as Geraldine Brooks remembers, in the bar of the Holiday Inn in Sarajevo, the war-ravaged capital of Bosnia.

Brooks, a foreign correspondent of the *Wall Street Journal*, was in Sarajevo to cover the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, a province in the old Yugoslavia embroiled in a civil war pitting Muslims against Christian Serbs.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

"That's when I first heard about it," said Brooks, referring to the priceless Sarajevo Haggadah, the 14th-century manuscript made of bleached calfskin and illuminated in gold and copper.

Crafted in Barcelona, Spain, it is the world's oldest Sephardi haggadah, a masterpiece of medieval Judaica with an astounding appraised value of $700 million.

Removed from the Iberian peninsula by Jews fleeing the Inquisition, the haggadah, judging by hand-written notes in its margins, was taken to Venice. There, a Catholic priest, for reasons best known to himself, saved it from the book burnings of papal intolerance.

The whereabouts of the wine-stained haggadah remains a mystery from that point onward, but in 1894, a man named Joseph Kohen sold it to the National Museum of Bosnia and Herzogovina in Sarajevo. By all accounts, it had been in the Kohen family's possession for several generations.

In 1941, the German army marched into Sarajevo, in Ante Pavelic's Nazi puppet state of Croatia. Synagogues were sacked and Jews were deported.

Amid these crushing events, the chief librarian of the National Museum, an anti-fascist Muslim scholar named Dervis Korkut, smuggled the haggadah out of Sarajevo under the very nose of a German general who had arrogantly come to claim it.

Having witnessed the destruction of Torah scrolls in Sarajevo, Korkut feared that the haggadah might meet an identical fate. He presumably did not know that the Nazis, bent on exterminating European Jewry in the Holocaust, were probably ghoulishly interested in showcasing it in a planned museum for the Jewish "extinct race."

Korkut entrusted the haggadah to a Muslim cleric, who took it to a remote mountain village.

There, in an obscure mosque far from Sarajevo, it was hidden among Islamic textbooks, only to be returned to the National Museum in the wake of World War II.

For the past six years, the haggadah, a symbol of resurrection and hope in a nation that could dearly use both, has been on permanent display at the National Museum.

Shmoozing with colleagues that day in Sarajevo in the early 1990s, Brooks initially learned of its existence. Since the National Museum was pockmarked with the shrapnel of Serbian shelling, journalists wondered what had become of it.

"There was a lot of gossip about it," said Brooks.

Geraldine Brooks

According to one widely circulated rumour, the treasured volume had been sold by Muslim forces for the acquisition of arms. Still another account, which was far more implausible, suggested that it had been spirited out of the country by the Mossad, Israel's external intelligence service.

In fact, the haggadah remained in Sarajevo throughout the fighting, having been deposited in a bank vault for safekeeping by a Muslim librarian.

"Not for the first time had it been saved by Muslim hands," Brooks observed.

Its peregrinations fascinated Brooks, who has filed stories from the Middle East and Africa. "The few facts about it were so intriguing," she said. "This little book had survived so many crises and found so many protectors."

To Brooks, the topic seemed tailor-made for a book, but she applied herself to it in fits and starts.

Twelve years elapsed before she finally got down to the task of writing *People of the Book*, a novel published in February by Viking and distributed in Canada by Penguin.

In writing it, Brooks immersed herself in Jewish history and studied the techniques of bookbinding and illumination. In 2001, while researching it, she sat next to a book conservator who had been hired by the United Nations and the Bosnian Jewish community to restore it to its original condition. Brooks was impressed by its vivid illustrations and gleaming gold leaf, but saddened by its worn, discoloured binding.

People of the Book, which has elicited positive reviews, opens in 1996 as a young and upcoming Australian book conservator, Hanna Heath, is handed the job of a lifetime. She is asked to restore the Sarajevo Haggadah.

The Sarajevo Haggadah

In leafing through its pages, she discovers a number of odd artifacts: an insect wing, a white hair and salt-water crystals. As she investigates the origins of these objects, the narrative moves backward to Sarajevo in the 1940s, Vienna in 1894, Venice in 1609, Tarragona in 1492 and Seville in 1480 before returning to the 1990s. These chapters are linked to the complexities of family, romance and international politics.

Brooks, who was in Toronto recently to publicize *People of the Book*, said that her conversion to Judaism and her subsequent marriage to the Jewish American journalist Tony Horwitz were not factors in her decision to write it.

But in an interview, she admitted that her interest in Jewish matters goes back a long way, to her Irish Catholic childhood in Sydney, Australia, where she was born in 1955.

Her American father, a successful big band singer originally from California, was posted to Palestine during World War II, assigned to an entertainment unit in the Australian army.

He liked Jews he met in Palestine and was sympathetic to Zionism. "He was a lefty Zionist," said Brooks, who resides on Martha's Vineyard with her husband and son.

As a high school student, Brooks wrote term papers on Nazi Germany, the Holocaust and Israel. She credits her dad for having introduced her to these and other Jewish-related topics.

After working as a general assignment reporter for the *Sydney Morning Herald*, she received a scholarship to do a master's degree in journalism at the Columbia School of Journalism. At a class, she met and fell in love with Horwitz, who won a Pulitzer Prize for national reporting in 1995 while on the staff of the *Wall Street Journal*.

She had no problem converting to Judaism. "It was a very easy step for me to take, and did not require any great soul searching," explained Brooks, a petite, pleasant person with an electric smile. "It had more to do with history than religion. If I was to marry a Jew, I didn't want to be responsible for the end of the line of his Jewish heritage."

Comparing Judaism to journalism, Brooks – a member of a Reconstructionist synagogue – said, "Judaism is a close analysis of text and the meaning of words. Plus, the music is great."

Based in Cairo as a foreign correspondent from 1987 to 1992, Brooks reported from Egypt, Israel, the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Somalia, Eritrea and Nigeria (where she was briefly arrested). She then covered the United Nations from New York City. She left the *Wall Street Journal* to tend to her son, Nathaniel. "Journalism was not compatible with child raising."

Turning to book writing, she wrote her first non-fictional work, *Nine Parts of Desire: The Hidden World of Islamic Women* – a best-seller translated into 17 languages – in 1994. She followed that up with *Foreign Correspondence*, a memoir, in 1997. Brook's first novel, *Year of Wonders*, was set in 17th-century Britain. Her second novel, *March*, which takes place during the American Civil War, earned the Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 2006.

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Rate of anti-Semitic incidents continues to climb, says League for Human Rights

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Incidents of anti-Semitism continued to trend upward in Canada last year, with a record 1,042 occurrences reported by the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada – nearly one-third of them on the Internet.

The new high marked an 11.4 per cent increase over 2006 and nearly doubled the 584 incidents reported in 2003, the League stated in its *2007 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents*.

Occurrences ranged from assaults on visible Jews to the airing of a Holocaust-denial film by a campus student group.

The surge in Canadian incidents is consistent with findings by other organizations surveying anti-Semitism around the world.

"The findings of this year's Audit...support the conclusion of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe that anti-Semitism 'appears in a variety of forms and is becoming relatively commonplace.' This statement holds true across the globe," the Audit concluded.

The largest number of incidents was reported in the Greater Toronto Area, home to the country's largest population of Jews, where 427 events were recorded, down four per cent from the year before. Montreal, with 249 incidents (up 16 per cent from 2006) and regional Quebec, with 42 incidents (up 282 per cent from the year before) showed increases.

The Audit correlated the spike in incidents in Quebec to the Bouchard-Taylor Commission hearings, which solicited the opinions of Quebecers on the reasonable accommodation of minorities.

"While there were submissions on relevant issues that used respectful and sensitive language, the hearings proved to be a magnet for intolerance and bigotry," the Audit stated. "Instead of calming the waters, the process stoked the flames of discord, feeding into and amplifying every misconception and bias and giving a largely unrestricted public platform to ignorance and racism."

The Audit found that, across Canada, "It was the smallest centres of Jewish presence that saw the most significant patterns of escalation, including regional Quebec and regional Ontario."

Breaking down the incidents by type, the Audit reported that of the 1,042 events, 699 were categorized as harassment, up from 588 in 2006. Altogether, that category represented 67 per cent of incidents in 2007.

The Audit also reported 315 cases of vandalism, down marginally from the 317 recorded the year before and 28 cases of violence, down from 30 in 2006.

There were 22 incidents involving synagogues, with targeted houses of worship in Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Richmond, B.C., Hamilton and Barrie, Ont.

In one of the most egregious acts reported in the Audit, the Montreal Jewish Community Centre was firebombed during the Passover holiday.

Nearly 30 per cent of all incidents – 310 in all – were attributable to Web-based activity. Of these, nearly one-third involved threatening or harassing communications.

Harassment was reported in 31 instances in the workplace and 82 incidents were reported in school settings, mostly at public schools.

"With concerted efforts underway to import anti-Israel propaganda into the high school classroom, such an increase cannot be entirely unexpected, since anti-Semitism is often a by-product of virulent anti-Israel activity," the Audit stated.

The Audit also found university students "reported feeling intimidated as a result of the poisoned environment created by the annual 'Israel Apartheid Week' hate fest."

The Audit did report some silver linings. It welcomed the government of Ontario's "recent provision of funding to bolster services to victims of hate crimes," which included a grant to the League to hold a forum on the topic. It also applauded the federal government's announcement of financial grants to vulnerable communities to underwrite part of the costs of security measures.

"The 2007 findings indicate that anti-Semitism is not just at the fringes of Canadian society, nor the work of a few lone bigots," said Frank Dimant, executive vice president of B'nai Brith Canada. "Anti-Semitism's reach is far more systemic, occurring in benign places where one normally would not expect to encounter racism. This form of hatred appears to be increasing in rural areas, whereas before incidents were primarily confined to urban centres."

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Fugitive rabbi believed to be in Canada

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

An Israeli rabbi who fled to Canada after being accused of involvement in child abuse is being asked to turn himself in.

The Jewish Community Council of Montreal is asking members of the community "to be on the lookout for this individual and to ensure that he surrenders himself to the authorities."

Canadian Jewish Congress issued a news release calling on the suspect, Rabbi Elior Chen, to give himself up.

Rabbi Chen and his followers are suspected of abusing two children in Bet Shemesh, aged three and four, who were severely beaten with hammers, knives and other implements. Israel has issued an international arrest warrant for Rabbi Chen.

Israeli police spokesperson Micky Rosenfeld said the three-year-old has suffered brain damage.

The children's mother was charged with abusing a minor, along with 25 charges of assault against six of her 12 children.

Police told reporters in Israel that when routine methods of discipline failed, Rabbi Chen ordered the mother and other followers to use violence, which allegedly included beatings, burnings, pushing, shaking and tying. Investigators also suspect that the two of Rabbi Chen's followers placed the children in baths of hot and cold water, and broke their bones with hammers and blows. The mother reportedly forced the children to eat feces.

The Israeli newspaper *Yediot Achronot* reported that police had seized Rabbi Chen's journals, which indicate he was trying to cleanse the children of satanic possession.

In one entry, the rabbi wrote, "put stones on a hot plate… when they are boiling, put them on the bodies of the children and they will be cleansed."

Israeli police said they had begun extradition proceedings against Rabbi Chen. *Ha'aretz* quoted one of Rabbi Chen's friends as saying the rabbi likely fled to Canada because of the difficulty in extraditing him from this country.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka, co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress, said that his organization issued its appeal to Rabbi Chen because "we've always been in the forefront saying that people who have committed an injustice need to face the music.

"He's a fugitive from justice. Maybe he's not guilty, but he shouldn't be running away."

Rabbi Bulka acknowledged that Congress likely has limited influence on haredi rabbis such as Rabbi Chen.

"Should we call it a stab in the dark? Possibly."

"But it's better than sitting back and doing nothing."

As of *The CJN*'s press time, Rabbi Chen's whereabouts in Canada were unknown.

Beth Tikvah votes to stay in USCJ

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Beth Tikvah Synagogue will stay in the Conservative movement, despite a recent recommendation by the Toronto congregation's board of governors to terminate its membership in the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) over philosophical differences regarding ritual observance and lack of responsiveness to the congregation's needs.

Last Thursday, two weeks after the board of directors of Adath Israel Congregation voted to leave the USCJ and terminated its membership retroactive to last July 1, Beth Tikvah held a special congregational members' meeting, during which a vote was taken to determine whether to amend the synagogue's constitution, which mandates USCJ membership.

Of the 192 members at the meeting, 98 were opposed to the motion to change the constitution, and 75 were in favour.

The meeting included about an hour of discussion, but it was not heated, Rabbi Wayne Allen, the congregation's spiritual leader, told *The CJN*.

"I think there was much exasperation expressed in terms of the services provided by United Synagogue, yet there was a sense that an affiliation with a larger entity is important," he said.

Beth Tikvah president Jeffrey Jackson told *The CJN* that the constitutional clause regarding USCJ affiliation can be changed only if 75 per cent of members vote in favour of the change at two consecutive meetings.

"We wanted to change [that rule] to two-thirds of the members present at a special meeting," said Jackson.

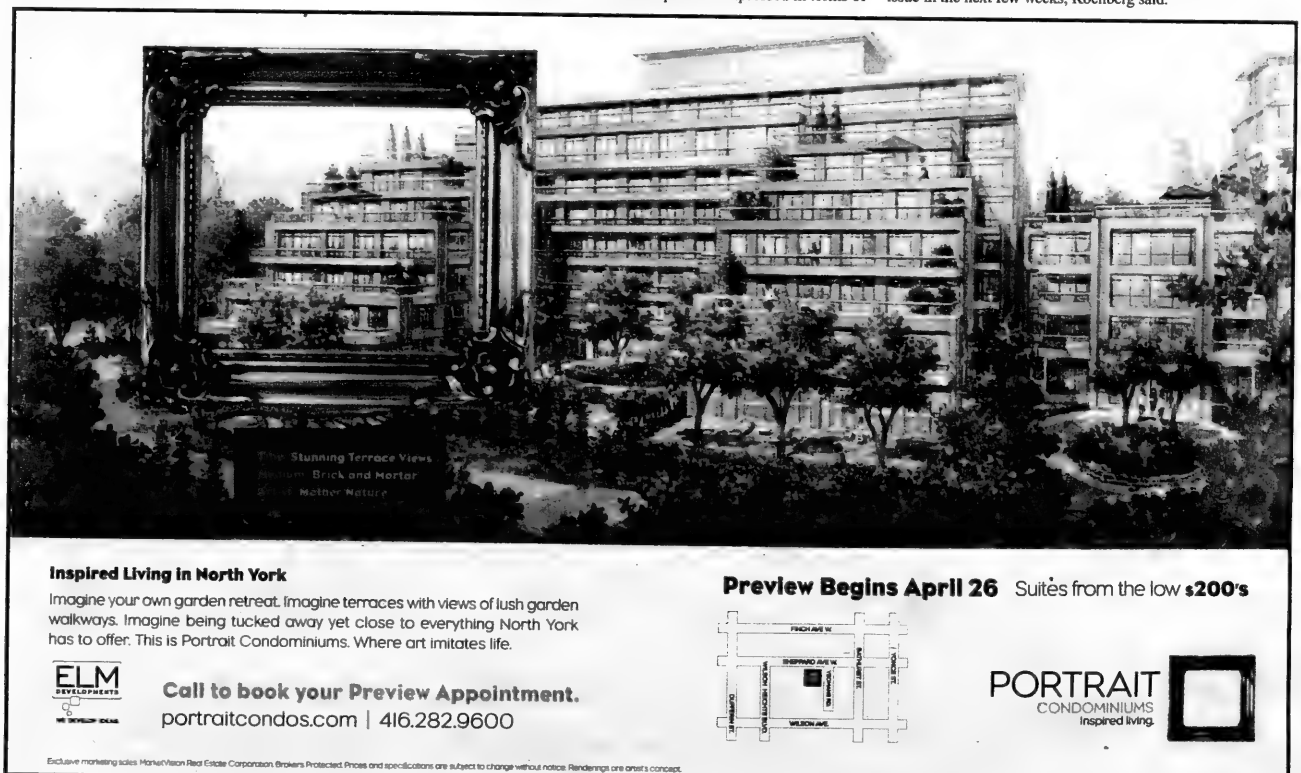
He said the synagogue, which pays $41,000 annually in USCJ membership dues, uses "very few" of the organization's services.

The USCJ, which has about 760 affiliates in North America, offers services in areas such as education, leadership development, social action and public policy, Israel affairs and youth activities.

Beth Tikvah's youth group has about 25 members.

Paul Kochberg, president of the USCJ's Canadian region, said the board of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue was scheduled to vote this week, on April 15, on the issue.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue and Beit Rayim Synagogue are staying in the movement, and other congregations will vote on the issue in the next few weeks, Kochberg said.



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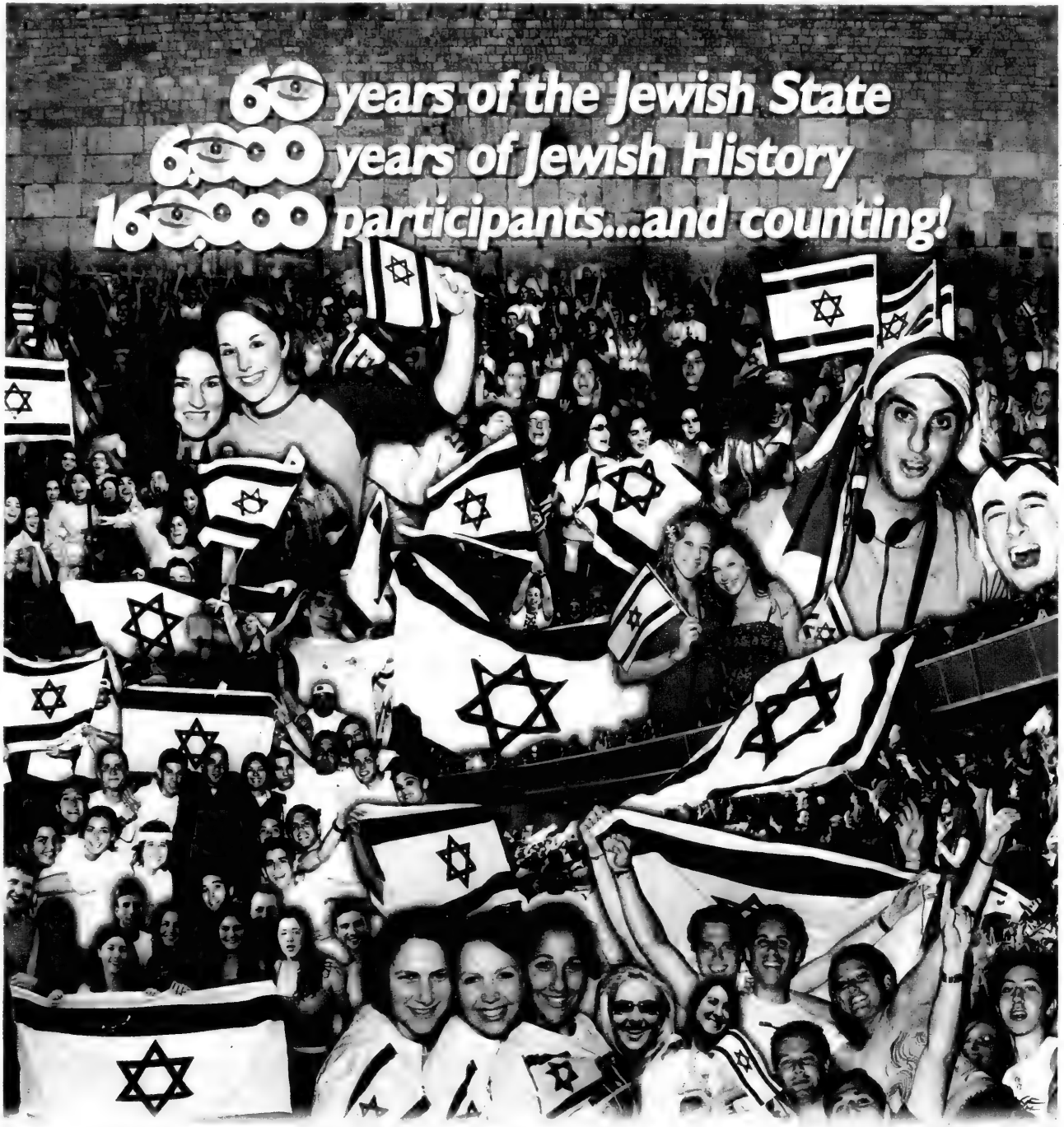

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Israel is at a 'pictorial disadvantage' in conflict

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

As senior press co-ordinator for Israeli's Prime Minister's Office, David Baker acknowledges that advocates for Israel start the day behind the eight ball, or, as he puts it, at a "pictorial disadvantage."

Even if there is no Israeli military action on a particular day, the country's conflict with the Palestinians is widely perceived as one in which a first world superpower, enjoying all the comforts of modern society, takes on a fifth rate force fielded by shanty town-dwelling Palestinians.

Human nature being what it is, people generally sympathize with the underdog. That gets worse if Israel has to take some sort of military action. "We acknowledge that off the bat, by default, we have a heavy, heavy disadvantage," Baker said in an interview last week.

People generally sympathize with underdog, says Israeli government official

Baker was in Toronto as a guest of UJA Federation to meet and brief its supporters. His North American tour also took him to speaking engagements in Wilmington, Del. and Louisville, Ky.

A native of New York who attended college in Buffalo, Baker said Israelis "try to deal with the problem."

The international media with whom he works have their own ways of framing stories and all he and colleagues can do is make themselves available to comment, he said.

The government, he continued, is "making strenuous efforts" to improve its "hasbara" (PR outreach), but it faces an opponent that has become quite adept at staging media events that distort reality.

Baker pointed to a fairly recent event in which Hamas representatives in Gaza held a meeting by candlelight to make it appear Israel was causing a power outage. "It was media manipulation at its best and worst," he said, "staging a power outage and lighting candles when it's broad daylight. Sometimes the media can be culpable of not checking things out."

There are foreign journalists in Israel "who don't take the proper measures to check out the validity of a story and to check out facts," he said. As a result, "Israel sometimes gets the short end of the stick."

Turning to the country's current political and diplomatic situation, Baker said the Olmert government is hoping to have the outlines of a deal in place by the end of 2008. "We're trying to bring this about, but the situation is challenging and difficult. We're hopeful, because the status quo is difficult."

No one in Israel has known peace in the country's 60-year-history but Israel is willing to take "painful steps" and assume "inherent risks," he said. "We know that. But for Israel to remain a Jewish state, territorial compromise will have to be made."

As to the settlements controversy, Israel, he said, is not establishing new ones or expropriating Palestinian land. "It has cancelled incentives to settlement growth, with the exception for settlements that will remain in Israel after a peace deal.

"Natural growth to accommodate a growing population will be permitted," he continued.

Baker made it clear territorial compromise would include giving up lightly populated outposts, not "densely populated" ones.

As for developments in the north, Israel is keeping a close eye on Syrian efforts to re-arm Hezbollah "in flagrant violation of UN Security Council resolution 1701 that ended the Lebanon war," he said.

"Israel expects the international community and the...UN forces on the ground to stem the tide of arms smuggling. That would be enforcing their own resolution," he said.

Canada understands Israel's challenges, diplomat says

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Canada has a keen appreciation of the problems Israel faces in confronting terrorism, says the new Canada desk officer at Israel's foreign ministry.

Carmela Shamir, the deputy director of the North American department, suggested earlier this month in an interview at the Israeli consulate, that Canada has a greater understanding of the difficulties because of its role in Afghanistan combating the forces of Islamic radicalism as personified by the Taliban.

"We see Canada working with democracies to fight radical Islam, just as we're doing in our backyard in the Gaza Strip," she said in a reference to Israel's ongoing conflict with Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Continued on page 17

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Shamir praises Canada's support of Israel

Continued from page 16

Shamir, who visited Ottawa and Toronto during her whirlwind five-day trip, her first to Canada, said Israel and Canada see eye to eye on major issues.

"We share similar understandings of global issues."

Calling Canada an ally and a "very important" country for Israel, Shamir described Israel's relationship with Canada as positive.

"Canada has expressed support for Israel in a clear, courageous manner," she said, referring to Canada's decision to boycott the Durban II anti-racism conference in 2009 and its support of Israel at a recent session of the United Nations Human Rights Council during which Israel's policies in the territories were condemned.

Shamir, a 38-year-old career diplomat who took over the Canada desk two months ago, added she is pleased with Canada's voting record at the United Nations.

Praising the Canadian government's overall attitude toward Israel, she noted, "This is clearly a very supportive government. It's very encouraging and helpful to Israel."

But she does not believe that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's support of Israel is a departure from traditional Canadian policy.

Canadian support for Israel is politically bipartisan, observed Shamir, who had lunch with members of the Canada-Israel Interparliamentary Group while in Ottawa.

Shamir, who was previously the deputy chief of mission at Israel's embassy in Belgium, said she hopes to strengthen bilateral relations through more mutual visits of Israeli and Canadian VIPs.

She brushed aside a recent comment by Canadian Foreign Minister Maxime Bernier expressing concern about Israel's military operations in the Gaza Strip, claiming it had no effect on Israel's bilateral relations with Canada.

In addition, she was unconcerned by the release of a Canadian army report that recently blamed Israel for the "preventable" death of a Canadian major who was killed while serving as a United Nations peacekeeper in southern Lebanon during the Second Lebanon War.

"This was a tragic and unfortunate incident and Israel has expressed its regrets. It has had no impact on relations with Canada." Shamir is pleased with Israel's commercial relations with Canada.

"We've reached $1.5 billion in the volume of trade. We've gone from about $1 billion to $1.5 billion in five years."

She said Israel's free trade agreement with Canada, signed in 1996, has had "a dramatic effect" on trade.

Israel is now looking to forge joint ventures with Canada in three fields in which Israel excels: biotechnology, information technology and environmental technology, she said.

Shamir, a mother of three married to a management consultant, explained her visit as a learning experience. "I'm here to get to know Canada and the Jewish community better."

Apart from meeting Canadian diplomats and parliamentarians, Shamir conferred with officials from the Canada-Israel Committee, UJA Federation and the Canadian Council for Israel Jewish Advocacy.

"It was too short a visit, unfortunately," she stated, saying she intends to visit Montreal on her next trip. "I was in and out of meeting rooms."

She leaves Canada with good impressions. "It's a welcoming society in all respects. And I have a very positive image of the Jewish community, which is extremely vibrant, reflective and supportive of Israel."

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Bialik launches a CD of Yiddish music

By ADI NEUBERGER
Special to The CJN

I could have sworn I heard the sentimental sighs of Tevye, Golde, Tzeitel and the whole gang from Anatevka, the Russian shtetl in *Fiddler on the Roof*, as Bialik Hebrew Day School students sang a sample of songs from their recently released CD of Yiddish music at its official launch earlier this month.

Even Yente would have been left speechless by the sweet voices serenading an audience of all ages who took part in a celebration of the centuries-old Jewish culture at Yiddish Night 2008 at Bialik.

The CD *Lomir Zingen* (*Let's Sing*) includes mostly well-known works, ranging from the hauntingly familiar melody of *Oyfn Pripetshik* (*On the Hearth*) to the more whimsically humorous *Hop Mayne Homentashen*, and that *Tum-Balalaika* tune we all seem to instinctively know.

The CD is the brainchild of Bialik vice-principal Anita Eckhaus, coming from her experience of hearing students in grades 3 through 8 singing in their classrooms during Yiddish lessons.

"As I wandered the halls listening to their beautiful voices, I thought this is so special that we must find a way to capture and preserve it," said Eckhaus, who also considers the CD the perfect way to pay tribute to Bialik Yiddish teacher, Anna Berman, who was poised to retire before the project's completion.

Bialik students in grades 4 and 5, together with soloists who came back from the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and other high schools, performed at the launch of the Yiddish music CD.

For the CD, Berman, with the assistance of Toronto-based Yiddish musician Lenka Lichtenberg, chose 33 songs she had taught students during her 26 years at Bialik.

Lichtenberg produced the CD and provided musical accompaniment, along with bassist Rachel Melas and clarinettist Kinneret Sagee, both members of the Yiddish band Lichtenberg fronts, Sisters of Sheynville.

Lichtenberg went from class to class in grades three through eight, deciding which students would sing which song. "Talk about a labour of love," Lichtenberg said. "The CD turned out even better than I expected, not only because of the sweet sound of their voices but also because they're soulful and full of heart when they sing these songs which they love so much."

Eric Stein, artistic director of the Ashkenaz Festival, one of the world's largest celebrations of Yiddish culture, attended the launch, which also included a Grade 7 performance of the play *Life in the Shteitl*. He called the singers' performance "heartwarming" and "impressive."

"I was very moved by the way they thoroughly captured the different aspects of Yiddish music and managed to involve as many students as possible," Stein said. "This is one more example of the extent to which Yiddish culture is still very much alive and thriving, even among the younger generation."

He added that Ashkenaz hopes to further strengthen its support for and dialogue with Bialik as the only Hebrew day school that teaches Yiddish as a language.

In addition to thanking numerous volunteers who contributed to the CD's creation, Eckhaus reminded the crowd that Yiddish, spoken as far back as the Middle Ages, is the language spoken by more Jews than any other single language in history.

"During the Holocaust, 75 per cent of the Yiddish-speaking world was annihilated," she said, adding that the CD is a testament to the resilience of Jewish culture and its ability to evolve over time.

"This is a dream come true," Berman said. More than a meaningful memento of her many years at Bialik, the CD is "a tremendously valuable resource for our students, as well as anyone interested in experiencing or learning about Yiddish through song."

She added that, more importantly, "*Lomir Zingen* is a living legacy – irrefutable evidence that Yiddish didn't disappear after the Holocaust."

To order the CD, call 416-783-3346. All proceeds from sales go to Bialik Hebrew day School.

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Zareinu principal wants every child to reach potential

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Just a few weeks after taking on the position of principal and clinical director of Zareinu Educational Centre, Mitchell Parker stops in the hallway to greet a student by name and chat briefly with him and a staff member.

It's still early in Parker's tenure, a transition that took place last month, nine months after the death of his predecessor, Carol Goldman. He says he has yet to learn the names of all 65 students and 85 staff.

Goldman, whom Parker met briefly on a visit to the school five years ago, "left a very strong legacy," he said in an interview.

"I'm trying to maintain Carol's legacy and trying to carry on the things that she so strongly began, but I'm also letting the staff know, and I have a mandate from the board as well… to bring the school to the next level."

A 58-year-old Toronto native who attended Associated Hebrew Schools and the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Parker left the city in 1972 to pursue a master's degree in education and then a PhD in educational psychology at the State University of New York in Buffalo.

His career includes a 10-year stint from 1993 to 2003 with Camp Ramah's Tikvah program for special needs children, of which he was founding director, and more recently as a psychologist and psycho-educational consultant in Detroit. As well, he co-ordinated a parent education program for the Florence Melton Adult Mini School, a Jewish adult education program.

As might be expected from the approximately two dozen published academic papers listed on Parker's CV, he wants to ensure that Zareinu's educational and therapeutic services are "empirically based" and "best practice."

As well, he said, "Ultimately, we want to have our own space.

"We're very cramped right now, and that's affecting our ability to provide the best-quality services." A twice-weekly early intervention program for parents and children, he noted as an example, is held in a classroom for older students. The room has to be rearranged, and the students have to go elsewhere while the program is on, he said.

Mitch Parker

Parker, the father of two adult children, has been involved with both Jewish education and special education for most of his career, but aside from his summers at Ramah, he said that working at Zareinu marks the first time both aspects have come together for him.

Shortly before he left Toronto, when Parker served as youth director at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue for a year, the idea of having special needs programs within Jewish day schools was "non-existent," he said. Even today, he added, programs like Zareinu's are "very few and far between."

Parker said his belief that "every child is entitled to have a quality education" is what drives him.

"I want to know that every child can learn and reach his potential. The sense of accomplishment that the kids and the parents have in every little step of progress that the kids make is extremely gratifying. It's part of what drives me to work with children."

Reflecting on advances in the field and in the Jewish community over the past 30 or 40 years, Parker said, "Now kids stay with their families [instead of being put in institutions], and we know that early intervention is a key piece of promoting potential. The idea of early intervention, intensive intervention, working with kids and seeing them improve is now much more a part of our culture."

The next step, he said, is to continue to make the education of kids with special needs part of the mainstream. "For rabbis and community leaders to see inclusion of people with special needs as one of their objectives I think is something we still have to work on."

At Zareinu, Parker aims to be "very hands-on… very approachable."

Despite his tie and jacket, he prefers an informal approach, he said. He doesn't mind getting on the floor with kids and getting his clothes dirty, and he prefers being on a first-name basis with staff and most of the students, he added.

From a practical standpoint, he noted, it's easier for younger kids to call him "Mitch."

His modest office has no diplomas on the wall – at least for now – but it boasts a collection of more than a dozen stuffed animals, including a parrot that repeats what is said to it.

Parker uses them therapeutically and diagnostically.

As well, he said, "They're fun to have. I wanted people to feel that [my office] is not an imposing place to be."

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Baycrest receives $10 million for project

Continued from page 3

"What the blood pressure cuff did for cardiac assessment in the 20th century, this tool – about the size of a laptop computer – has the potential to do for brain health in the 21st century," Baycrest said in a statement.

Dr. Jon Ween, medical director of Baycrest's Louis and Leah Posluns Stroke and Cognition Clinic, who developed the diagnostic tool, said he hopes it will be widely available in doctors offices in five years. "It allows early detection of cognitive impairment so patients have the benefit of [quick] intervention."

Dr. Donald Stuss, director of Baycrest's Rotman Research Institute, said that loss of memory is the No. 1 health concern for older people. "Through this centre, we will generate knowledge into new diagnostic tools.

"Our cognitive assessment will transform [lives.] If we cannot detect it, we cannot intervene," he said.

He said, however, that diagnosis is just one step. "Brain function is critical, and we will develop products to maintain and rehabilitate. Today's collective dream of making aging better is becoming our future."

Dr. Tony Melman, chair of Baycrest's board, said the Centre for Brain Fitness could save the Ontario health-care system an estimated $1 billion annually by delaying the institutionalization of one-third of dementia patients for one year.

He added that the grant to help create the centre will, in turn, help Ontario be a player in the "global brain fitness market," which is expected to reach $4 billion by 2010.

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TanenbaumCHAT opens its doors to She'arim students

School is the first for comprehensive community effort

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA FEDERATION

One of North America's most successful Jewish community high schools, TanenbaumCHAT, is stepping forward as part of a community effort to assist the students of She'arim.

Last month, the board of the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School decided that severe financial problems and declining enrolment would prevent the school, which serves children with learning disabilities, from continuing to operate next year. The board accepted the recommendation of a joint management committee composed of UJA Federation and She'arim representatives.

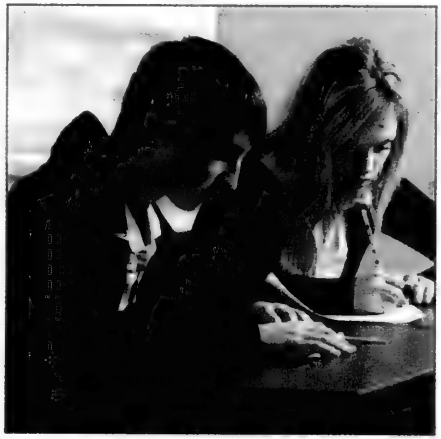
The TanenbaumCHAT (Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto) Wilmington Campus will be creating a specialized Grade 8 program next year for 18 students currently in Grade 7 at She'arim. TanenbaumCHAT expects 14 or 15 students to accept its offer. The program will be taught by appropriately qualified special education middle school teachers, who will report to Campus principal Helen Fox.

"We are delighted to offer these students this opportunity while at the same time, minimizing the disruption to their education," said Paul Shaviv, TanenbaumCHAT's director of education. "We hope that this program will prepare them for grade 9 at our school and we're looking forward to seeing these new faces on our Campus."

In order to accommodate the She'arim students, TanenbaumCHAT is transforming offices into classrooms and making other space alterations.

"TanenbaumCHAT has set a standard of excellence in North American Jewish education and this outstanding commitment to She'arim's children is another example of TanenbaumCHAT's educational leadership," said David Koschitzky, chair, UJA Federation.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is currently in discussions with other Jewish day schools to accommodate the remaining 34 She'arim students who are not graduating this year. A 16-member transition team has begun the process of reviewing the needs of every child at She'arim. In addition to facilitating the transition process, UJA Federation is committed to the successful conclusion of the school year for She'arim's students and assistance in She'arim's fundraising efforts to clear its mounting deficit.

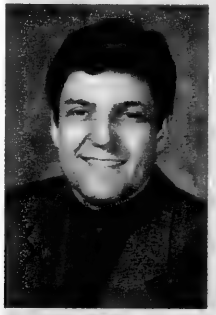


A new Grade 8 program for She'arim students at TanenbaumCHAT's Wilmington Campus will see an expected 15 new special education students on the Campus next year.

Special attention focused on She'arim's children

A place for every child to sensitively meet his or her unique needs. That's the goal of a 16-member team of specialists including community educators UJA Federation and its Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education – The Mercaz – which is working diligently to find a place for every She'arim student at a consortium of day schools. This intensive effort is being guided by consultant Sandra Giddens, one of the Toronto District School Board's top special education experts.

"In undertaking our task, we are very sensitive to the previous experiences of She'arim's students at other schools," said transition team member Debbie Gladstone. "Our objective is to place as many She'arim children as possible as a group at a few schools that will provide an appropriate, quality, caring, special education setting."



UJA Federation chair, David Koschitzky

Once She'arim's graduates this year are taken into account, there are 52 children for whom the transition team is finding a suitable school.

So far, signs are encouraging. TanenbaumCHAT is setting up a Grade 8 special education program at its Wilmington Campus for She'arim's 18 Grade 7 students. Up to 15 children are expected to enrol. It's the first time that TanenbaumCHAT, a Jewish community high school, has established a Grade 8 track.

"I take great pride in how many different schools have come forward to help us, as a community, handle this challenge," noted UJA Federation board chair David Koschitzky.

According to Koschitzky, the decision by the She'arim board to close the school next year at its BJCC location for financial reasons is understandably emotional – even heart wrenching – for She'arim students and their parents. However, he urged all concerned to move forward.

"Despite continued UJA Federation financial grants, the school board, faced with mounting debts and dramatically dropping enrolment, concluded that closing was the only feasible option," said Koschitzky. "Now it's time to look ahead for the sake of She'arim's children who have been and will always be our primary priority."

New community campaign spotlights importance of Jewish education

By HOWARD ENGLISH
UJA FEDERATION

Just in time for Passover, UJA Federation's Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education – The Mercaz – is launching a campaign to promote the value of Jewish education. It's called Get Centred, and it's designed to get parents thinking about the importance of Jewish education and the priority they place on it in their lives.

"The challenge," says Mercaz senior vice president Seymour Epstein, "is to get today's generation to prioritize the value of holding on to some of the past to preserve their existence in the future."

The Get Centred campaign will promote the value of Jewish education.

Currently, just over half of Jewish community members provide their children with some type of formal Jewish education whether it is a day school or a supplementary program, despite the fact that in the Greater Toronto Area there are 70 day schools and supplementary (after-school) programs to choose from that span the spectrum of Jewish ideologies.

Recent studies show that while the percentage of students enrolled in Jewish day schools has remained constant at around 34 percent, the number of actual students registered is down due to an overall population decline. Additionally, other studies have shown that many Toronto Jews are disconnected from their traditions and faith.

Get Centred is a video-based campaign that debunks some of the myths surrounding Jewish schools and touches parents' emotions with beautiful images of young modern-day children learning Jewish values, culture and religion.

While directed toward the Jewish community, the challenge of preserving culture and heritage is shared by many minority communities.

"The struggle between the older generation that wants to continue their cultural traditions and the younger generation that wants to be more Canadian is ongoing for most ethnic groups. Yet, there is significant evidence that these kinds of multiple belongings are positive for the individuals involved as well as Canada," says Professor Usha George, the dean of Ryerson University's Faculty of Community Services.

"We're taking an innovative approach to demonstrate the importance of passing Jewish values to a new generation," says Epstein.

More information on the Get Centred campaign is available from www.getcentred.com

The Mercaz is UJA Federation's educational pillar, dedicated to strengthening, enriching and promoting the quality of Jewish education.

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Iraqi Jews said to have a proud, difficult history

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Iraqi Jews, the oldest continuous Diaspora in the world, lived under difficult circumstances throughout their 2,700-year presence in the region, but have a history and a community that they can be proud of, said Diana Mingail, born to Iraqi Jewish parents.

Earlier this month, Mingail, once an editorial assistant at ORT Canada, a non-governmental education and training organization, was invited by the Iraqi Jewish Association to present a lecture titled "Abraham to Saddam – The Jews of Iraq" at the Sephardic Kehila Centre.

Mingail, who was born in Calcutta, India, but currently lives in Toronto, recalled the day when she found her father crying over a letter he received from the family he left behind in Baghdad.

"I said, 'Daddy, why are you crying?' He told me that this letter contained the news that the Jews of Baghdad were being raped and pillaged and murdered and looted and that this was the last letter from his family… He never found out what happened to his family," Mingail said, adding that her presentation about the "sometimes glorious and sometimes troubled history" of Iraqi Jews, which she had been preparing for a year, is a tribute to her family and her heritage.

She said Jews were in Iraq – then called Mesopotamia – about 2,500-2,700 years ago, and it is regarded as the birthplace of Abraham.

It wasn't until 1,200 years ago that Islam was introduced to the region.

When the Arabs invaded Iraq in the seventh century, many big changes occurred. But the biggest change of all was for the Jews, who were regarded as infidels, as inferior.

"They were forbidden to ride horses, … they were not permitted to drink wine or to bear arms and they had no legal status… They had to wear yellow patches and their turbans had to be a different colour from the Muslim turbans."

This carried on for six centuries. Conditions became even worse when there was a Mogul invasion in 1258, she said.

"They were a nomadic and barbaric people. They killed thousands of men, women, and children."

But when the Persians came into power for the third time in the 16th century for the following 2½ centuries, Jews enjoyed more freedom.

Living conditions for Jews remained stable when the Turkish Ottoman Empire began ruling the region in 1908, and Jews became Ottoman citizens.

"They were allowed autonomy and were no longer confined to ghetto neighbourhoods. They could serve in the law force and municipal councils," Mingail said.

But when the Turks became allies with Germany in 1916, Britain took over Iraq and ended Ottoman rule.

"Britain promised the Arabs who helped fight alongside them that they would be rewarded and they told the Jews through the Balfour Declaration in 1917 that they would establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine."

She said when King Faisal was appointed by the British to rule Iraq in 1921, the Jewish community continued to flourish.

"Under his rule, Jews lived in Baghdad, Basra, they spoke Arabic, and they lived in Jewish neighbourhoods."

During the British mandate from 1922 to 1932, Jews were allowed their own educational, social and economic autonomy. About a quarter of Baghdad's population was Jewish, she said.

"Jews were the educated elite."

In 1932, when King Faisal died, Iraq gained independence and Jews were persecuted again.

"They restricted Jews from travelling abroad, there were restrictions on acquiring higher education, Jews were no longer allowed to teach and [it was said] that Zionism was a crime. On the streets, Jews were murdered three or four at a time."

In 1942, Zionist emissaries came to train the Jews in self-defence and urged them to make aliyah to Palestine.

"At the start of World War II, the British had promised the Arabs that they would reward them for their help during the war, by restricting Jewish immigration to Palestine," Mingail said, adding that after the war, Britain used its boats and planes to keep Holocaust survivors away from Palestine.

She added that when the United Nations announced that they were in favour of establishing a Jewish state, the surrounding Arab countries began recruiting for war.

"How did they raise funds for this process? They forced the Jews in Iraq to pay, what they called, contribution and if the Jews refused, they were accused of Zionism, which was a crime."

She said that when Israel's first prime minister David Ben Gurion declared Israel as an independent state in 1948, the situation worsened for the Iraqi Jews.

"Jews were publicly executed and tortured, and raped. Jewish property was looted, businesses were destroyed… Zionism was punishable by death," Mingail said.

"Iraq forbade the Jews to leave and they said that if they wanted to go to Israel, they would have to pay them a 'deposit' guaranteeing their return – it was a bribe. Jews didn't dare refuse to pay."

She said that many Jews were smuggled into Iran where the Shah gave them silent consent to emigrate to Israel.

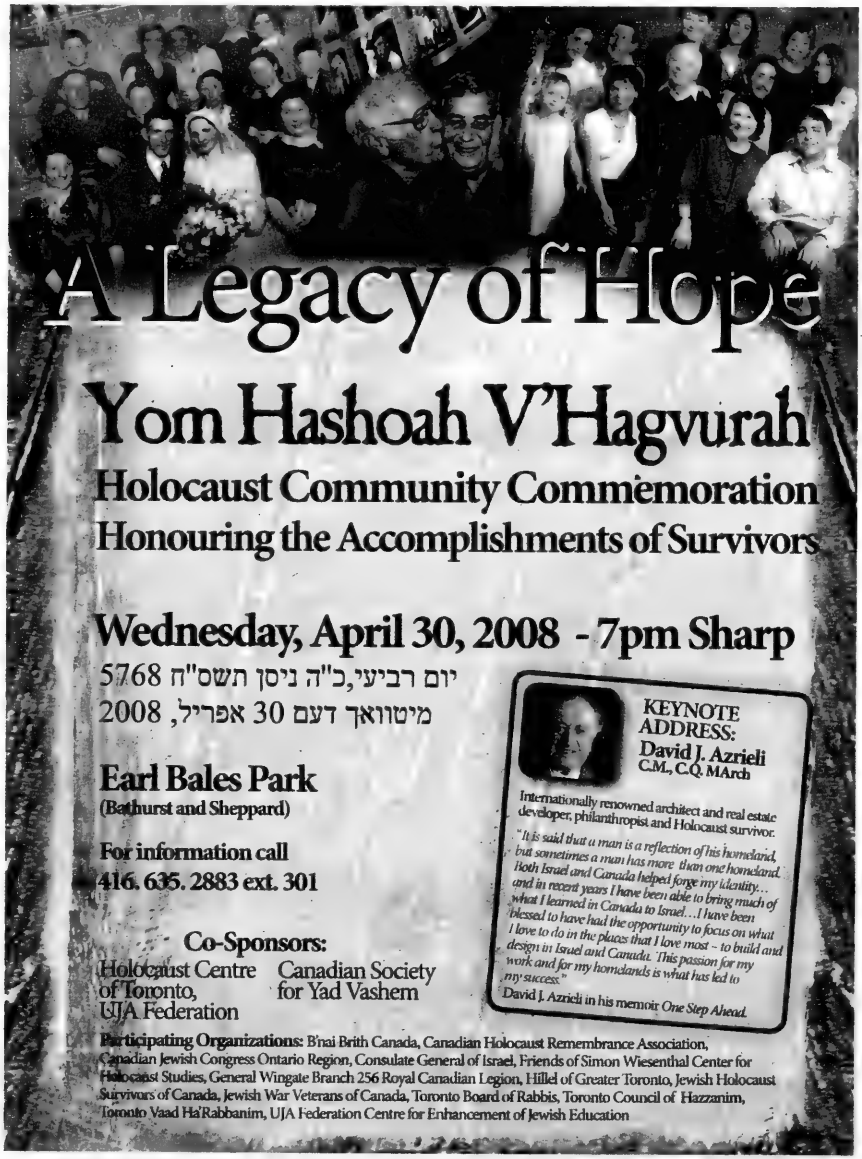
The Jews that left were forced to denounce their Iraqi citizenship and were forbidden from returning.

Between 1950 and 1952, Israel went forth with Operation Ezra and Nehemiah that airlifted more than 110,000 Iraqi Jews from Iran to Israel.

She said that in the early 1970s the rest of the Jews were quietly allowed to leave Iraq, but they had to leave everything they owned behind.

The estimated value of property left behind by Jews in Arab countries – including synagogues, community centres and private property – is about $30 billion, she said.

Today, only about 35 Jews remain.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"It is said that a man is a reflection of his homeland, but sometimes a man has more than one homeland. Both Israel and Canada helped forge my identity… and in recent years I have been able to bring much of what I learned in Canada to Israel…I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to focus on what I love to do in the places that I love most – to build and design in Israel and Canada. This passion for my work and for my homelands is what has led to my success."
David J. Azrieli in his memoir One Step Ahead.
Participating Organizations: B'nai Brith Canada, Canadian Holocaust Remembrance Association, Canadian Jewish Congress Ontario Region, Consulate General of Israel, Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, General Wingate Branch 256 Royal Canadian Legion, Hillel of Greater Toronto, Jewish Holocaust Survivors of Canada, Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Toronto Board of Rabbis, Toronto Council of Hazzanim, Toronto Vaad Ha'Rabbanim, UJA Federation Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education

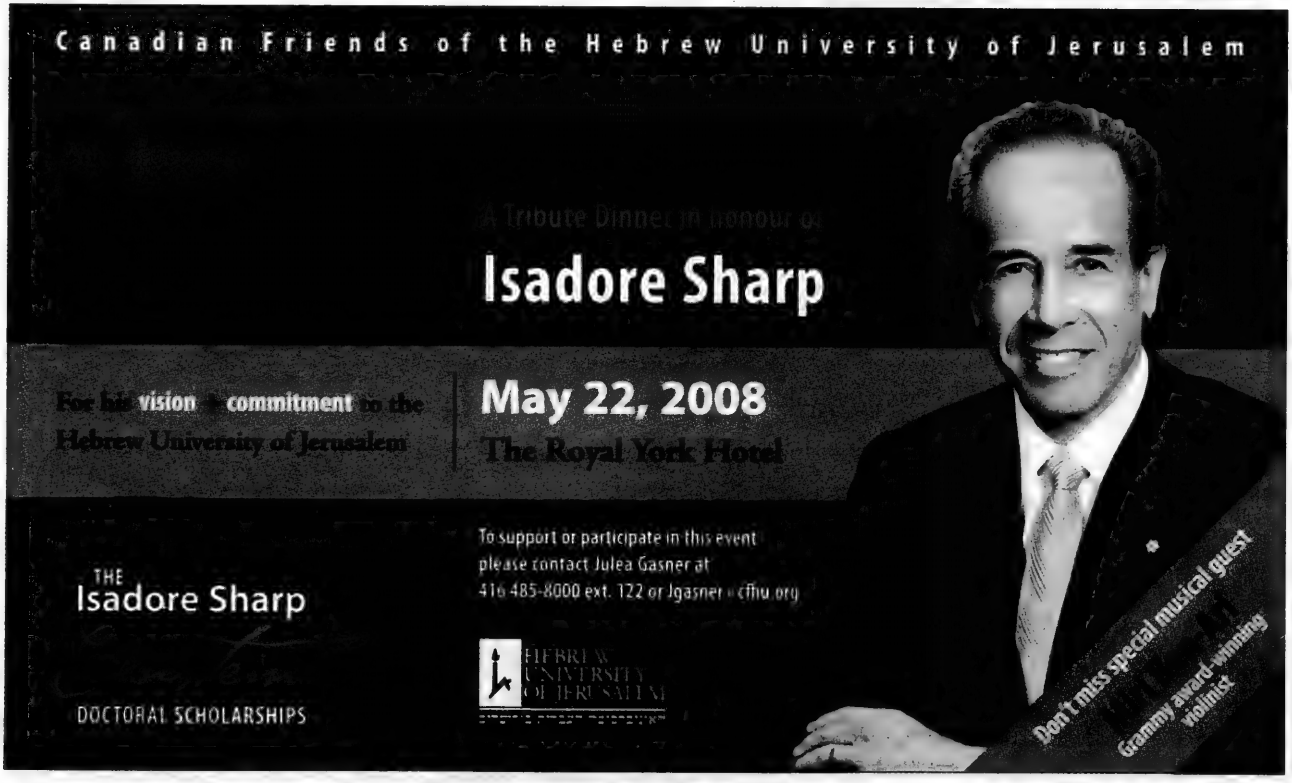
Preparing for Pesach

Talia Rochwerg, left, and Jesse Muller of Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns Education Centre packed boxes of Passover foods in a recent Passover food drive organized by the school's student council and Mitzvah Corps.

Grade 2 students Matthew Lax, left, and Jacob Greenberg demonstrate how to wash before making the blessing over the matzah at a recent model seder with parents and grandparents at United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tzedec campus.

Grade 2 students at Netivot HaTorah Day School – from left Maya D., Jordana, Noah, Erin and Maya S. – prepared for Pesach by creating their own unique seder tables, set with kiddush cups, wine bottles, matzot and seder plates. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

As in past years, Or Haemet was among the schools whose students volunteered to assist with the Passover Food Drive, which has been organized for 25 years by the National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section. Or Haemet grades 7 and 8 students collected food and helped pack it for families in need. Seen are Grade 7 students Chana Oziel, left, and Rivka Bensimon.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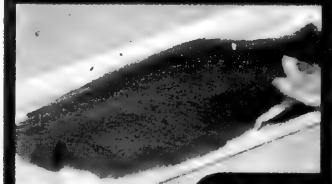

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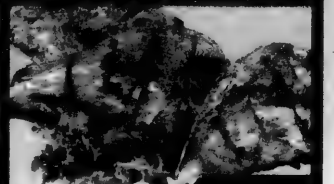

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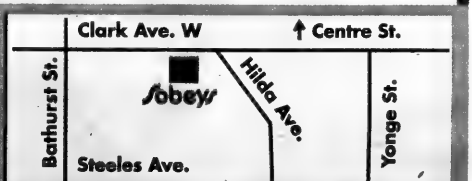

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USCJ wants Toronto shuls to stay in the fold

By PAUL KOCHBERG

The article "Conservative shuls move to secede from the USCJ" (CJN, April 3) was filled with inaccuracies and unanswered questions.

Although some congregations are debating their continued affiliation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), it is inaccurate and misleading to say they are moving to secede. It is not true that a number of Conservative congregations in Toronto and Montreal have voted to leave the USCJ over issues of egalitarianism and gay clergy. As of this writing, only the board of Adath Israel Congregation in Toronto has decided to disaffiliate. Two other area congregations, Shaar Shalom Synagogue and Beit Rayim Synagogue, have voted to continue their affiliation. The remaining Toronto congregations, either their boards or their membership, are considering their affiliation. No Montreal congregations have voted or plan to vote to leave the USCJ.

Guest Voice

It is important to understand why the issue of affiliation is being addressed now, and to do that, it is important to know something about the USCJ, the association that represents more than 700 Conservative synagogues in North America. The USCJ offers a wide range of services in the areas of formal and informal education, youth activities, leadership development, social action, and public policy, and it also has a home in Israel, the Fuchsberg Jerusalem Center.

It is the congregational organization within the Conservative movement, which includes the Rabbinical Assembly, the Jewish Theological Seminary, the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, the Cantors Assembly, the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs, Women's League for Conservative Judaism, the Camp Ramah system, the Jewish Educators Assembly, the North American Association of Synagogue Executives, Mercaz-Canada, Mercaz-USA and the Canadian Foundation for Masorti Judaism.

The UCSJ's primary source of financial support is synagogue dues. (That is true as well for the Union for Reform Judaism and other such organizations. Reform temples' dues generally are more than double those paid by UCSJ affiliates.) Each USCJ region retains a portion of the dues paid by its congregations, and the remainder is used to support the central organization.

In September 2006, a group of representatives from local Conservative affiliates began a series of deliberations, hoping to retain a larger portion of the dues locally. In May 2007, they began a series of negotiations with the USCJ's leadership, eventually facilitated by the dean of the University of Windsor's law school, and, after some unfortunate misunderstanding as to terms, they ultimately reached an agreement that addressed all the issues. None of the parties was entirely happy with it, but all signed off.

The UCSJ's understanding was that the negotiators, who all accepted the agreement, would promote it within their congregations. It was what they said they would do, but it appears that, while some did recommend ratification to their respective congregations, at least some actually recommended that their congregations reject it.

There is also much irony in the comments from the rabbis quoted in the story. Rabbi Steven Saltzman is paraphrased as having said that "Canadians are much more traditional than communities across the border, and the egalitarian movement in the United States includes women being part of the services, the ordination of gay and lesbian rabbis, and patrilineal descent."

The Conservative movement does not promote patrilineal descent. Rabbi Saltzman should have known that. *The CJN* should have known that, too.

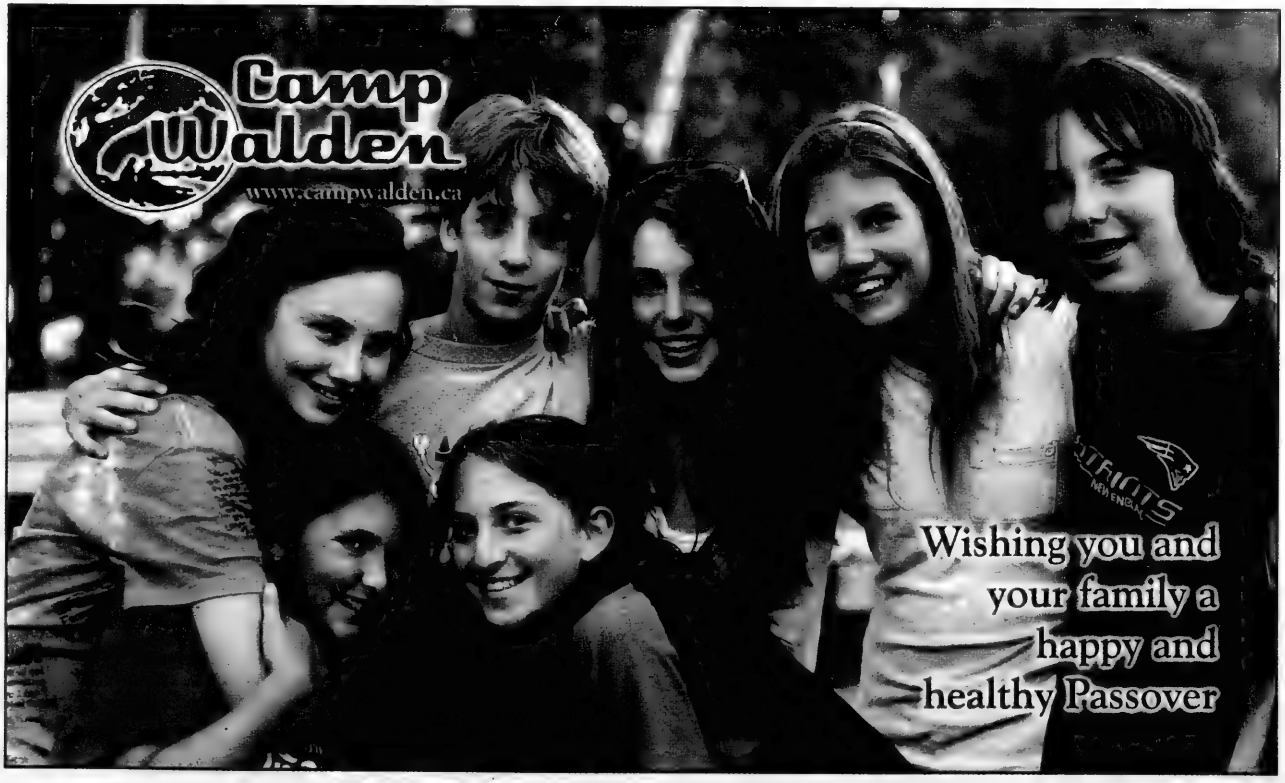
Furthermore, there is no one Canadian approach to observance. In fact, most Canadian Conservative congregations are egalitarian – there are egalitarian synagogues in Halifax, Ottawa, London, Edmonton, Calgary, Vancouver, and Victoria, among other places, including the Toronto area itself. There also are non-egalitarian synagogues in the United States. Canadian Conservative Jews are not different from their counterparts in the United States.

Moreover, what does the USCJ have to do with patrilineal descent, egalitarianism, gay marriage, or any other issues of practice? The Conservative movement's halachic direction is determined by the Rabbinical Assembly. The USCJ is a service organization. It does not dictate halachah. It does, however, stand proudly for religious pluralism. Within the boundaries of acceptable halachah, each congregation follows its rabbi's rulings. Each congregation finds its own level of observance. The movement is extremely inclusive. Only the most marginal of our congregations fall outside our broad boundaries.

Toronto-area synagogues must choose whether they wish to remain part of the mainstream Conservative movement, directly affiliated with its institutions, or if they wish to isolate themselves.

The USCJ's leaders are deeply saddened by Adath Israel's departure from the Conservative movement. We sincerely hope that the remainder of the Toronto congregations will ratify the agreement that their representatives negotiated. We hope and expect to continue to work together, helping our congregations grow and prosper.

Paul Kochberg is president of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Canadian region.



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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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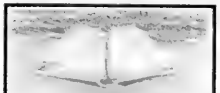
Jewish Life

We're wired to feel others' pain

By RABBI IRA EBBIN

In the rabbinic world, there are things known as "rabbinic perks."

While they might be few and far between, they come in handy every once in a while, especially when fighting a traffic ticket.



In the story of the Exodus, at the end of Parshat Vayigash, the Torah tells us that Pharaoh provided all clergy, Jewish and non-Jewish alike, with a "perk." While he taxed everyone under his auspices, the clergy, including the entire tribe of Levi, were given a special parsonage exemption, including an eventual immunity from enslavement.

Rabbi Yonatan Eibshitz (18th century Prague) asks an obvious question. Why would Pharaoh, one of the paradigms of anti-Semitism, grant freedom to the tribe of Levi? If Pharaoh's goal was to break the spirit of, and eventually eradicate, the Jewish people, why would he give this discharge to the Jewish clergy and specifically the tribe of Levi?

Rabbi Eibshitz explains that Pharaoh had an excellent political strategy. The Talmud tells us that Pharaoh's magicians and fortune tellers told him many details about the future saviour of the Jewish people. Included in these details was that this saviour would come from the tribe of Levi.

Pharaoh the sociologist made a brilliant calculation. He figured that if this potential saviour did not endure the same suffering and torture as his enslaved brethren, it would be impossible for him to muster the motivation and inspiration needed to start a rebellion. Pharaoh assumed that if he shielded this "saviour" from being enslaved, the potential rebellion had no chance for success.

Without "feeling the pain" and plight of the people, without ever having experienced the agony, suffering, and humiliation that the Jewish people were subjected to, this potential dissident would never rise to power. So Pharaoh excused the tribe of Levi from being enslaved in order to squelch the drive of this "saviour."

Pharaoh, however, was wrong. He failed to understand the makeup and sensitivity of a Jewish person. What Moshe, the greatest leader in our history, teaches us is that a Jewish person can reside in an affluent community on the other side of the world, and despite this still find the compassion and sensitivity for his "*acheynu kol Beit Yisrael*" on the other side of the globe. In spite of the opulence of Moshe's upbringing – the fact Moshe grew up in the luxury of the king's palace and did not endure the pains of slavery like his brothers – nonetheless he still heard their cries, and he still felt their pain. "*Vayigdal Moshe vayetze el-echav vayar besivlotam*" – the verse tells us that Moshe grew up (matured), then went out to his brothers and saw their suffering.

It's a phenomenon that can't be rationally explained, but the Jew always feels the plight of the impoverished. This is the concept of "*kol Yisrael areyvin zeh l'zeh.*" Each Jew is responsible for each other. If there is an issue that is affecting the Jewish people, or non-Jews alike, nothing in the world can impede our hearts from going out to them, and our hands from reaching out to them.

As we celebrate the holiday of Passover and the Festival of Freedom, we naturally remember those who are still fighting for their own exodus, whether it be on a national or personal level. When a cry goes out – whether in our neighbourhood, our homeland or anywhere else in the world – our ears are ingrained to hear it and respond eagerly.

With so much indigence and need out there, there is much work to be done. But whenever and wherever there is a shout for help, our people will stand up and shout back, "Hineini!" – "Here I am!"

Rabbi Ira Ebbin is spiritual leader of Montreal's Beth Zion Congregation.

Freedom requires morality

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

As we approach Pesach and muse about the benefits of liberty, it's worth considering the impact of current technology on our freedoms. With the advent of the Internet Age, access to information, and hence the construction of individual understandings separate from any official or authoritative perspectives, has enormous ramifications for education.

As British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks has forcefully articulated in *The Dignity of Difference*, contemporary information technology is the biggest leap forward since the printing press, and its effects may not be calculable for centuries. But if it resembles Johannes Gutenberg's invention of printing in the 1450s, we are in for quite a ride.

The last time around, religion itself was transformed, as Sacks writes: "No sooner had printing been developed, than Bibles started flying from the presses in the hundreds of thousands. In England alone, it has been estimated that more than a million Bibles and New Testaments were published between the Reformation and 1640… Nothing did more to challenge ecclesiastical authority than the fact that the Bible in vernacular translation was now readily available to large masses of people, who could read and debate its words in the privacy of their homes."

Such a revolution, but multiplied many times over, is currently underway and it cannot help but leave Judaism and all other religions changed in its wake. What happens when every Jew can access almost every text, in his or her native language, and no longer seek religious authorities to disseminate or "translate"– with all that such a word implies – the ideas contained in those texts? As with many other technological developments, this phenomenon carries mixed blessings. The ability to directly access information enhances intellectual and emotional freedom at the same time as it presents other risks.

To cite a different example, a recent issue of the medical journal *Pediatrics* published a study indicating that 42 per cent of a national sample of 1,500 Internet users aged 10 to 17 had been exposed to online pornography within the last year. Not surprisingly, there was a higher incidence of male users. Other surveys found the incidence of pornographic usage to be even higher. Ubiquitous outlets such as MySpace and Facebook further encourage the posting of risque poses and more. This too, is what freedom brings, and once the genie has left Egypt, no amount of free leeks or onions will place pornography or even more insidious "cultural expressions" back into the bottle of restricted availability.

None of this is, or should be, surprising to those who are involved in education on any level. I don't favour a return to information suppression, even if it were possible. The harder task, but the one that's key in the long run, is to be able to discuss what freedom really means and how best to use it.

An exodus from slavery does not necessarily represent freedom. As Rabbi Sacks writes elsewhere, a "free society must be a moral society," and such morality must be transcendent of shifting human whims. As Pharaoh learned and as we are still struggling to internalize, the divine presence is real and, ultimately, the only liberation.

Jewish Life

A novel about the Sarajevo Haggadah

***People of the Book* by Geraldine Brooks, Viking.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

Hanna Heath, the protagonist of this absorbing novel, is a young Australian manuscript conservator. She is invited by the National Museum of Bosnia to examine and restore, to the extent possible, a 14th-century Hebrew codex, famed as the Sarajevo Haggadah, before it is put on public display.

What is distinctive about this manuscript are its remarkable illustrations about the Exodus, as interpreted in the Midrash, as well as a black female figure who is seated with other participants at the seder table.

In her foreword to *People of the Book*, Geraldine Brooks says that how this unique Haggadah has survived over the centuries is a melding of miracle and mystery. It is known that it was rescued from destruction on at least three occasions – twice by Muslims and once by a Roman Catholic priest.

This is all the vital information the author has in constructing her fictional narrative that begins in Sarajevo in 1940 and then moves backward in time to late 19th-century Vienna and then to 15th-century Venice, and then to Catalonia during the Spanish Inquisition – and finally to Seville in 1480, where evidently the Haggadah was fashioned.

In her close examination of the Haggadah, Hanna discovers the fragment of an insect's wing, a flimsy strand of white hair, a drop of sea salt and what appears to be a stain of either wine or blood. In addition, there is a question of what happened to the ornamental clasps that once held the pages of the book together.

So we have a kind of detective plot in which from a few clues the author transports intrigued readers to the venues in which each of these assorted bits of information first saw the light of day.

The history of the book's preservation is bloody and brutal. One exciting episode concerns the experience of a teenage girl who escapes the Nazis in Sarajevo and is sheltered by a Muslim family.

The actual Haggadah contains a 1605 inscription from a Catholic censor who chose to save the Haggadah rather than to cast it into a pyre of condemned Hebrew books.

In effect, the traumatic history of the Haggadah is a saga of religious intolerance, yet it also contains examples of human compassion and friendship across the religious divide.

Every chapter concerned with the Haggadah alternates with one that concerns Hanna's varied emotions and personal concerns – including glimpses of her disastrous relationship with her neurosurgeon mother.

Who is the small, black woman at the seder? In Hanna's account, she turns out to be a Moorish artist employed by a Jewish scribe. "It seemed good to me to use the last of my fine brushes to do it, the last of those except for a single hair."

People of the Book is a result of extensive research and the author's interest is echoed by Hanna, who when she agrees to examine and conserve the manuscript, exclaims, "It never occurred to me not to take it. You don't say no to the chance to work on one of the rarest and most mysterious volumes in the world."

Brooks is a Pulitzer Prize winner for her novel *March*. She has worked as a newspaper correspondent in Bosnia and the Middle East. Her latest work will add considerably to her reputation.

Passover, kids and the web

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

"Why is it only on Passover night we never know how to do anything right? We don't eat our meals in the regular ways, the ways that we do on all other days."

Sound oddly familiar? That's an excerpt from Uncle Eli's Special-for-Kids Most Fun Ever Under-the-Table Passover Haggadah. **[tinyurl.com/ zxd9x]** And just one of the wonderful sites you can visit with your kids.

Let's start with the seder. Although this should be a marvellous experience, there's plenty of fidgeting time between reciting *Mah Nishtanah* and delivering the afikoman. Aish.com points out that "the whole aim was – and continues to be – to stimulate the kids to ask questions and get involved in the seder. The 'props' – be it the seder plate, or the cushions for leaning – are all there in order to arouse curiosity in our kids and get them asking questions." The site has some additional Games & Tips for the seder, including:

• The Why Game – Before Passover, children fill a basket with questions and answers about the holiday (e.g., say the plagues backward). Throughout the evening guests or family members are blindfolded and asked to choose a question. If they answer it correctly, they get a point, sweet, nut or small prize.

• Give Us A Clue – In this variation on charades, different verses from the Haggadah are written on pieces of paper. Participants randomly select a verse and without talking are challenged to act out the phrase. **[tinyurl.com/2bypz6]** The redoubtable Martha Stewart has more seder advice. **[tinyurl.com/2778zl]**

Need to keep the kids creative (and busy) while you're getting ready for the holiday? Here are a couple of sites worth checking out. Kids Domain Passover has craft suggestions (make your own seder plate, place mats and afikoman bag). **[tinyurl.com/3cb4lc]** The Disapora Yeshiva has an online colouring book that follows the entire seder in 15 panels. **[tinyurl.com/3bvccq]** Just download, print and colour. Torah Tots also has pages illustrating the story of Pesach and the Ten Plagues. **[tinyurl.com/ypefcc]**

One of my favourite Passover kids' sites is Nurit Reshef's From Pesach to Shavuot. In her Library, you can listen to stories in Hebrew and English, learn about the history of the holiday and create some silly holiday stories. **[tinyurl.com/6nkfyv]** When you get to the Playroom, try out the holiday Word Search, complete the on-screen jigsaw puzzle. And don't forget to play (and win) Passover Tic-Tac-Toe against the dumbest computer in the world. **[tinyurl.com/5qmygq]**

Since much time before Passover is spent in the kitchen, why not include your kids? Cookbook author Joan Nathan says that "when children help you cook for a holiday, they learn the meaning of that holiday." You can find her kid-friendly recipes for chocolate-covered matzos, charoset, apple and carrot kugel muffins and chocolate chip kisses. **[tinyurl.com/2m3pxb]** Speaking of food, if your child has a food sensitivity or is allergic to eggs, wheat or dairy, Passover can feel like an almost insurmountable challenge. Rivka Leah Schwartz has been there and has some advice. **[tinyurl.com/2dpxk3]**

Are your kids making their singing debut at this year's seder? They can brush up on their renditions of popular Passover tunes for kids **[tinyurl.com/5ygssz]** And they can sing along with instrumental versions of those songs at Classic Passover Tunes. **[tinyurl.com/32srr8]**

The Haggadah tells us how to remember the Exodus. You can also take a look at how Hollywood does it. You can find several clips from Dreamwork's *Prince of Egypt* online. **[tinyurl.com/6fn6qk]** But for the definitive word, watch the late actor Charlton Heston in a few scenes from *The Ten Commandments*. **[tinyurl.com/6365yb]**

By now your home should be pretty clean. But did you ever consider how much leaven might be living in your computer? One simple game encourages you to search for any chametz that may be hiding on your computer screen **[tinyurl.com/2v5ubg]** With a few deft clicks of the mouse, you are chametz-free. Once the kids have mastered that, have them try the more challenging Chametz Annihilation, in which they confront a piece of chametz that is trying very hard to evade eradication. **[tinyurl.com/3dcfnt]**

If only tracking down the real stuff were that easy!

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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YU president helps launch 'Toronto Partnership'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

According to Richard Joel, not only did he not expect to become president of Yeshiva University, but he was certain it wasn't possible, given that his predecessors have all been rabbis.

Before he became YU's fourth president in September 2003, Joel spent 15 years as president and international director of Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, where he was widely credited for bringing new life to the campus organization. He is also a former YU faculty member and parent.

A genial New Yorker who still describes himself as "a recovering lawyer," Joel was in Toronto last week as keynote speaker for the launch of YU's new "Toronto Partnership."

More than 500 people attended the sold-out April 7 event, which honoured Joseph and Cheryl Greenbaum, John and Lori Ulmer and the late Bill Rubinstein. The dinner, which was held at Copper Creek Golf Club in Kleinburg, raised approximately $3.2 million for the project.

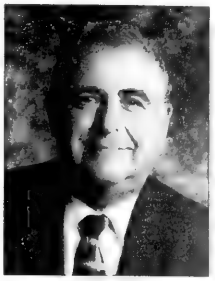
Toronto's partnership with YU and its Center for the Jewish Future will have educational, professional, spiritual and social components.

It's an effort both to strengthen YU's philosophy here and to make the community more appealing to young religious Zionist couples, said Mo Lidsky, national director of Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University, citing focus groups the organization conducted last summer.

As part of the project, the organization plans to bring in nine young couples, all "highly educated and committed to the Jewish community" from the university and from Israel in August 2009. They will serve as staff members for three or four years, spending time in local schools and institutions.

In a separate interview, Joel added, "As a major training institution for rabbinic leadership and educational leadership, we have a responsibility to be of as much help and partnership with the institutions of Toronto as we can be."

The school also gains because the result will be more potential students, he said. "By having that happen, our world goes on."


Richard Joel

Yeshiva University – a 122-year-old institution commonly described as the flagship of modern Orthodoxy for its combination of Torah and secular studies – currently has about 220 Canadian students, 120 of whom are from Toronto. Its secular studies include medicine, law, social work and the liberal arts.

But Lidsky, like Joel, shies away from the term "modern Orthodox." In a similar vein to Joel, Lidsky explained that he doesn't want to jeopardize YU's welcoming of people "to the right or to the left of where they perceive Yeshiva University to be."

He added that the school, which has an almost $700 million annual budget and 7,000 students on four campuses, stands for core values that include dedication to Jewish learning for men and women, commitment to Jewish tradition and Israel, communal leadership for women and men, higher education, and engagement with the modern world.

In the context of what is sometimes referred to as the "haredization" of Orthodox Judaism, Joel said that one of the school's goals is "to very proudly and non-defensively talk about an aspiration to…: an integrated life, involved in the world, [and] based on the primacy of Torah. That's really what we stand for.

"But coupled with that is a sense of Yeshiva also being a big tent, that… all serious Jews who are equally committed to the world of Halachah, are welcome at Yeshiva without having to swear fealty to the particular drive of Yeshiva University."

He said he understands and respects why people create more insular communities to protect their children and the Torah from "corrupt and corrupting" influences, but he does not agree with that philosophy.

"I think our Jewishness is flavoured by that encounter [with the outside world], and as long as it's girded by a deep commitment to Torah, we get richer for it… The challenge has always been how to be a part of the world even as we are apart from the world."

In a talk to students at Yeshivat Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot the same day as the dinner, Joel was challenged by a student who asked how he reconciles the centrality of Torah with the pluralistic approach that characterized his years at Hillel.

Joel told *The CJN* he believes that it's beneficial and healthy to dialogue with non-Orthodox Jewish leaders, and he does so both informally and on public panels.

However, he added, there are issues he won't address in such dialogue, such as "doctrinal challenges.

"But I do believe there are things we share – [such as] a commitment to Jewish peoplehood, a commitment to Jewish education, and the safety and security of the State of Israel."

He defined pluralism to the students as being "prepared to respect your right to be wrong, not your right to have another truth… I'm going to have respect for your dignity, and I can find the sparks of godliness in you."

He told *The CJN* that it's easier for him as a Jewish "layman" – a non-rabbi – to engage in such dialogue.

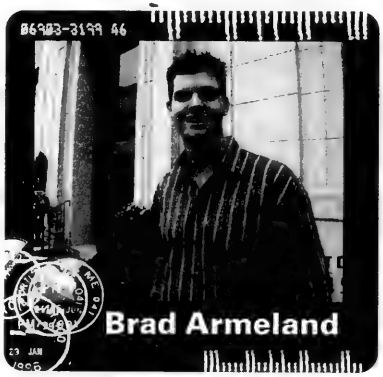
"I'm careful in what I say, [but] probably not as careful as some people want."

MASA Israel Representative in Canada

Now that Brad has returned to Windsor, Ontario from a year of volunteering on a post-college MASA program in Israel, he is getting involved with both Jewish youth and adult groups. He enjoys speaking about "how important it is to support and visit Israel and learn about its history and culture." Brad believes that "all of our efforts towards the upkeep of Israel as a safe and vibrant country demonstrate that we are truly one people."

Brad is just one of thousands of MASA participants. MASA offers over 150 programs, including a year in Israel after high school, a semester abroad during college, and post-college community service and resume building internships.

At a time when many Jewish young adults are alienated from Israel, it's encouraging to know that MASA participants like Brad return to their campuses and communities with a vibrant, enduring connection to Israel and a strong desire to serve as Israel ambassadors to Canada.



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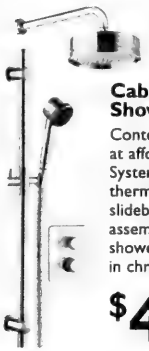

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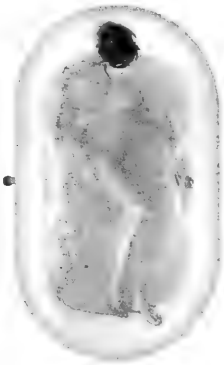

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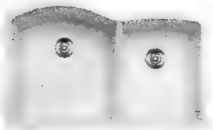

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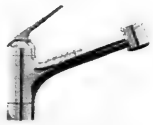

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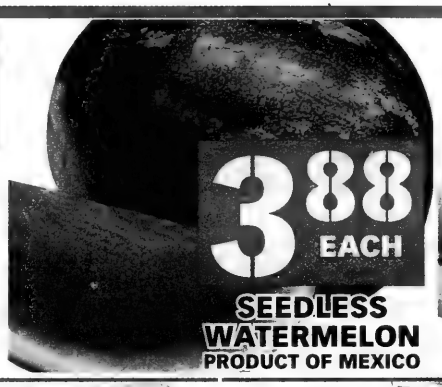

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Winnipeg Jewish day school adopts uniforms

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Come September, students attending the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education's Gray Academy will all be wearing uniforms.

"I think it's wonderful that students will have to wear uniforms," said Becky Dveris, whose daughter, Shira, will be going into Grade 7 at the school, which serves children from junior kindergarten to Grade 12. "The uniforms will take the students' focus off what they are wearing and put it on their school work, where it should be.

"It will also be a good safety measure, in that staff will know who is supposed to be in the school and who isn't."

The issue of school uniforms was previously considered 10 years ago, when Gray Academy – formed by a merger of four predecessor schools – opened at the brand new Asper Jewish Community Campus.

"At that time, a majority of parents thought that school uniforms would be too elitist, even though our school was among the top schools in the city," said Faith Kaplan, the head of the school uniform implementation committee.

Gray Academy reverses decision made 10 years ago

There are several new factors in the equation now, she notes. First of all, there are a lot more foreign-born students in the school than there were 10 years ago. Foreign-born students comprise 15 per cent of the student body, Kaplan said, and they come with a different attitude to school uniforms.

There is also a larger economic gap among the students from wealthier homes and other students, and uniforms camouflage the economic disparity, she said.

As well, the school has also been accredited nationally as one of the top independent schools in Winnipeg, and some parents believe that uniforms promote more self-discipline among students, Kaplan noted.

Finally, Kaplan said that uniforms ensure proper dress for the study of Torah.

"We are a Jewish school," she said.

Kaplan herself got the ball rolling on the school uniform issue a couple of years ago when she was serving as president of Winnipeg's Board of Jewish Education.

"The proposal came out of a strategic planning session," she said. "Myself and three other board members formed a sub-committee to study the issue. After much discussion, the board approved our recommendation."

Another committee was subsequently formed to design the uniform, source a supplier and write the rules. That committee was made up of 34 parents, staff and students.

"We wanted a uniform that was simple, easy to wash and comfortable for the kids," Kaplan said.

The uniforms that the BJE chose differ slightly for the elementary and high school levels. The high school uniform consists of grey pants, white shirt, navy overtop and black shoes or runners. Girls will have the option of wearing a plaid kilt or trousers. Elementary school girls have the option of wearing a grey kilt or "skort" (a skirt and shorts combination) or shorts.

The high school uniforms, Kaplan said, will be made of finer fabric than the elementary uniforms.

As for the cost of the uniforms, Kaplan said parents will save money that they might otherwise have spent on other clothing for their children.

"We have tried to keep the costs reasonable," she said. "We decided against requiring ties and blazers, for example, because of the cost. And we have set up a fund to help families who may be hard-pressed financially with the cost of the uniform."

Kaplan expressed excitement about the change. "I believe that the uniforms will be good for the school. I believe that they will help with retention and create a stronger sense of community."

Gray Academy students, from left, Morgan Shalom, Haley Yurman, Cassie Ackerman, Sarah Sommer and Sari Waldman modelled new school uniforms at the 100th Anniversary of Jewish Education in Winnipeg Gala on March 30.

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FENCE DEMO: Local Alpha Epsilon Pi president Jonathan Telch, right, speaks with a passerby at Carleton University April 3 at a mock Israeli security fence the fraternity erected in response to recent anti-Israel demonstrations on campus. One side of the 15-foot long fence displayed pictures of Israeli terror victims, while the other showed the faces of terrorists.
[Dave Goldberger photo]

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במסע הכפשה אנונימי תואר השיר כ"דבר תועבה", והורים דרשו את הדפטרתו מניהול, כי שיירתו מעידה שאין הוא דמות מתאימה לחנך את ילדיהם. לאחר "התלבטות עמוקה" שנמשכה ימים ספורים הודיע בית הספר שהמנהל יפרוש מתפקידו בסוף השנה. כלומר-עד או הוא לא סיכון ממש לנפשם של הילדים, אלא רק אחר כך....

הפרשה הזאת תעוזה אותי לצריכה לזעוק כל מי מיכם שאכפת לו מדמות האדם ודמות היהודי בקהילה שלנו.

ממה פחדו ההורים המשמיציכם? מזה שיש להם מנהל שמדבר בשירתו על יחסים אינטימיים? יתכן שהם פוחדים מזה שילדיהם ידעו שאנשים מבוגרים אמורים ליהנות מיחסי מין ? יש עדיין ילדים שנאמינים שהוריהם קיימו יחסים רק פעם אחת בחיים כדי שהם יולדו. אני לא מקנא בהשקפת העולם של ילדים כאלה, ואני מאוד מקווה שיתפתחו נורמאלית למרות הוריהם.

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יד על הלב: אם המנהל היה זוכה בפרס נובל על שיריו-היה בית הספר הראשון להשתמש בפרסומו לצרכי גיוס כספים, והילדים היו לומדים עליו וכותבים חיבורים "למה התכוון המשורר".

אני מקווה בכל ליבי שהמנהל שפניו הולבנו ברבים, יתנב את בית הספר ויזכה במיליוני דולארים על רצח אופי זדוני. אבל שישאר בינינו.

חג הפסח והאנטישמיות החדשה

חג הפסח בא להזכיר לכולנו את היציאה מעבדות לחירות. עבדות איננה רק מידי פרעה במצריים, עבדות היא גם שיעבוד אישי לחומרנות, לדיפה אחרי עוד ועוד. רגע האמת של החומרניות של כולנו הוא, למשל, כשאנחנו עוברים בית ומגלים את אלפי הצ'אצ'קאלאך שאספנו ברבות השנים בלי שאנחנו ממש צריכים אותם, וברוב המקרים אין לנו אפילו למי לתת אותם.

רבים מאנשי הקהילה היהודית ככלל, והישראלית בתוכם, חיים בצורה ראוותנית ומנקרת עיניים. נוכו ריש במיטבו. חג הפסח צריך להיות מוקדש גם לערך החשוב של צניעות.

האם עד לשנים האחרונות דיברו מוסלמים קיצוניים על השמדת ישראל בלבד, הרי שעכשיו מצהיר אל קעידה בריש גלי על כוונתו לפגוע ביהודים באשר הם שם, גם אם אינם ישראלים, וגם אם, למשל, אין הם תומכים בישראל.

אנו שרים בליל הסדר: "בכל דור ודור קמו עלינו לכלותינו, והקב"ה מצילנו מידם". רק להזכיר שהאל עזר למי שעזר לעצמו. אבל שישאר בינינו.

Caramel

הסרט הלבנוני "קאראמל" נתן לנו כישראלים הזדמנות נדירה להציץ לבידוד של ימינו, לחייה של קבוצת נשים נוצריות שעובדות במספרה בביאון טיאן, על אתגוותיהן, צרותיהן ושמחותיהן.

המסקנה הכמעט לא מפתיעה- כמה שזה דומה לתל אביב, לטוב ולרע, על האחים האנושי, על המילה שאיננה מילה, על הבאלאגן ועל הזקוקה לאושר. בסופו של דבר-זהו סרט אופטימי שנוצר על ידי אישה. אין ספק שאם העולם הערבי שמקיף את ישראל היה נוצרי ברובו-השלום היה חוגג במזרח התיכון זה זמן רב. אבל שישאר בינינו.

Fredericton businessman was a renowned fundraiser

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — When Harry Levine died in Fredericton on April 1, the community, Jewish and non-Jewish, lost a man who would never take no for an answer, who always had a charitable ticket in his pocket and who generated thousands and thousands of dollars for community projects.

Obituary

Harry Levine

A long-time Rotarian, the retail giant always said, "Charity is part of my life. What better goal could a person have?"

He was renowned for his efforts on behalf of the Dr. Everett Chalmers Hospital, Rotary Camp for physically challenged youth, the YMCA and the Salvation Army, as well as for chairing United Israel Appeal, United Jewish Appeal and Israel Bonds drives on many occasions. He was a major influence on the renovation and enlargement of the Sgoolai Israel Synagogue, both in spearheading the fundraising and overseeing the expansion.

Levine, 89, operated Levine's Department Store in downtown Fredericton for more than 50 years, finally closing it in 1990. A major fire destroyed it in 1974, but Levine refused to give up, rebuilding it again into a major part of downtown.

His business associates became part of his family. Daughter Rhona (Allen) Ruben of Toronto said he understood the importance of recognizing and working with each person's strength.

"Everyone wanted to do business with him," she said. "He was always fair. And he always empowered his employees, celebrated their successes with them, and recognized when they needed help. They knew they could go to him when they had problems."

She said he would help people in the Jewish community and beyond. "He loved people and liked to help them."

Rhona's daughter, Allana, said that her grandfather was a "builder. He saw the community as one. He did not separate it into Jew and gentile. He saw communities giving to each other."

She noted how her grandfather called members of the Jewish community each week to generate minyanim for Friday night and Saturday, and how he took an interest in youth by starting a Safe Grad program at Fredericton High School for teens to celebrate their graduations in safe, non-drinking environments.

His dedication to his family and the community around him made Levine an icon in Fredericton.

"He loved music, loved to dance, was always the life of a party," recalled son Ivan of Fredericton, who, along with Rhona and Harry's four grandchildren, eulogized him at a packed memorial service at McAdams Funeral Home in Fredericton.

"He had a profound love for all of us," Allana said of the family. "For the grandchildren, he modelled leadership, and showed us how to have a love for people. When he died, all we heard from people at the ceremony and at the shivah house was how everyone loved him and he loved everyone."

Levine served as president of B'nai Brith, Sgoolai Israel Synagogue and the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce. Among his awards and recognitions, he was one of the first recipients of the Fredericton Distinguished Citizens Award, the Governor General's Award for Volunteering, and the Fredericton Chamber of Commerce Business of the Year Award. Rotary twice honoured him with the distinguished Paul Harris Fellowship Award, in recognition of a lifetime of service to the Fredericton community.

Michael Hines, president of the Rotary Club of Fredericton, recalled Levine once sold 400 tickets at $100 each to help fund the Rotary Camp.

ACTION PARTY: The Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC) held its annual Action Party on April 3 at Toronto's Manyata Courtyard Café. The event – meant to encourage young people to become involved in the political process and support Israel – attracted over 500 young professionals and more than 20 elected officials and candidates. From left are Shlomo Buzaglo, Action Party co-chair; Debbie Osiel; Finance Minister Jim Flaherty; and Deena Granot. [Adrian Holmes photo]

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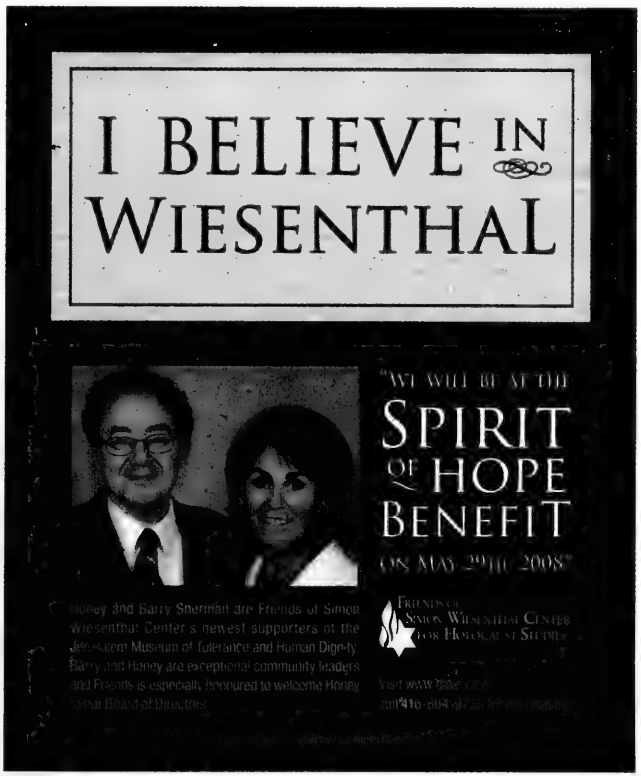

Protesters storm Israeli ambassador's speech

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A shaken Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker said he was thankful that the raucous demonstrators who forced their way into a luncheon that he was addressing at Montreal's Queen Elizabeth Hotel were not armed.

"Thank God none of them was carrying any weapons, which may be due to Canada's gun laws. Otherwise, things could have been far more serious," he said at a press conference after the incident.

"It's regrettable they found their way up to the hall," Baker said, but he stopped short of directly criticizing the police or hotel. "I'm a diplomat. I'm sure the people responsible will look into this." No arrests were made.

Baker was the guest speaker at an event organized by the Montreal Council on Foreign Relations, a non-profit, non-partisan private group, in co-operation with Montreal's Federation CJA and the Quebec-Israel Committee, and a number of businesses.

In the middle of Baker's address on Canada-Israel relations over the past 60 years, a group of about 25 young people suddenly burst through the hall's closed doors, loudly denouncing Israel "apartheid" and "war crimes" against Palestinians and the killing of Lebanese civilians, and showering the back of the room with coloured bits of paper calling for a boycott of Israel.

They would have had to go up two flights to reach the hotel's convention floor. There was little visible security at the event's outset, and few were evident after the melée broke out.

It was noise and confusion for several minutes as the protesters appeared to have free rein. The approximately 120 guests, some of whom had spent up to $650 a table to attend, looked on in astonishment.

A few members of the audience stepped in, trying to push and even tackle the protesters.

None of the demonstrators got anywhere near Baker, who travels with an undercover RCMP officer, and no one was apparently hurt.

Once they were chased outside the room and the doors locked behind them, the protesters continued shouting loudly for several more minutes.

Baker resumed speaking nevertheless, and received a standing ovation encouraging him to go on, despite the cacophony. He called the disruption a "denial of democracy and the basic norms of society."

Alan Baker

Baker said the charge of apartheid against Israel is "curious and strange" because Arabs and Muslims in Israel can vote freely and become parliamentarians, supreme court justices and ambassadors. "But Jews cannot even own property in [Arab states] and aren't even allowed into Saudi Arabia."

He then carried on with his prepared speech.

The protesters didn't identify themselves, but a local group called Tadamon (Arabic for solidarity) issued a press release stating that Baker's address was targeted to mark the 60th anniversary of "Israel's massacre" at the Palestinian village of Deir Yassin. Tadamon actively promotes an economic and academic boycott of Israel, and the removal of Hezbollah from Canada's terrorist list.

A megaphone left behind at the scene had "QPIRG Concordia" and a university phone number written on it. Tadamon has organized events at Concordia University with the Quebec Public Interest Research Group, a recognized campus organization that supports the pro-Palestinian International Solidarity Movement.

Montreal Police spokesperson André Leclerc told *The CJN* that officers were parked outside the hotel in case of a street demonstration. Security inside the hotel was the responsibility of the hotel and the ambassador's personal safety is the responsibility of the RCMP officers who escort him.

The police were called about the inside protest, but Leclerc said by the time they arrived, the protesters had already left. No arrests were made, because no charges were brought by anyone.

The council's president and CEO, Pierre Lemonde, said afterward that he had been told that the Montreal police had known beforehand that a demonstration would take place and advised the hotel. He said he was told that three police officers would be on duty, and that the hotel had said it would station its own security personnel at all entrances.

There was no demonstration outside the hotel before the lunch began, except by two older men who quietly held placards denouncing Israeli "apartheid" at the building's main entrance on René Lévesque Boulevard.

In his prepared remarks, Baker spoke of the strong economic, cultural and increasingly military and security ties between Canada and Israel. However, he said he feels that the free-trade agreement that came into effect in 1997 has been under-utilized, even though the Israeli economy has been hot for the past seven or eight years.

He emphasized his hope for stronger ties between Israel and Quebec in particular. A wide-ranging agreement between the province and Israel on cooperation in trade, research and other areas, signed in December at the National Assembly, is being finalized, Baker said, and he hopes provincial Economic Development Minister Raymond Bachand will soon visit Israel for its ratification.

"I discussed the agreement with Premier Jean Charest a few weeks ago and he said he was very satisfied with it," Baker said, adding there are plans to open a Montreal office of the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce.

Canada is a valuable liaison between Israel and certain Arab countries neighbouring Israel, Baker said.

"Our two prime ministers often discuss matters that we want transferred to the Lebanese or Syrians or others," he said, adding that Israel hopes to at some point make peace with those two countries.

He thanked the government of Canada for changing its policy at the United Nations and its bodies and voting against one-sided anti-Israel resolutions. "It started changing its voting practices not because it is more supportive of Israel, but because of its belief in the important role the UN can play in the international community, and that it should not be making an utter fool of itself making inane resolutions."

BAGEL WORLD

Happy Passover to all our Customers and Friends

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BUDDING SCIENTISTS: Bialik Hebrew Day School Grade 7 students – from left, Joely Pulver, Evan Strom, Mia Kibel and Amanda Tittel – proudly show off their project at their school's recent science fair. The senior division students had to follow the scientific method in their investigations, starting with a hypothesis and concluding with results.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlysimchas.com will appear as space permits.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., #205 North York, ON. M3B 3K4

or email to:
cblackman@cjnews.com

Adele & Szol Henkowicz, Linda & Wayne Wertheim, Diane & Howard Fine happily announce the engagement of their children Dana & Brandon.

Happy 13th birthday Joshua on April 23. This is an exciting time in your life. Love, Mom, Dad & Rebekah.

Happy birthday and mazel tov, Jude, on marking your 50th by running the Boston Marathon. Love mom, Vera, Russ, Cory, Kristin, Jamie and Kailee.

Mazel tov Maurice Moss, Avril Moss and Marianne Reti on the engagement of Susanne Reti & Keith Moss. Grandparents Lily Friedman, Iris Moss, Anne & Cyril Levine.

Syndie & Roni are engaged. Mazel tov! Parents Barb & Michael Nudelman, David Singer & Carol Kingdon, Gloria & Yacov Gordon, bubbies Ethel Segal and Minnie Solomon.

As featured on
onlysimchas!
Celebrating Jewish Life
www.onlysimchas.com

Mazel Tov to David & Kaitlin Roberson on the birth of Eitan Adi.

Mazel tov to Gedalyah & Rifky Shatz on the birth of Tova Elana.

Mazel tov on the engagement of Devora Oserrof & Benji Pariente.

Mazel tov on the birth of Chaya Mushka, born to Mordechai & Rochel Nemtzov.

Mazel tov to Yishai & Geula Feldman on the brit milah of Yaggel Yitzchak, on 3 Nisan.

PASSOVER GREETINGS FROM SAL DI MEGLIO, PAT KINGSTON & FAMILY

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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WHAT'S NEW DEADLINES: Friday, April 18, is the deadline for the May 1 issue; Tuesday, April 29, is the deadline for the May 8 issue; and Monday, May 5, is the deadline for the May 15 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Friday, April 18

BURNING YOUR CHAMETZ

The Beth Radom Congregation invites everyone to join in a communal burning of the chametz in our synagogue parking lot after morning services and *siyum b'chorim*. Bring your raw shankbones to roast for your seder plate. 416-636-3451

Sunday, April 20

VE'AHAVTA SEDER

Ve'ahavta invites the community to the ninth annual Passover: "A Modern Day Road to Freedom." Guests will participate in a warm, spiritual evening full of good food, laughter and learning. 6 p.m. at Congregation Habonim, 5 Glen Park Ave. To register, contact **Katie**, 416-964-7698, ext. 20.

Tuesday, April 22

SUNSHINE ON SPADINA

Bill Gladstone, journalist and genealogist, presents a slide-lecture titled "Sunshine on Spadina" at Holy Blossom Temple. Learn about the early history of Spadina Avenue in Toronto. All are welcome. No charge. 7:30 p.m. For information, call **Anne** at 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

Wednesday, April 23

COTLER SPEAKS

Irwin Cotler, Canada's former minister of justice and attorney general and a leading authority on international law and human rights, speaks on "The Law and Human Rights: 21st Century Challenges" at a business lunch lecture sponsored by the Speakers Action Group and the Canadian Jewish Civil Rights Association. Noon in the offices of Blaney McMurtry LLP, 2 Queen St. E., Suite 1500. $20. Reservation required, 416-449 6484.

WRITING YOUR STORY

Darchei Noam Congregation holds their monthly Lunch and Learn Series with guest speaker **John Freund** on "Writing Your Story." Freund, a war orphan when he arrived in Canada as a Holocaust survivor, has written many of his own stories. In this interactive session, he will share the joy of documenting memories as means of creating a meaningful legacy for your family. Bring a brown bag lunch; beverages and cookies provided. 12-2 p.m. Free. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca.

JEWISH JOKERS GROUP

The Jewish Jokers, Humour and Trivia Group meet at 7 p.m. at the Antibes Community Centre. All ages welcome. $3. Call **Irv Helpert** for info, 416-661-2541.

SUPPORT GROUP

Parents or relatives of a lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBT) person meet and discuss the new directions in their lives. 7:30 p.m. at Beth David Synagogue. Info, **Noreen**, 416-633-5500.

POMEGRANATE GUILD

Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles holds its monthly meeting at 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. The guild brings together people who are interested in studying and creating textile art and needlework based on Jewish themes. People of all ages and skill levels, from professional artist to novice stitcher, are welcome to attend. Members free, guests $5. www.pomegranateguild.ca

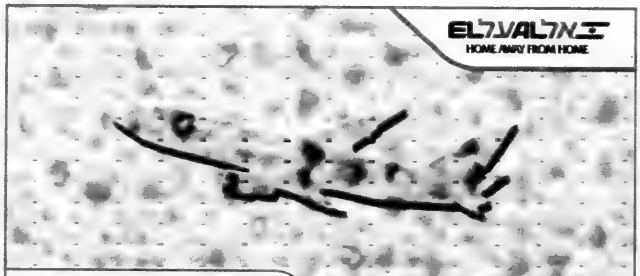
Other News

PASSOVER CELEBRATION

Holy Blossom Temple presents

Continued on page 37

EL AL אל על
HOME AWAY FROM HOME



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Happy Passover

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What's New

Continued from page 36

a Passover concert of *Uprising* by Ballet Espressivo and **Srul Glick**'s *Haggadah* performed by members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Festival Quartet and the Holy Blossom Temple Singers under the direction of **Cantor Benjamin Maissner**. Thursday, April 24, 8 p.m. Tickets $25, youth under 25, $15. Info, call **Mari Lynn Rusak** at 416-789-3291, ext. 224, or visit www.holyblossom.org.

THIRD SEDER

The Winchevsky Centre hosts its annual secular community third seder with Yiddish singer and cultural activist **Adrienne Cooper.** Sunday, April 27, 4:30 p.m. at Villa Columbo, 40 Playfair Ave. $45, children $35, $30 for students/low income individuals. Tickets must be purchased in advance. For reservations, contact 416-789-5502, mws@on.aibn.com or visit www.winchevsky.org.

FROM DUSK TILL DAWN

The Mount Sinai Hospital Auxiliary presents its 55th anniversary ball with jazz crooner **Matt Dusk**, to raise funds for the care of mothers and babies. Tuesday, April 29, at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. Info and tickets, www.mountsinai.ca/auxiliary.

BENMERGUI: MY ISRAEL

Downtown Jewish Community School hosts "**Ralph Benmergui**: My Israel" in honour of Israel@60. Benmergui shows sneak peeks from his new series and shares stories of his experiences in Israel. Sunday, May 4, 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC, Room 318. 416-924-6211, ext. 112

ETHICS OF THE FATHERS

Join **Rabbi Joseph Kanofsky** for "Ethics of the Fathers/Pirkei Avot: The Spirit Within the Letter of Law," a six-week examination of Pirkei Avot with the aid of classical and contemporary commentaries. Thursdays, May 1-June 5, 10-11:15 a.m. at Ulpanat Orot High School, 45 Canyon Ave. Register, www.mekorot.ca or 416-877-2050.

KOLEL LUNCHEON

Join Kolel Monday, May 12, for a fundraising luncheon with **Letty Cottin Pogrebin**, author, journalist, social activist and founding editor of *Ms. Magazine*, and **Sarah Fulford**, newly appointed editor of *Toronto Life Magazine*. Noon-2 p.m. at Darchei Noam Synagogue. For tickets, call **Esther Schlesinger**, 416-636-1880, ext. 255.

ZAREINU EVENTS

Join Zareinu's new Moveathon Pro Tour – a 50-km, 100-km and new 162.5-km bike ride features a route along the Niagara Escarpment. Support a Jewish day school and treatment centre that provides special education and individualized therapies to children with a wide range of physical and developmental challenges and have a great day complete with pre- and post-ride massages and finish-line barbecue, Sunday, June 1. On Sunday, June 22, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Zarienu sponsors an annual Moveathon Festival – daylong entertainment for the whole family, a 2-km walk, 10-km miracle run and a 20-km ride. Info, www.moveathon.com.

CELEBRATION OF HOPE

Israel Cancer Research Fund Celebration of Hope Event, Thursday, Nov. 2, at the Capitol Event Theatre, 7 p.m. For more information, contact **Karen Lieberman** at 416-440-7781.

AMPUTEE SUPPORT

Chazak V'Ematz, outreach support for all amputees to help them adjust to life, meets to discuss new products and prosthetic devices. For information and confidential support, call **Ruth**, 416-783-3717.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information, call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual, friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com.

For the following programs, call ext. 215 for info and registration.

• Today's Woman: A six-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Discuss time and stress management, building self-esteem, assertiveness and improving communication skills. Begins Tuesday, April 29, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

• Successful Step-parenting: Six sessions for couples living in blended families who want to build a solid relationship. Includes myths and realities of step-families and helping kids to adjust. Begins Wednesday, April 30, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

For the following programs, call ext. 246 for info and registration.

• Teen Talk: An eight-week program for teens 12-14 to talk about issues of importance to them and to meet new friends. Wednesdays, April 30-June 18, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

• Parenting Children with ADHD: A six-week program for parents of children who have been diagnosed with ADHD. Parents will learn strategies to bring about positive change in their families. Wednesdays, April 30-June 4, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

• Parenting the Child with Challenging Behaviour: This group is for parents who are frequently challenged by the behaviour of their children aged 6-12. Tuesdays, May 6-June 17, 6:30-8 p.m.at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC. Socialize, meet friends, enjoy culture, informative speakers and stimulating new programs. Get connected to seniors and the community. For info, call 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, April 30. Bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m; mah-jong, Tuesdays 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Thursday, Bridge, 12:30-3 p.m. Info, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"A Journey Through The Russian Pale: A History of Ashkenazim," a lecture with **Vivian Felsen.** Tuesday, April 22, 10 a.m. Members $3, non-members $6.

"Getting the Jewish Community Politically Engaged," a discussion with **Hershel Recht** of the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC). Wednesday, April 23, 1-2:30 p.m. Free.

Spring Fling Lunch and Concert, Wednesday, April 30, 12-2:30 p.m. Members $13, non-members $16.

Friendly visitors needed to visit seniors in their homes. To volunteer, call **Bev**, ext. 134.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Pesach Tea, Wednesday, April 23, 3-4 p.m. with entertainment by **Arkadi Tulshinksi**. $2, guests $5. Register at ext. 2267.

Baycrest Centre offers an osteoporosis education and exercise program for seniors. The program runs for seven weeks, beginning Monday, May 5. Cost $70, includes exercise, information manual and educational video. Information, ext. 2588.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Springtime luncheon, Tuesday, May 13, 12:30 p.m. $5. Tickets are on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

Tickets still available for Stratford trip May 20 to see *The Music Man*, and Shaw festival, June 4 to see *Wonderful Town*. Tickets, ext. 235.

Learn to play the recorder, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m. Starts May 7. Info call Janet, ext. 259.

Koffler Centre of the Arts presents Stars of the 21st Century, Sunday, May 4, an international ballet gala. Tickets, www.koffler arts.org.

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Myriam Nafte in the Jacobs Lounge Visual Arts Space, extended to April 30. Info, ext. 0.

2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition submission deadline May 31, 2008. For info and guidelines, contact **Esther Arbeid**, ext. 606, or esthera@mnjcc.org.

HOPE FOR FUTURE: Dr. Musa J. Bajali, dean of Al-Quds University School of Dental Medicine, the first Palestinian dental school, attended the 100th anniversary convention of Alpha Omega, the international Jewish dental fraternity, held recently in Tel Aviv. Alpha Omega provides funds to support dental schools in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. From left are Joyce and Dr. Paul Chapnick and Bajali.

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Jack Zippan	Apr 1/08	10 Torresdale Avenue
Sadie Shapero	Apr 2/08	4 Marmot Street
Neil Rubenstein	Apr 2/08	4415 Bathurst Street
Daniel Gotlibowicz	Apr 2/08	16 Starthearn Blvd.
Sylvia Balcon	Apr 2/08	40 Chister Place
Doreen Adler	Apr 2/08	10010 - 119th St.,N.W.
Julius Green	Apr 2/08	115 Brighton Avenue
Pauline Goodman	Apr 3/08	4001 Bayview Avenue
Min Stenzler	Apr 4/08	C/O 56 Highgrove Cres.
Stanley Cohn	Apr 5/08	1131 Steeles Ave. W.
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Kaplow, Berta	Mar. 28/08	333 Clark Ave. W.
Ellison, Ruth	Mar. 29/08	550 Cummer Ave
Eisenberg, Clara	Mar. 29/08	6200 Bathurst St
Sternberg, Ernestina	Mar. 23/08	
Hanick, Sheldon	Mar. 30/08	704 Briar Hill Ave
Grunfeld, Herman	Mar. 30/08	140 Westhampton Dr
Varadi, Olga	Apr. 1/08	Private
Gasner, Leon Judah	Apr. 2/08	1 Glen Park Ave
Yalova, Anna	Apr. 1/08	22 Norfinch Dr
Hecht, Suzanne	Apr. 1/08	
Small, Debra	Apr. 2/08	121 Van Horne Ave

HEBREW BASIC SERIAL

Denise Leviston	Mar 31/08	1004 Ossington Avenue
Marian Weiss	Apr 2/08	3174 Bathurst Street.
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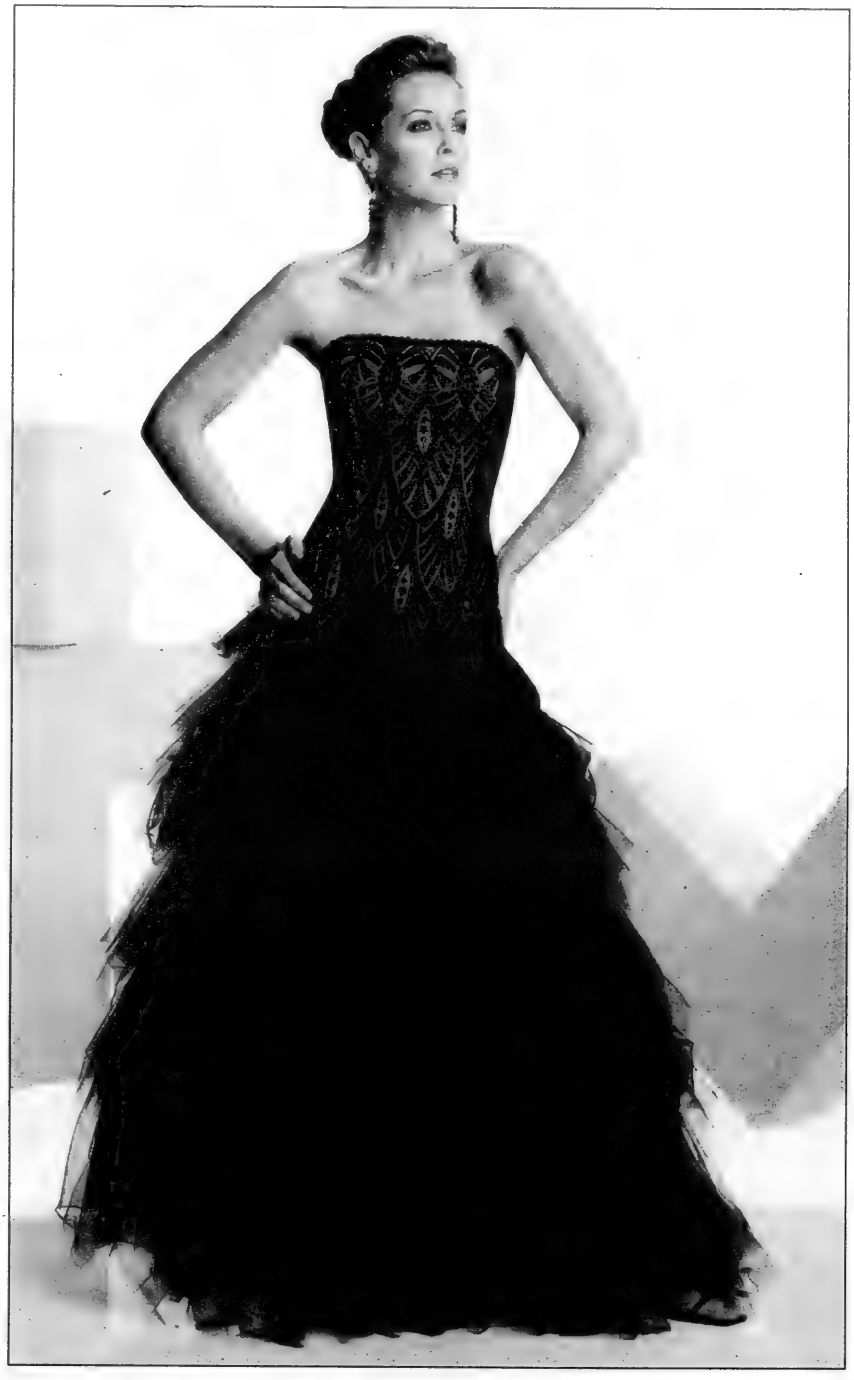

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Hillel marks fifth year of the Darfur genocide

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Hillel of Greater Toronto is doing its part to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the ongoing conflict in the Darfuri region of Sudan by screening a documentary called *Darfur Now* later this month to raise awareness about the issue in the campus community.

"We're trying to raise awareness about the fact that there has been a genocide going on in Darfur for five years. It doesn't get a lot of attention in the media and we're trying to educate people about what is going on," said Devora Schwartz-Waxman, Hillel's tzedek and social action director, who is organizing the April 28 screening at the Sheppard Grande movie theatre in partnership with UJA Federation's Impact Toronto.

Since 2003, up to 400,000 people have been murdered at the hands of the pro-government Arab militia called the Janjaweed, that has attempted to exert control over a country divided by religious and ethnic backgrounds.

About 2.5 million have been displaced into refugee camps where the threat of starvation and disease are constant.

She said that although there are many in the campus community who are aware of the conflict in Darfur, there are many who don't have a basic understanding of the extent to which the people are suffering.

"They don't know what they can do, how they can help, they don't know the history or the background. That is who we're targeting," she said, adding that they have been working with Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND), on Toronto area campuses to spread the word.

She hopes that the screening of *Darfur Now*, produced by Academy Award nominated actor Don Cheadle, will help expose students to the conflict and push them into action.

The film features six stories told by individuals who are working to bring an end to the conflict in Darfur.

Cheadle is one of the individuals featured in the film. He first learned about the conflict while working on a film *Hotel Rwanda*, that dramatized the Rwandan genocide in 1994. With his friend and fellow actor George Clooney, the documentary shows how Cheadle uses his celebrity to bring attention to the conflict and to pressure the international community to act.

Hejewa Adam, another of the six individuals featured in *Darfur Now*, shares her experience when her village was destroyed by Janjaweed militias. Her three-month-old son was beaten to death, and this devastating experience led to her decision to join the rebels in an effort to bring peace back to Sudan.

> ***About 400,000 murdered since 2003***

A 24-year-old American student named Adam Sterling, who is the executive director of the Sudan Divestment Task Force, an organization that provides support to those involved in targeting Sudan divestment campaigns around the world, is another subject profiled in the film.

Sterling, the grandson of a Holocaust survivors, managed to get California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger to sign a bill he drew that will keep state funds out of Sudan.

Schwartz-Waxman, who is expecting about 350 people at the event, said Sterling will introduce the film and will also answer question after the screening.

She said this will give students the opportunity to learn about the ways that they can make a difference and advocate for peace in Darfur.

"People may have heard about Darfur... but don't know much about it and that's who we're trying to reach out to; people who are concerned about it and have heard about it, but don't know what to do," Schwartz-Waxman said.

"We're reaching out to the people who are aware so they can reach out to those who aren't aware."

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On Campus

Maus creator Art Spiegelman believes in free speech

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Art Spiegelman is more often read than heard. But at a recent lecture, the graphic novelist talked about his most controversial drawings and spoke about freedom of speech and cartoons.

Earlier this month, Spiegelman, best known as the creator of *Maus*, the bestselling graphic novel memoir for which he earned a Pulitzer Prize, delivered a lecture titled "Comix 101: Forbidden Images and The Art of Outrage, Art and Conflict."

The event, organized by Hillel of Greater Toronto and the Latner Jewish Library, in co-operation with other groups, including the University of Toronto's Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity Office, was held at the Isabel Bader Theatre.

"Words and pictures together make things happen," said 60-year-old Spiegelman, who has been a staff illustrator for *The New Yorker* and *Harper's* magazine, and created *In the Shadow of No Towers*, in which he relates his experience of the World Trade Center attack and the psychological after-effects.

"Comics penetrate deeper into the brain," he noted.

Describing his introduction into the world of comics as a youth, Spiegelman told the audience of some 400 where he culled his artistic vision and life lessons.

"I learned about sex from Betty and Veronica, I learned about courage from Batman, I learned economics from Donald Duck and I learned ethics from *MAD* magazine," he said.

He whimsically defined the difference between art and comics.

"Those who do not understand art, they think themselves stupid. Those who don't understand comics, they think the comics are stupid."

Inspired by the desire to tell his father's story of surviving the Shoah, Spiegelman created *Maus*. It is believed to be the first time a survivor's story of the Holocaust was illustrated through the medium of a graphic novel.

"*Maus* left you with what you were able to understand and what I was able to tell," he said.

"I never intended it to be Auschwitz for beginners. However, I took criticism. I heard everything from [it being accused of] making it palatable to smoothing things over."

Art Spiegelman
[D. Gordon photo]

In his graphic novel, Jews are portrayed as mice, a deliberate irony.

"The [Nazi] killing project was involved in demarcating Jews as animals. I borrowed Hitler's metaphor," he said, adding that Zyklon B – the gas used in the mass execution rooms – had originally been created to kill vermin.

Spiegelman showed the audience two drawings from death camp inmates who managed to illustrate on paper the horrors they saw, when they saw it.

Via large-screen projection, he also navigated his way through a history of risqué images, graphic horror-genre comics of the mid-20th century, and the evolution of pointed political cartoons, to show that scandalous and controversial artwork has been around longer than most might have thought. In 1898, he pointed out, a few politicians in the United States were angered by how they were portrayed by cartoonists, thus inspiring a failed attempt at an anti-cartoon bill.

No stranger to controversy himself, one of his *New Yorker* magazine covers from the late 1990s was a caricature of a police officer at a carnival shooting gallery, aiming at silhouettes of civilians. It came off the heels of a news item of a New York constable who fired a number of times at a man whose key chain, it was alleged, looked like a gun to the officer. At the time, New York governor George Pataki and mayor Rudy Giuliani publicly excoriated Spiegelman.

The political repercussions of editorial cartoons was another subject Spiegelman touched on. He displayed, on screen, the controversial editorial cartoons published in a Danish newspaper. in September 2005 that depicted Muhammad. The cartoons led to protests across the Muslim world, some of which escalated into violence.

Spiegelman rated each of the cartoons on a scale of one to five bombs for what he thought was relatively offensive content.

The cartoons were not republished in most major newspapers in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom, where editorials covered the story without including them.

"The gatekeepers were trying to shelter us from these cartoons," Spiegelman said.

In response to the cartoons, the Iranian newspaper *Hamshahri* retaliated by starting a Holocaust denial cartoon contest, the International Holocaust Cartoon Contest.

"Fittingly, they [have] had so much practice before," Spiegelman noted.

Taking cues from the infamous Nazi propaganda newspaper, *Der Stuermer*, the submissions echoed the region's continual dehumanizing depictions of Jews, and, of course, minimized or trivialized the Holocaust.

However, Spiegelman did not advocate squelching these images. Though it was not an official submission, he instead mocked the contest with his own public entry: death camp inmates, surrounding barracks, with one prisoner chortling, "Thank goodness none of this is really happening."

THIS POEM WAS WRITTEN DURING THE GREEK HOLOCAUST, WHEN THE BARBARIANS (THE NAZIS) OCCUPIED THE PLACE OF MY BIRTH.

WHO AM I?

by Thanos Karamanos
(known to you as Carman)

A man once said, Earth, but a speck of Dust, floating somewhere in this vast Universe. If this is the case, how big are you? How Big am I? Who are you? Who am I? I don't know about you, but I do know about me. I am, what I understand, and only what "I" understand. What I know about me, is, that this speck of dust is made and decorated with trees, flowers, birds and bees, squirrels, dogs, ducks and seas, lakes, brooks, rivers and air, and countless other beautiful things, oh yes, and little girls and little guys, and, with you, and me. They are all of me, and I am all of them. What about you? This, is what, I, understand, so therefore, this is who I am. If, I love thee, it is not because I want to secure a place in heaven, or, avoid the inferno down below. I love thee, because, it is all of me, and I am, all of thee. If I love thee, it is for my joy and pleasure and yours too. If, I wrong thee, it is my problem, and yours too. Don't overestimate me, you will hurt yourself and me too. Don't underestimate yourself, you will hurt yourself and me too. So if a man is good, so if he is bad, society, I am your product, and reflect you.

Peace begins at home. Just a thought to share with you.

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PASSOVER FOOD IDEAS

Kosher in China

By ALISON KLAYMAN
JTA

As the sun rises on a crisp March morning, a van from the Hebei Dongfang Green Tree Food Company arrives at Rabbi Nosson Rodin's home in Beijing.

During the four-hour journey to the company's factory in Shenzhou, Rabbi Rodin calls for a break to recite his morning prayers. He puts on his tfillin at a rest stop, as curious truck drivers look on, then gets back into the vehicle.

For the Amidah prayer, the van pulls off the dusty road and Rabbi Rodin consults the small green compass on his watchband. He needs to pray facing west, toward Jerusalem.

It's all part of a routine day for Rabbi Rodin, 24, a Chabad-Lubavitch emissary who does Jewish outreach in Beijing and also travels the countryside performing kosher inspections in China for U.S. companies.

With the kosher certification of more than 300 food factories in China, each producing multiple products, America's largest kosher certification company, the Orthodox Union (OU), has more than doubled the number of certifications it does in China in just the past two years.

The kosher food market here has experienced tremendous growth. Half of China's $2.5 billion (all figures US) in exports of food ingredients to the United States are kosher, up 150 per cent from two years ago, according to Bloomberg News.

Green Tree first looked into kosher certification in 2005, about the same time the company began exporting its products.

"We met a Jewish customer who wore a small hat on his head," recalls Lucy Zhang, Rabbi Rodin's interpreter from Green Tree. "He asked us if our food was kosher. He explained if it was kosher, then Jewish people could eat it."

"The only way to explain kosher to a company here is to explain it's for export," says Rabbi David Markowitz of Shatz Kosher Services, a kosher certification agency based in Israel.

Continued on page 43

Passover Food Ideas

Hundreds of food products certified in the Far East

Continued from page 42

Kosher certification costs $3,000 to $5,000 per year on average, Rabbi Markowitz says. In exchange for access to the $11.5-billion kosher food market in the United States, many Chinese companies are willing to pay the price.

Rabbi Markowitz opened Shatz Kosher Services in China five years ago, and recently added a location in Vietnam. The rabbi lives in Israel but spends about two weeks each month working in China.

In addition to its office near Hong Kong, Shatz also has one in China's Shandong Province, where many fruits and vegetables are grown and processed.

Canned, frozen and dried fruits and vegetables are the most common kosher products from China, but many chemical additives and finished products like candy also are certified here.

Providing kosher supervision means paying strict attention to a product's components. Instead of conducting scientific health tests, kosher inspectors check a company's compliance with rules for a product's ingredients and preparation.

Most factories have a few scheduled inspections each year. In situations where sweeping changes are required to make a product kosher, kashrut services usually decline to certify.

During his visit to the Green Tree plant, Rabbi Rodin is as interested in what lies behind closed doors as he is in what's on the apple chip production line.

He insists on opening the doors and inspects a flattened cardboard box with an unfamiliar label that lies discarded in the corner. As possible evidence of unaccounted-for ingredients that could be non-kosher, the discarded box is suspect.

"Since they don't really understand what I am looking for, they don't know what to hide," Rabbi Rodin says.

Although kosher certification has been carried out for years in China, the landscape of food quality control in the country is undergoing drastic change.

Last September, following intense negative publicity in the United States and elsewhere about the discovery of tainted food products, Chinese regulators began requiring companies to use numbered codes on packaging to identify the plants of origin for products. This way, all ingredients could be traced to their sources.

The Orthodox Union began using a similar oversight system in China as far back as 2001, a representative here said.

Most Chinese who work with kosher supervisors still know little about kosher laws, but they are no longer completely unfamiliar with the practices of their Jewish colleagues.

Rabbi Amos Benjamin of the Baltimore-based Star-K kosher certification company has been certifying products in China as kosher since 1987.

"Ten years ago when you visited a factory here, they had generally no idea what kosher certification was," he said. "Now, 10 years down the track, they understand more."

Though the food companies under inspection provide English-speaking interpreters, some of the rabbis here have picked up basic Mandarin.

Rabbi Benjamin, who speaks several languages, says Chinese is the most difficult to learn. Perhaps it's because his conversations in Chinese are so unusual.

"I don't know the last time you sat around the coffee table discussing techniques of fermentation, but I can do that in Chinese," he says.

Not everything runs smoothly in the kosher business in China. Rabbi Markowitz recalls that five years ago, one of his most popular certified products, canned mushrooms, ran into trouble when insects were found in the mushrooms.

"We once brought from China to Israel 350 containers of mushrooms," he said. But after the insect trouble, "that whole industry shut down. One of the main things in kashrut is to keep no insects in the food."

Yossi Gehardy, an Israeli living in China, is the general manager of the Solbar Ningbo Food Company, which produces soy proteins and is regularly inspected by the OU. Solbar is one of several kosher food companies in Ningbo.

"Kashrut should not be an obstacle to come to China to set up a plant," Gehardy says.

For the rabbis who travel through China providing kosher supervision, the oft-asked question is what they themselves eat.

Rabbi Benjamin says it's hard to explain kashrut to Chinese hosts who insist on treating the visiting rabbi to a banquet lunch.

"Many afternoons I sat there with just water and an apple at a business lunch," he says.

More often, rabbis travel with canned foods and stock up on kosher products at import markets in big cities like Shanghai and Beijing. There is even a kosher restaurant in Beijing.

For his visit to the Green Tree factory, Rabbi Rodin packed peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for lunch (it obviously wasn't Pesach). He came home with a box of apple chips for his family, and his wife, Miriam, made a spaghetti dinner with tomato paste from a factory he had certified in Xinjiang province.

The next morning, Rabbi Rodin took an early flight to Guangzhou to do it all again.

Asparagus coming into season just in time for Pesach

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

Call me crazy (OK, not really), but I like to be able to buy the freshest of the fresh first spring vegetables to serve, and not have to take a second mortgage out on my house as I did for the rib roast I got for the seder.

For me, spring doesn't officially begin on March 21. Rather, it's when asparagus drop below $2 a pound and are so inexpensive they're practically paying me to take some home.

You should select bright green asparagus with closed, compact, firm tips.

If the tips are slightly wilted, you can freshen them up by soaking them in cold water. You can eat asparagus raw or cooked. Cook fresh asparagus in a small amount of boiling water until tender. Fresh asparagus will be crisp-tender in 5 to 8 minutes. You can also microwave fresh asparagus by placing one pound in a microwavable baking dish or serving bowl. If cooking whole spears, arrange with tips in centre. Add about 1/4 cup water and cover tightly. Microwave at 100 per cent power for 4 to 7 minutes for spears. Stir or turn halfway through cooking time.

You can use just about every single bit of your asparagus. For a puree for soups or salads, break or cut asparagus spears at the tender part and use the trimmed ends that you might otherwise discard. Place them in a covered saucepan and boil until tender. Strain the cooked asparagus through a sieve, food mill, food processor or blender. Use the puree to mix with the cooking water for soups, stews, creamed dishes or sauces.

ASPARAGUS WITH HAZELNUT ORANGE SAUCE

2 tbsp. finely chopped hazelnuts
1 1/2 to 2 lb. asparagus stalks, washed and trimmed
1/4 tsp. freshly grated orange zest
2 tsp. fresh orange juice
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
2 tbsp. olive oil
kosher salt
coarsely ground black pepper

Continued on page 45

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Passover Food Ideas

The versatile vegetable adds a distinctive flavour

Continued from page 44

Preheat oven to 375. Toast hazelnuts in a small shallow baking pan until golden, 4 to 5 minutes. Cook asparagus in a large frying pan of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 3 to 4 minutes, and drain well in a colander. Transfer hot asparagus to serving platter or individual serving plates. In a small bowl, whisk together orange zest, orange juice, lemon juice, olive oil, salt and pepper to taste. Spoon orange dressing over top of asparagus and sprinkle with nuts. Makes 4 servings.

ASPARAGUS GUACAMOLE

This is a wonderful alternative to the regular chip or veggie dip.

2 cups (approximately 1 lb.) chopped lightly steamed asparagus
2¼ tsp. fresh lemon juice
3 tbsp. chopped onion
1 large tomato, chopped
¼ tsp. salt
1 tsp. chopped jalapeno pepper
¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 tsp. minced garlic
dash ketchup
¼ cup sour cream or mayonnaise

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth. Transfer the guacamole to a bowl. Cover tightly and refrigerate several hours or overnight before serving. Makes 3 cups or 12 (¼-cup) servings.

ORIENTAL CHICKEN AND ASPARAGUS

½ to 1 lb. asparagus
1 lb. boneless chicken (white or dark meat)
1 red or green bell pepper, thinly sliced
4 tbsp. salad oil
1 medium onion, sliced
¼ tsp. pepper
2 tbsp. sugar
1½ tbsp. ketchup
2 tbsp. vinegar
1 tbsp. honey
1 cup mandarin oranges, drained

Heat the oil in a wok or skillet. Cut the chicken into one-inch chunks and stir-fry until done. Remove from wok and set aside. Cut the asparagus into two-inch strips. Add the remaining onion, bell pepper, pepper and sugar; cook, stirring, until the vegetables are crisp-tender. Add the asparagus, then the chicken. Add the ketchup, honey and vinegar and mix to coat. Cover and cook until mixture begins to steam. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 9 minutes. Add the mandarin oranges, stir in gently and cook an additional 2 or 3 minutes, just to warm the oranges. Serves 6.

ASPARAGUS NUT SALAD

2 lb. fresh asparagus cut into 1-inch pieces
1 cup shredded carrots
1 tbsp. mayonnaise
½ cup golden raisins
1½ tbsp. honey
2 tsp. vinegar
2 tbsp. toasted slivered almonds or other nuts

Cover asparagus in salted boiling water. Cook until tender. Rinse immediately in cold water to stop cooking process. Pat dry and place in a bowl with the shredded carrots and golden raisins. In another bowl, combine the mayonnaise, honey, vinegar and nuts. Pour the dressing over the asparagus and carrots. Toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Serves 6 to 8.

NEW POTATO AND ASPARAGUS SALAD

1 cup oil
¼ to ½ cup vinegar
½ cup minced red onion
1 tbsp. dry dill weed
salt to taste
pepper to taste
3 roma tomatoes, diced
2 lb. small red potatoes, unpeeled, cooked until just tender, cooled and sliced
2 lb. asparagus spears, cooked crisp tender
hard-boiled eggs, quartered
fresh dill for garnish

Cook and cool the potatoes. In a bowl, combine the oil, vinegar, onion, dill, tomato, salt and pepper and mix well. Place the sliced potatoes in a large bowl. Pour the dressing over the potatoes. Toss gently. Cover and refrigerate overnight. To serve, arrange asparagus on a large platter in spoke pattern. Remove potatoes from dressing with a slotted spoon and mound in centre of asparagus. Pour remaining dressing over asparagus and serve with quartered eggs and a garnish of fresh dill. Serves 6.

SMOKED SALMON AND ASPARAGUS

¼ cup mayonnaise
¼ cup sour cream
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
4 hard cooked eggs, finely chopped
2 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
1 tbsp. chopped fresh tarragon
1 tbsp. minced shallot
24 white and/or green asparagus spears
½ lemon
1 tbsp. butter
1 tsp. sugar
3 tbsp. olive oil plus additional for drizzling
8 oz. thinly sliced smoked salmon

Whisk mayonnaise, sour cream and lemon juice in small bowl to blend. Stir in chopped eggs, parsley, tarragon and shallot. Season sauce to taste with salt and pepper. Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.

Cut off bottom 1 in. from each asparagus spear. Bring large saucepan of salted water to boil. Squeeze juice from ½ lemon into boiling water; add lemon half, butter and sugar. Add asparagus and cook just until tender when pierced with knife or skewer, 5 to 8 minutes, depending on thickness and colour. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, remove asparagus from saucepan and transfer to platter to cool. Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and chill.

Just before serving, add 3 tbsp. olive oil to sauce and stir without overmixing (sauce should have coarse texture and olive oil should be slightly separated). Arrange asparagus decoratively on platter or individual plates. Drape salmon slices over. Spoon a few tbsp. sauce over both and drizzle lightly with additional olive oil. Serve, passing remaining sauce alongside. Serves 6.

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Ashkenazi Jews face greater risk of breast cancer

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Knowledge is power – this was a recurring theme stressed by all speakers at a recent program about hereditary breast and ovarian cancer from medical, genetic and Jewish perspectives.

Taking part in the evening at Beth Tikvah Synagogue were doctors Marla Ash and Wendy Meschino, physicians at the Charlotte and Lewis Steinberg Familial Breast and Ovarian Cancer Clinic at North York General Hospital; Rabbi Jennifer Gorman, director of youth activities for the eastern region of United Synagogue Youth; and Natalie Witkin, a social activist who is a breast cancer survivor.

One in nine women will get breast cancer during their lifetime, Meschino said. "For most people, it is rarely due to inherited factors. Usually, it is sporadic, affected by age, hormonal issues [which] may have some genetic component, diet, or alcohol."

However, she said, the proportion is higher for Ashkenazi Jews. "It's not that more Ashkenazi Jews get breast cancer, but that a higher proportion get it from a genetic mutation," Meschino noted.

Jewish families have 10 times higher rate of the BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 genetic mutation – one in 40 carries it, she said.

This higher percentage, Meschino explained, is from the so-called "founder effect," meaning that it appeared in a small group and remains genetically strong.

The BRCA 1 or BRCA 2 mutations make women more susceptible to both breast and ovarian cancer. In men, it leads to increased risk of prostate, renal and pancreatic cancers.

To answer a question from the audience, Meschino said that Sephardi Jews have a lower risk, but it is still higher than in the general population.

If a family has had multiple cases of breast or ovarian cancer, especially in those over 50 years old, or a single case in a first-degree relative (mother, sister, grandmother or aunt) under 35, one can assume that there is a genetic link and people should be tested, she said. She added that the mutated gene can come from either maternal or paternal relatives.

Ash said that prevention and early detection are vital in both breast and, especially, ovarian cancer, which has few symptoms, and so by the time it is diagnosed, carries a three out of four death rate.

Carriers of either mutation should conduct regular self-examinations, have a clinical exam by someone qualified every six months and an annual mammogram starting from age 25 to 30.

Breast MRIs tend to give more high false-positive results

Breast MRIs can detect more cancers, but they tend to give high false-positive results and are time-consuming and expensive.

There are several ways to lower the risk of these cancers, Ash said. These include prophylactic mastectomy and then breast reconstruction; and prophylactic removal of the ovaries or the whole reproductive system. Though drastic, these procedures can reduce the risk by 90 per cent.

Ash stressed that it is essential to learn one's family history, so as to know whether or not you have those genes and thus have a higher risk of getting breast or ovarian cancers.

Rabbi Gorman said that the issue of prophylactic surgery is being researched in the Conservative movement, both by individual rabbis and the law committee.

Halachah insists that one is obligated to take care of oneself, with the injunction of pikuach nefesh, saving a life, being primary. However, she said, this is not really pikuach nefesh, as even if one does have the BRCA 1 or 2 mutations, it is not certain that one will get cancer.

Witkin said that knowing her mother and a relative had the gene mutation didn't stop her from getting cancer, but she firmly believes that it led to early detection, thus saving her life.

"I never considered my family at high risk for cancer. My family didn't talk about it, and I didn't even know that my relative had it. Because I hadn't asked about it, I didn't know."

As a 31-year-old newlywed, Witkin found out she had the gene. She didn't do anything about it until 2000, when her family was complete. She then booked herself for a mastectomy and oophorectomy (removal of the ovaries). Two weeks before the surgery, she learned she had stage one breast cancer.

Her philosophy is that one must be aware of family medical history and cultural norms. "If someone doesn't tell you what you need to know, keep asking until you find out."

Meschino said that ovarian cancer is know as "the silent disease," or the whispering disease, because there are few symptoms. Some signs are abdominal bloating, nausea and painful intercourse. However, by the times those symptoms appear, the condition is already advanced and treatment options and the chance of survival are limited.

Once she's 18 years old, recalculate child support

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator for 26 years

Question. I pay child support for my 17-year-old, who lives with her mother. She'll turn 18 during the school year. I pay the table amount for child support. Next academic year she will be attending Queen's University and commuting back to Toronto on the odd weekend and school breaks and I will only live with her during the summer vacation. She will likely have a summer job as a camp counsellor, like last year.

Am I to pay the same amount of child support? My wife earns the same income as I do, about $70,000 yearly. As it is we will be splitting the costs of the child's post-secondary education, including tuition fees, residence, books, etc.

Answer. Under the Child Support Guidelines, once the child turns 18 you no longer automatically pay the amount stipulated for child support tied to your gross yearly income. That amount is just one factor to consider. In your situation, the Court will consider that you both are already paying your proportionate share of the child's living costs and educational costs at Queen's University and that she is certainly not living at home "full time" any longer. However, from my reading of the Court's decisions on facts such as yours, the Judges have ruled that the child's mother still has substantial costs in keeping a "home base" for your child when she comes home; i.e. that extra bedroom and facilities, especially for those special weekends, school breaks and summer holidays. The Ontario Court of Appeal has also recently ruled that the child herself has to contribute something towards her schooling either from her own assets (if inherited), savings or summer earnings to relieve the burden on the parents.

The end result is that, depending on the size of the payer's income, the Court may or may not modify the basic amount of child support (called the "table amount") that he must pay based on his or her gross yearly income. In your particular case, I suspect there may be some reduction from the table amount given that both of you earn the same amount of income. However, if you were earning $150,000 yearly I would be less certain a judge would make any modification. The difficult questions begin to arise when the adult child begins bouncing back and forth between the two parental homes, begins working "co-op", starts taking "half-time" courses, moves in "part-time" with her boyfriend, stops communicating with Dad, or drops out because of illness. There are no easy answers.

On behalf of my family, and all of us at Garfin Zeidenberg, I wish you and your family a happy and healthy Passover.

Mr. Syrtash has now moved to a new law firm and has been appointed as Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Embracing the new midlife

Looking and feeling fabulous at every age is a topic you often see on the cover of fashion, beauty and lifestyles magazines for both men and women.

Indeed, the cover of this month's *Harper's Bazaar* has a photo of actor Demi Moore with the caption "Fabulous at Every Age." But more than looking fabulous, we all want to feel that way inside, too, and have that combination of good health, vitality and the ability to age happily and gracefully.

Life Coach Corner

Judy Siblin-Librach

As I'm always on the lookout for the latest news, information and education about life coaching, I happily attended the "I Can Do It" conference at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre last month. Among the speakers were Wayne Dyer, Sonia Choquette and, most notably, *New York Times* bestselling author and spiritual activist Marianne Williamson, who talked about her latest book, *The Age of Miracles: Embracing the New Midlife*.

Williamson, who has a daily show on *Oprah and Friends* on XM Satellite Radio, was hugely inspiring as she talked about the fact that "midlife is not a crisis – it's a time of rebirth. It's not a time to accept your death, it's a time to accept your life and to finally, truly live it as you and you alone know deep in your heart it was meant to be lived."

She tells a fantastic story about a friend of hers who was entertaining some people in her living room. When her twentysomething daughter came home at 10 p.m. and saw them there, sitting on the couch, she admonished them with the words: "You guys are so boring! You never go out!" To which all three responded in unison, "We were out, and now we're in!"

A close friend of mine, Sari Sonshine, always says, "Every year is a gift. It is wonderful to be another year older, because if you think about it, what's the alternative?"

Williamson makes a good point when she talks about how what we lose in slowing down physically, we make up for in other ways.

She says: "The mind is its own kind of dance floor. If in fact the highest, most creative work is the work of consciousness, then in slowing down we're not doing less, we're doing more. Having slowed down physically, we're in a better space to rev up psychically. We are becoming contemplative. We are shifting from the outer to the inner, not in order to begin our demise, but to reseed and re-green the consciousness of the planet."

In many cultures, we are given clues on how to anticipate midlife with joy and grace. In Thai culture, to maintain their well-being during the midlife transition, most women adjust simply by accepting midlife change and thinking of it in a positive way as a natural progression and an extended gift of life.

I love the expression, "Dreams have no expiry date," because that is exactly what midlife gives you a chance to do – to dream. There was a woman at the conference who was married to a man 16 years her senior, and she mentioned that he at 60 years old wanted to move to the country to write songs and music and really begin this new phase of his life. She, alternatively, at the height of her career and with two small children, wanted to stay in the city.

Williamson told her, "You are going to be surprised by my answer about what to do, but my suggestion is that you have to move to the country. Because you have to give your mate a chance to express himself fully and be giving as a partner in order to make that happen." She suggested that feminism has not always been a good thing for women and that in a partnership between a man and his wife, there are masculine and feminine roles.

Williamson made midlife seem fun and adventurous and exhilarating, and really, isn't it all in the way you frame it?

My favourite memory is of a feminist professor at the University of Ottawa talking about the first women's studies courses at Canadian universities in the 1970s. Once she had asked her students to bring in a picture of the most beautiful woman they knew. Everyone in her class brought in a picture of actor Farrah Fawcett, who was then at the height of her career in the TV show *Charlie's Angels*.

The professor brought in a very different picture. Her photo was of an eightysomething woman diving into a pool of water. She had a healthy complexion and was the very picture of physical, spiritual and emotional well-being. This is what we all pray for and want to strive for. That picture serves as an excellent reminder that aging is a gift, something we all should be grateful for and not afraid of.

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@ican.net.

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Sutton Group Admiral blazes new trails in real estate

Murray Goldkind
Broker of Record

Using a simple formula of maximizing opportunity and minimizing hassle for its agents, Sutton Group Admiral Realty has experienced the kind of spectacular growth that has surpassed even its own high expectations.

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In its dual capacity as reseller and new home purveyor, Sutton Group Admiral's access to both resale homes and new construction allows it to offer home buyers the best of both worlds, says Sol. "Whether you're looking for a resale home or a new one, you can now explore ALL your interests and options with us."

One thing that hasn't changed, says Sol, is Sutton Group Admiral's commitment to work "24 hours a day to earn your trust and ensure your satisfaction."

Sol Goldkind
Sales Representative

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Honey product can stimulate the immune system

By MEIRA MAIEROVITZ DRAZIN
Special to The CJN

Last Pesach, Dr. Heime Geffen had to be carried to the seder. After he was diagnosed in October 2006 with acute myelocytic leukemia, his doctors abandoned chemotherapy because his white blood cell counts were perilously low. By March 2007, his family was looking into palliative home care.

But less than three months later, after taking two teaspoons a day of a special honey from Israel, he was able to play nine holes of golf.

After seeing the remarkable turnaround of her father-in-law, verified by his blood count, Cathy Mallove of Toronto decided to import the honey to Canada to make it available to others in similar situations.

The honey, called Life Mel, which has an Israeli hechsher approved by the Canadian Kashruth Council of Canada (COR), was developed by a Russian-Israeli doctor and is produced in Israel. It is made by bees that feed on nectar derived from therapeutic herbs and medicinal plants combined with a selection of natural bioactive materials such as iron, proteins, enzymes and vitamins. The final product produced by the bees is honey that contains the properties of the herbs and plants and can have the effect of stimulating the immune system. The honey goes directly from the hive to the bottle and is not treated with any added ingredients or processing.

Geffen, who is in his 70s and what his daughter-in-law describes as a "traditional, very conservative family practitioner from small-town Ontario" was quite skeptical about any kind of honey remedy and only agreed to try it because he had nothing left to lose.

"I was quite moribund with illness, needed a wheelchair to go to the bathroom, had my meals in bed," says Geffen, who lives in St. Catharines, Ont. "My wife and sons insisted I take it. Much against my judgment and training as a traditional doctor, I yielded to their pressure."

Mallove says: "There are a lot of quacky things out there, so I think the fact that it was from Israel and that it was honey – we thought, well, what could the downside be?

Cathy Mallove and her father-in-law, Dr. Heime Geffen

"My father-in-law was very sick, his mouth was full of sores and he couldn't eat anything because it hurt to swallow. We were making him soup and tea, and smoothies… and he couldn't swallow any of it. So there was also the fact that it was easy for him and pleasant and sweet."

Geffen says that he is still skeptical. "I still do not know to this very day if it was solely the honey that did it, or good luck, or a combination," he says. "We need more time for research.

"All I can say is that I was about to die, and within 10 days to two weeks of taking the honey, I had abandoned the wheelchair and was sitting with my family at the table. Within two weeks I was taking out the garbage, within a month I was going for walks and within two months I was playing golf."

He still takes two teaspoons of the honey every day.

The family heard about Life Mel when Geffen's daughter and son-in-law had a chance conversation with an oncologist in Israel who had just participated in a small clinical study that sought to explore Life Mel's effects after doctors heard so many positive anecdotal reports from their patients. The two-year clinical trial yielded promising results, published in the medical journal *Medical Oncology* (vol. 23, no. 4).

After Geffen's own immediate positive experience, the family looked further into the product and found it had been on the market in Israel for several years. Geffen's daughter decided to bring Life Mel to the United Kingdom, where she lives, and Mallove was inspired to bring it to Canada.

Mallove began selling the product in Canada in late 2007 and launched the website www.lifemel.ca in January. "A lot of people are intrigued by it, trying a jar or two to start," she says. "Most people do feel a difference with the first jar or two – it seems that if it's going to work for you, it works right away." She said she's starting to see repeat orders from customers to supply them for the duration of their chemotherapy or longer term to support whatever underlying condition they have.

Continued on page 49

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Our best wishes for a Happy, Healthy Passover

from

Mitch Cadesky, *General Sales Manager*
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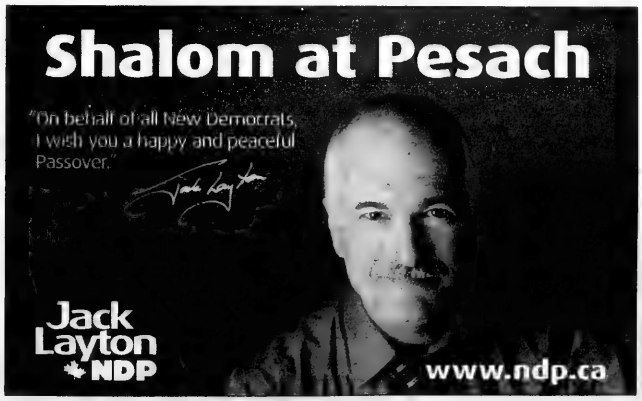

Keepsake Treasure Quilts

Members of Adath Israel Congregation's sewing group in Toronto celebrate the first quilt made by group member Diane Glazer (front row, right). The group creates challah covers, wall hanging quilts and other works of art on Monday and Thursday afternoons – keepsake quilts made with love and care for family members and friends. While they sew, they discuss topics of the day, recipes or books. Knitting will be added to their activities in the fall. Ongoing instruction is offered to beginners and experts throughout the year. For more information, call Stephanie Kepecs at 416-638-9224.

Honey has been approved by COR

Continued from page 48

Mallove, unfortunately, has extensive experience supporting people with cancer. Her father died of cancer, her mother is a lymphoma survivor and a close friend just went through treatment for breast cancer. The mother of two children, the younger of whom has developmental delays, she spends a lot of time in the special needs world and with education advocacy but says that she was looking to do something different from her work as an independent communications and organizational development consultant. She describes the experience so far of bringing Life Mel into Canada – "speaking with people every day with cancer or people who have someone they love who's sick" – as both gratifying and very emotional.

"One thing I hear a lot of, and which is exactly what we felt with my father-in-law is, 'you know what, it's only honey.' It can't hurt, it's sweet, it's given with love, and it makes many people feel like they actually have control over something. We're not under any illusions that this is a miracle cure.

"My father-in-law is 79 years old, and he's very sick. But if it's something that can give people a better quality of life and help their families support them, why wouldn't anybody want to try it? It's not a cure for cancer, but hopefully it's something that can help people be and feel stronger when they're going through something very difficult," Mallove says.

Hana Snir, a Toronto woman whose mother has Hodgkin's lymphoma and originally bought Life Mel in Israel, ordered more jars from Mallove based on her mother's initial positive reaction while undergoing a round of chemotherapy recently. She says that usually after two weeks of chemo, her mother would need a blood transfusion and that by four weeks her hemoglobin levels would have gone down by 10 points or more, but that this time she has not needed a transfusion and her hemoglobin levels have remained steady.

"It's only been four weeks and I don't know if it's the honey or the type of chemo she's on, but we won't be stopping the honey," says Snir. "We're at the point where we had nothing to lose – we've been going through this for two years already. Nothing else was helping her, and it's only a matter of time before things get worse. It's not like it's invasive or anything that can hurt or even a bad taste – at worst, it's just honey."

A portion of all sales of Life Mel will go toward cancer-related charities. It is also currently being imported into the United States.

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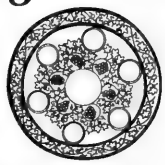
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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Brothers' day camp includes children with learning disabilities

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to the CJN

Thornhill residents Ryan and Jared Kalef are encouraging others to follow in their footsteps and engage in active and healthy lifestyles.

Ryan, 24, and Jared, 22, have been physically active their whole lives. They have both participated in a variety of sports, including hockey, baseball, basketball and tennis.

At university, a friend encouraged Jared to take on cardio-based sports such as biking, swimming and running, which are typically done in triathlons. Jared soon became passionate about them, and he and his friend completed their first short-distance triathlon at a recreational level that summer.

A year later, Jared, then 20, completed an Ironman Triathlon in England.

Soon after, he and Ryan discussed how beneficial it could be for children to participate in these sports on a recreational level.

"I realized that anyone can do these sports and participate in triathlons," said Jared. "It doesn't matter how old or how good you are."

Ryan Kalef, the camp's co-founder, said he hopes that if kids have to "choose between going out on their bikes... or playing video games, we want them to choose to go out."

The brothers are working hard to ensure the values of an active life are instilled in people when they're young through their newly launched children's day camp called Camp You Can!

"We want people to live more active and healthy lifestyles, so they can better enjoy various activities, and for children to grow up to become healthy adults," said Ryan. "If on a nice sunny day, children have to choose between going out on their bikes or to the park or playing video games, we want them to choose to go out."

At Camp You Can!, children aged seven to 15, with or without learning disabilities or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), will mainly participate in activities such as biking, running and swimming.

The brothers noted the growing problem of childhood inactivity in Ontario, which has contributed to the increase in childhood obesity, diabetes, and other medical conditions associated with sedentary living.

"Typically, when children are young, their parents put them in conventional sports," said Jared. "Usually by the time they are in university and then later start a family and a full-time job, they're not going to be able to use the sports enough to stay healthy and active.

"Then when they're out of shape, and in their 30s or 40s, people start getting into fitness activities through a gym. But what they should be doing is the exact opposite. People should be engaging in fitness, particularly easy cardio-based activities, along with sports when they're young."

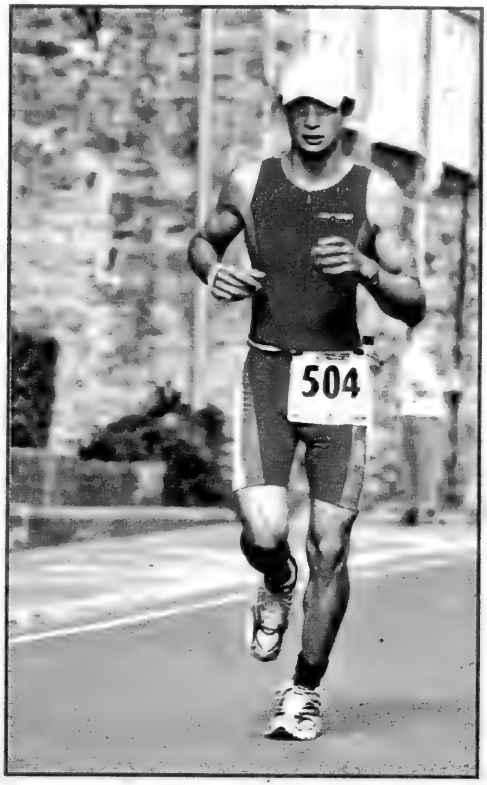
In addition to working on the camp, Jared is training for Olympic distance and ironman triathlons he plans to participate in this summer. He trains about three hours a day, six days a week.

While Ryan is busy with schoolwork as a fourth-year neuroscience and physics student at the University of British Columbia, he enjoys playing in the intramural levels of basketball and ball hockey at his university. He also teaches a tennis program once a week and works out at a gym three days a week.

Ryan and Jared have about 20 years of experience combined working with children in a variety of sports and other camp-related activities.

Ryan ran a tennis program at an all-stars sports camp at Green Acres, a day camp near Toronto, and coached children of diverse ages in tennis for several private country clubs in Toronto and Vancouver. He also ran sports programs at community centres and worked as a referee for ice hockey at his university.

Jared has worked as a swim staff member at Bayview Glen Day Camp and Crestwood Valley Day Camp. He also coached children at a tennis camp at the Thornhill Country Club.



Jared Kalef, co-founder of Camp You Can! competed in the Ironman Triathlon in England.

The brothers decided to provide their camp to children with learning disabilities after they heard about the challenges their now-13-year-old cousin was experiencing in conventional sports programs due to a learning disability.

"There's usually so much going on at once in the conventional sports," said Jared. "Children with these disabilities feel bad if they, for example, miss a shot. A program such as ours would give them an athletic pursuit they can undertake regardless of their ability and really boost their self-confidence."

The brothers said in the future they hope to be able to cater the camp for more children with special needs.

Ryan and Jared's endeavours have also been partly influenced by some of the values they learned having been raised in a traditional Jewish home.

"In Judaism, there's the inherent quality to do something good in your community," said Ryan. "You want to make something positive of your life. Being healthy is a key thing to instil in people."

They are both using their own resources to run this camp and have created the program based on their knowledge and experiences, along with consultation with university professors, special education teachers, other camp organizers, and top athletes and trainers.

For more information, visit www.campyoucan.com.

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Some criticism of Israel is anti-Semitic: U.S.

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration has taken the ground-breaking step of identifying some virulent criticism of Israel as anti-Semitism, as it warns that anti-Jewish attitudes and incidents are on the rise worldwide.

In a new study, the U.S. State Department cites Tel Aviv University's Stephen Roth Institute in reporting an increase of serious anti-Semitic incidents, encompassing physical attacks and vandalism, from 406 in 2005 to 593 in 2006.

The new study, *Contemporary Global Anti-Semitism*, also cites a range of other non-governmental organizations to show dramatic increases in Latin America, Australasia and Europe, including a 31 per cent spike in incidents in Britain from 2005 to 2006 and a 35 per cent jump in Argentina during the same period.

The report goes quite far in warning about the intensification of anti-Semitic rhetoric among governments and international elites, and its policy recommendations are unusually strong for State Department reports, which generally refrain from pronounced language.

Its boldest venture is to name some attacks on Israel as anti-Semitism. In addition, the report marks the first time that the U.S. government has made it a policy to apply the label of anti-Semitism to some criticism of Israel.

"Anti-Semitism has proven to be an adaptive phenomenon," the report said. "New forms of anti-Semitism have evolved. They often incorporate elements of traditional anti-Semitism. However, the distinguishing feature of the new anti-Semitism is criticism of Zionism or Israeli policy that – whether intentionally or unintentionally – has the effect of promoting prejudice against all Jews by demonizing Israel and Israelis and attributing Israel's perceived faults to its Jewish character."

In a town where tone often matters more than substance in assessing a government's priorities, the pronounced focus on anti-Semitism stands out, especially when compared to the State Department's separate, relatively muted report on human rights worldwide.

U.S. diplomats and other officials will be expected to take their cues from this forceful language in how they deal with political groups and individuals overseas.

In its introductory overview – generally the part of any report that is most closely read by U.S. officials seeking guidance on an issue – the report singles out governments that have had particularly parlous relations with the Bush administration, including Iran, Syria and Venezuela.

The body of the report, however, includes pronounced examples of anti-Semitism among the elites of nations that the United States has cultivated as allies, including Russia, Ukraine and Iraq.

Among other examples, it notes cartoons in the Greek and Arab press depicting Israelis as Nazis, as well as statements by Greek and British politicians to that effect. Some examples date as far back as 1991, and the report also includes examples of graffiti without reporting whether it is sanctioned or tolerated by the responsible authorities.

> ***'Ukraine is a country that we're particularly concerned about at the moment'***

More could have been done to rate how different nations tackle anti-Semitism, said Paul LeGendre, the senior associate for fighting discrimination and hate crimes at Human Rights First, the only major human rights watchdog that deals with hate crimes.

"Ukraine is a country that we're particularly concerned about at the moment," LeGendre said by way of example.

LeGendre said its government has condemned outbreaks of anti-Semitism, but "it doesn't seem to be translating into action at the police local levels, where crimes need to be prosecuted as hate crimes and not hooliganism."

Still, he welcomed the report as an important contribution to raising awareness.

"I hope this keeps it on the radar screen and lets other governments know that the U.S. sees this as an important issue that needs to be taken seriously," LeGendre said.

The report, which was sent to Congress last month, culminates four years of research launched in 2004 after U.S. lawmakers passed a bill commissioning such a report. The process was accelerated in 2006 when President George W. Bush named Gregg Rickman the first U.S. special envoy on anti-Semitism.

Jewish groups, including the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee, welcomed the report, as did some members of Congress.

"All too often, legitimate criticism of the State of Israel can veer into naked anti-Semitism characterized by vile hate speech," said Howard Berman, a Democratic congressman from California and the chairman of the House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee, in a statement. "When hate speech arises, we should call it what it is – and do what can be done to stop it."

The 94-page report deals at length with Holocaust denial as a vehicle for anti-Semitism, focusing particularly on the role Iran's government has taken in its propagation. It also targets the United Nations system, saying the double standards some of its constituent bodies display toward Israel promote a hostile environment for Jews.

"Regardless of the intent, disproportionate criticism of Israel as barbaric and unprincipled and corresponding discriminatory measures adopted in the UN against Israel have the effect of causing audiences to associate negative attributes with Jews in general, thus fuelling anti-Semitism," it says.

The report noted the singling out of Israel for condemnation by the UN General Assembly and, in particular, the UN Human Rights Council, as well as the tendency to keep Israel out of regional groupings, hampering its efforts to accrue legitimacy. At the same time, it commended the recent increase in General Assembly condemnations of anti-Semitism.

Seder prayers urged for soldiers' release

JERUSALEM — Zeev Bielski, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, is urging Jews around the world to say a special prayer for Israel's kidnapped soldiers at their Passover seders.

"Passover is approaching. The festival commemorates the liberation of the Jewish people from slavery to freedom," Bielski said in an open letter April 13.

"It is at this time, when we are together with our families at the Passover seder, that we remember our kidnapped soldiers – Gilad Shalit, Eldad Regev, and Ehud Goldwasser – together with the other missing soldiers of the [Israel Defence Forces]."

Eldad Regev

Gilad Shalit

Ehud Goldwasser

The appeal is being made in conjunction with the World Zionist Organization and the Israeli group Habanim, which advocates for the release of Shalit, who was kidnapped and taken to Gaza by Hamas in June 2006, and Regev and Goldwasser, who were kidnapped by Hezbollah along the Lebanese border in July 2006.

The prayer, written by Sephardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar, can be found by going to Jewishagency.org and following the link on the left side of the page.

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AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

Iran is the threat, Livni tells Gulf leaders in Qatar

By BARAK RAVID
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DOHA, Qatar — Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni arrived here on Sunday to attend the 8th annual Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade, where she was invited to give a keynote speech. Senior Lebanese and Iranian officials responded by cancelling their participation.

"The Arab states cannot continue sitting on the fence when it comes to support and backing for the peace process," Livni told *Ha'aretz* Sunday.

The most prominent cancellation over Livni's speech came from the Lebanese Parliament speaker and leader of the Shia Amal movement, Nabih Beri. Beri was also scheduled to address the forum, and to hold talks with senior Qatari government officials about the political crisis in Lebanon.

Others boycotting the conference are former Lebanese foreign minister Fawzi Salloukh, who has close ties to Hezbollah, and former Iranian president Mohammad Khatami.

Livni wants to enlist Qatar and other Persian Gulf states represented at the conference in the peace process, she told *Ha'aretz*. Specifically, she wishes to convey to the Arab officials she meets that "Israel is no longer the enemy," and that a situation has been created in which the threat is posed by Iran and extremist elements such as Hamas and Hezbollah.

"We are negotiating with the Palestinian Authority based on a final result of two nation states, and the Arab world is of great significance here," Livni emphasized. "Reaching an agreement will require historic compromises on the part of both Israel and the Palestinian Authority (PA), and the greater the support from the Arab states, the easier it will be for the Palestinians to reach decisions."

Livni added that PA President Mahmoud Abbas "is likely to encounter attacks from within over nearly every decision he makes regarding the peace process, and therefore the Arab world cannot go on sitting on the sidelines, but must help him. It is not only important to prepare the leadership for an agreement, but also public opinion in the Arab world, and to enlist its support."

Livni plans to use the forum to promote her initiative for an international ban on allowing terror organizations to run in democratic elections. She introduced the idea at the United Nations General Assembly last September, and has raised the matter in all her meetings since.

"Organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah exploit the democratic system to take over the country," she said.

Livni was also scheduled to meet with the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, and with Sheikh Hamad bin Jassem, Qatar's premier and foreign minister, to discuss political matters and bilateral relations, with an emphasis on trade ties.

She was to meet with the emir's wife, Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser al-Missned, and visit educational facilities that operate under her auspices. This would be Sheikha Mozah's first meeting with an Israeli government official.

Livni's visit to speak at an international forum was the first by a senior Israeli official since then-president Shimon Peres visited Doha in January 2007, when he was deputy prime minister.

Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni

Like all six U.S.-allied Gulf Arab states, Qatar does not have official diplomatic ties with Israel, but unlike them, it does host a small Israeli trade mission.

Qatari officials, including al-Thani, have met Livni before, but her invitation to speak on Arab land remains a significant step forward in Arab-Israeli relations.

On the eve of her trip, Livni told Qatar's *Al-Watan* newspaper that "stopping Iran is in the joint interest of Israel and the Arab world together and generates the understanding that Israel and Islamic countries in the region face a common threat."

Livni praised Qatar's willingness to talk to all parties in the Middle East conflict, and saw an opportunity for Israel and the Arabs to build a front against Iran's nuclear ambitions.

"Iran represents a threat to the region and to the world, and we cannot tolerate a nuclear-armed Iran… I see an opportunity here," she said.

Like the other Sunni Muslim-ruled Gulf Arab countries, Qatar is concerned about the growing influence of Shiite Muslim Iran and its uranium enrichment program.

Iran says its program is meant for electricity generation, but Washington charges it wants to develop atomic weapons.

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Palestinians kill three Israelis

Palestinian terrorists killed three Israeli civilians working at a fuel depot on the Gaza Strip border. Gunmen struck the Nahal Oz border terminal last Wednesday, shortly after a shipment of European Union-funded fuel arrived to be pumped in to Gaza. Along with the three Israelis killed, one other was wounded, officials said. Israeli forces gave chase as the assailants tried to retreat. At least three terrorists were reported killed. The attack was claimed jointly by Islamic Jihad, the Popular Resistance Committees and Fatah's al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade. They said their aim had been to abduct an Israeli soldier.

Olmert threatens Hamas

Ehud Olmert vowed Israel would take steps to incapacitate Hamas. The Israeli prime minister made his comments during a talk at a pre-Passover toast for Kadima activists at the party's Petah Tikva headquarters, a day after three Israelis were killed by terrorists in the Negev. Olmert said Hamas would be held accountable for every attack in the south, no matter which terrorist group claimed responsibility, according to the *Jerusalem Post*.

Officials to meet Carter

Israeli government officials will meet with former U.S. president Jimmy Carter when he visits the country this week. President Shimon Peres, Defence Minister Ehud Barak, Shas Party chairman Eli Yishai and Israel Beiteinu leader Avigdor Lieberman said they would meet with Carter, despite outrage in Israel over a planned meeting with Hamas leader Khaled Meshal in Damascus. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni both declined to meet Carter, citing "scheduling conflicts." Leaders in Washington and Jerusalem reacted with outrage last week to reports that Carter planned to meet with Meshal. A U.S. State Department spokesperson said senior officials counselled Carter not to proceed with the meeting, and Democratic presidential contenders Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton both said they disagreed with his plans. Carter had planned to arrive in Israel on Sunday and travel to Sderot on Monday.

Neo-Nazis confess

Four young men confessed to violence in the service of a neo-Nazi cell. Four of eight alleged members of the Jewish state's first known neo-Nazi cell accepted a plea bargain in Tel Aviv District Court under which they face jail sentences of between eight months and four years. The defendants, three of whom are minors, admitted to assaulting religious Jews and foreign workers, and vandalizing shuls. The four other suspects, believed to be the group's ringleaders, are considering separate plea bargains. The group was arrested last year after a protracted police investigation. All are recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union, including some not considered halachically Jewish. The case shocked Israel and prompted calls for immigration criteria to be reviewed.

Vanunu seeks asylum

Nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu has asked for asylum in Norway for a second time, but officials there held out no hope he would be accepted. Vanunu, whom Israeli authorities have barred from leaving Israel, sent his application directly to Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg. His first asylum application to Norway in 2004 was rejected.

–from JTA and Ha'aretz

New spy photos reveal secret Iranian missile site, report says

© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — A series of recently released spy photos have uncovered the secret location where Iran has allegedly been developing long-range ballistic missiles capable of striking Europe, *The Times* of London reported last Friday.

The satellite pictures pinpoint the facility where Iran launched its Kavoshgar 1 "research" rocket in February, the report said. Iran has claimed that rocket was tested as part of its space program.

Analysis of QuickBird satellite photos taken by Digital Globe, an imagery and information company, just a few days after the launch, show details indicating that the site of the research rocket is the same location where Iran is preparing a ballistic missile with a range of 6,000 kilometres, the report said.

The site is about 230 kilometres southeast of Tehran. The connection between the research rocket and Iran's long-range program was exposed by Jane's Intelligence Review, a British-based military intelligence group, following an analysis of the photos by a former Iraqi weapons inspector, *The Times* said.

The analysis of the photos suggests that Iran is pursuing a space program similar to that being developed in North Korea, with a focus on long-range missile technology, according to the report.

An analyst at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Geoffrey Forden, said that a structure on the Iranian site roughly 40 metres in length closely resembled a Taepodong long-range missile assembly facility in North Korea, *The Times* reported.

The editor of *Jane's Proliferation* has said that based on examination of the Iranian site, Tehran may be just five years away from developing the long-range missile, the report concluded.

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By NOREEN SADIK
Israel 21c

JISR A-ZARKA, Israel – Her tired eyes jumped from person to person, and she is obviously scared and confused by the excitement that she has caused. And who could blame her? Until now, she has never been exposed to so many foreigners and cameras, or been the object of so much curiosity.

Miriam Amash, born in 1888 in el-Makhaber (now Kibbutz Ma'agan Michael), lives in the northern Israeli Arab beach town, Jisr a-Zarka. This relatively poor fishing community numbers 12,000. There are no street names to guide newcomers around the town, but it really doesn't matter because everyone seems to know where Amash lives. Mention her name and residents say, smiling, "She's the oldest lady in the world! Go down to the end of the road, turn right, then left, and you'll be near her house – just ask anyone!"

Wearing a flowered skirt, striped colourful sweater and a white headscarf, Amash sat surrounded by three generations of family members. At the tender age of 120, she just might possibly be the oldest person in the world. As of now, 114-year-old Edna Parker of Shelbyville, Ind., is the holder of the title. Whether Amash will be entered into *Guinness World Records* is yet to be seen.

A trip to Hadera, Israel, to the Ministry of the Interior to replace her lost identification card brought the world to Amash's front door. Although her wrinkled hands proudly held her new ID card, displaying the year of her birth, her most highly prized possession seemed to be her Israeli passport, for this was her ticket to visit "God's house five times," referring to the Muslim pilgrimage (hajj) to Saudi Arabia.

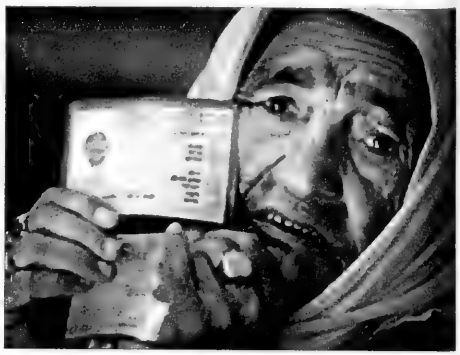
Oblivious to the reason why so many people in the world are fascinated by her, she sat patiently answering what questions she could. Her hands, covered by tattoos, hugged her great-great-great-grandson, Iyad, to her chest, an act that seemed to give her the courage to face her audience.

Although it is not clear just how much she does remember, she does have faded memories of the years of the Turkish and British rule, and the events that led to Israel's creation.

She was married twice, but it was her second marriage in 1914 that produced 11 children, three of whom she has outlived. Her eldest child is in her late 80s, and her eldest grandchild is 55 years old. How many people can boast about having 120 grandchildren and 250 great-grandchildren? When asked if she would be interested in marrying again, she emphatically replied, "No," and kissed her hands, raising them to the heavens. However, she did take that opportunity to point out several of her grandsons and great-grandsons who were present and just happened to be of marrying age.

Amash said that she has lived a good, easy life. Her second husband was a well-to-do landowner. They raised camels, sheep and cows, and they made their living from their animals and from the sale of milk, cheese and yogurt. Her husband passed away in 1989 at the age of 105.

She now lives in a large room that is attached to the lower level of a family member's house. Um Hilmee, as she is called, comes from another era but seems to enjoy the modernity of today's life. She has everything that she needs – a bed, a small kitchenette with a refrigerator (although she shares in the family's meals) and, most important, she has family all around her.



Miriam Amash, a resident of the northern Israeli Arab beach town of Jisr a-Zarka, is 120 years old.

In a way, she maintains a sense of independence. Although her granddaughter sleeps in the room with her, she walks without the aid of a walker. While she is a little hard of hearing, she does not have any obvious health problems and is probably the envy of many much younger then her.

So what is her secret to living to such an advanced age? It seems that the key to her good health is living tension free and indulging in good, hearty, preservative-free, salt-free and fat-free meals. She eats only natural foods such as yogurt, milk, meat and olive oil, as well as "*khubazi*" and "*ilik*" – wild, leafy-green mountain vegetables. No food passes her lips after six in the evening. She spends a part of every day walking around the village visiting friends and family. And, of course, she never smoked in her life. She calls her long life "a gift from God."

Amash is a woman who avoids problems. When asked what her hopes for the future are, she replied wisely: "I like everyone. I want all people to be friends, and to get along well."

As the day progressed and the strangers' questions continued, she grew increasingly tired. Not impressed with the commotion that her age had caused, she said with frustration, "If only I had not gone to the ministry, none of this would have happened to me!" Several times, she raised her hands and said "*halas*," indicating that she did not want to talk anymore or be the subject of the photographers' cameras.

She had her moment in the spotlight, but clearly was waiting for the world's attention to be turned elsewhere.

NOREEN SADIK is a freelance writer for ISRAEL21c, a media organization focusing on 21st-century Israel. Printed by courtesy of the Jerusalem Post.

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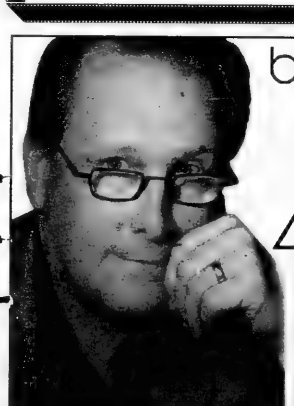
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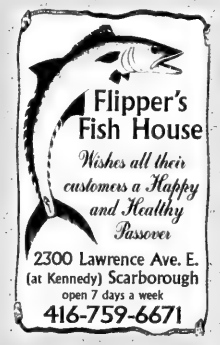

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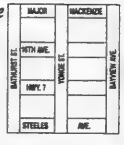

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Films of Jewish interest at Hot Docs festival

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israeli society in the early 1960s was conservative, if not puritanical. But as the sensational trial of arch Nazi war criminal Adolph Eichmann got under way, Israelis began snapping up a series of soft-core-pornographic pocketbooks, known as stalags, at kiosks.

Named after German prisoner-of-war camps where captured allied soldiers were held, stalags were virtually the only pornography available in Israel at the time.

Stalags, one of the lowest forms of pulp fiction, usually told perverse tales of American and British PoWs being physically abused by beautiful, busty, scantily clad, sadistic female SS guards usually wearing high boots and wielding whips. Some stalags, however, turned on Israeli "avengers" who took out their rage on Nazis in Germany.

Whatever the story line, each stalag invariably ended with the prisoners taking revenge on their Nordic-looking tormentors by raping and killing them.

These peculiar pocketbooks, which glorified sex and violence, are explored in Ari Libsker's *Stalags – Holocaust and Pornography in Israel*, one of the films of Jewish interest scheduled to appear at the forthcoming Hot Docs documentary film festival (which runs from April 17-27).

Stalags – which will be screened on Thursday, April 24, at 9 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre and again on Sunday, April 27, at 7 p.m. at the Isabel Bader Theatre – is an engaging and intriguing film about a short-lived cultural phenomenon that surfaced as Israelis were exposed to the enormity of the Holocaust for really the first time. Today, stalags, a curiosity, can only be found in second-hand book shops.

According to Libsker, stalags were portrayed as Hebrew translations of English works, but in fact they were written by Israelis such as Maxim Gilan, who went go on to be the publisher of a leftist magazine on Arab-Israeli affairs, and Eli Keidar, a failed journalist whose mother lost her entire family in the Holocaust.

The first stalag, which resembled a lurid comic book, appeared after the Eichmann trial began. It was a bestseller, bought by 80,000 readers.

Two years after the first edition rolled off the press, stalags disappeared. Having offended Holocaust survivors, they were outlawed after a court ruled that they peddled pornography. An Israeli judge comments that stalags were "the figment of sick Israeli minds." Libsker suggests that the edition that crossed all lines of acceptability was *I Was Colonel Schultz's Private Bitch*.

* * *

To See If I'm Smiling, by Tamar Yarom, recounts the experiences of six women in the Israeli army who were shaken or traumatized by what they saw or had to do while in uniform. They are articulate, voluble and sensitive.

Yarom made this documentary many years after watching a Palestinian terrorist suspect being tortured. It will be shown on Wednesday, April 23, at 9:15 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre and again at the Bloor Cinema on Sunday, April 27, at 1 p.m.

Meytal in *To See If I'm Smiling*

Meytal, a boyish-looking medic, wanted to save lives and jumped for joy when she was posted to the Palestinian territories. But when she was asked to clean the corpse of a Palestinian who had been illegally abused, she was shocked and, later, could not sleep. "How in hell did I think I'd ever be able to forget?" she asks plaintively.

Rotem, an observer, was overcome by moral qualms after a soldier shot a Palestinian she had spotted. Inbar, an operations sergeant, was torn by pangs of conscience after a commanding officer changed a report. Dana, an education officer, was shunned after becoming a whistle blower over the theft of Qur'ans. Tal, a welfare officer, still shudders when she remembers the glare of hatred of an aggrieved Palestinian woman. Libi, a combat soldier, seems grief-stricken after making 80 Arabs stand in the hot sun for 12 hours.

Judging by this film, military service can leave a negatively indelible impression on some Israeli soldiers.

* * *

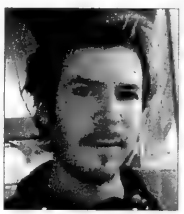
A Day In Palestine, a Canadian short of six minutes by Mary Ellen Davis, Jose Garcia-Lozano and Will Eizlini, is bereft of commentary and full of dreamy images of Palestinians climbing Israel's separation barrier, holding aloft the Palestinian flag and chanting slogans as Israeli soldiers descend menacingly from a hill.

These flickering vignettes are supposed to symbolize Israel's occupation of the territories and elicit sympathy for the Palestinian cause, but they show only one side of the conflict. It will be screened at the Bloor Cinema on Sunday, April 20, at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, April 26, at 12:45 p.m.

* * *

Poland was convulsed by a wave of state-sanctioned anti-Semitism, disguised as anti-Zionism, in the aftermath of the Six Day War. This campaign forced at least 20,000 Jews – the vast majority of whom were Communists who had assimilated themselves into Polish society – to leave the country between 1968 and 1969. Jacob Dammas, a descendant of one of those Jewish families, was born and raised in Copenhagen, Denmark.

In *Kredens*, a simple film 26 minutes in length with profound implications, he makes a sentimental journey to Wroclaw, Poland, to recover a family memento, a wooden cabinet known in Polish as a *kredens*. But as much as Dammas wants to reclaim this piece of furniture, the subliminal purpose of his trip is to make contact with Poles who knew his parents, even vaguely, and thus close a historical circle. He has a need to do that because neither his mother nor his grandmother – who lives in Israel today– wish to discuss the events that led to their flight from Poland.



Jacob Dammas

In impromptu visits, Dammas talks to several Polish men and one woman. They are usually fairly hospitable, but cannot help him find the *kredens*, his link to the past. Yet interestingly enough, almost all his interlocutors resort to a kind of implicit racism by stating that he does not look Jewish.

Kredens will be screened immediately after *Stalags*.

* * *

A Road To Mecca: The Journey of Mohammad Asad, by Georg Misch, is utterly fascinating. It's the story of Leopold Weiss (1900-1992), a descendant of rabbis and a European Jewish convert to Islam who wrote a best-selling memoir (*The Road to Mecca*) and learned texts on Islam and who served as Pakistan's first ambassador to the United Nations. This curious figure, whose goal was to reconcile Islam with the West, is fleshed out to only a certain degree. It will be screened on Saturday, April 19, at 9:45 at the Royal Ontario Museum and again on Sunday, April 20, at 1:30 p.m. at the Cumberland.

* * *

Stalags and *To See If I'm Smiling* are also scheduled to be screened at next month's Toronto Jewish Film Festival.

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Arts & Travel

Canadian artists' vision of Jerusalem on exhibit

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

My Jerusalem by Ian Leventhal.

Jerusalem Defined, a group exhibition presented by the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada, opens this month as part CONTACT, Toronto's annual photography festival.

The exhibit, at the System 4 Gallery from April 28 to May 31, includes giclee prints on canvas based on photography by Canadian artist Gina Godfrey; an evocative study of coexisting cultures by photographer Beverley Abramson; a large-scale painted installation by fabric artist Rochelle Rubinstein; and spiritual works by Toronto muralist Ian Leventhal, in his Chagall-like style.

Leventhal, 56, a commercial artist, is a longtime volunteer in the Jewish community. For the past three years, he has served as the executive director of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada. The organization, dedicated to raising money for the Israeli city, was founded by the late Jerusalem mayor Teddy Kollek.

"A year ago January, there was a journalist/artist mission to Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Foundation brought several artists and writers to explore Jerusalem through the eyes of the Jerusalem Foundation – a sort of behind-the-scenes view of the city and how it works," says Leventhal, who acted as organizer and curator for the sojourn.

"From the photography, sketches and writings of that trip, we used material to create a journalistic overview that spawned several articles, and with the artistic overview we took the vision of what the artists thought of Jerusalem and created an exhibition around it."

This Jewish calendar year both the Jerusalem Foundation and the reunification of Jerusalem celebrate a 40th anniversary.

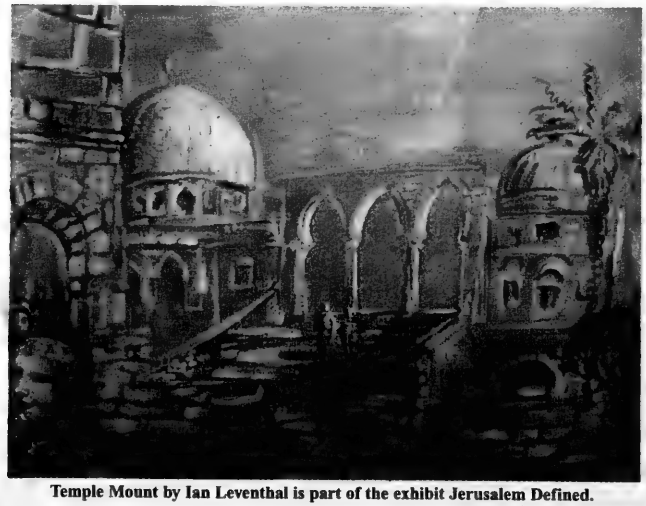
"To commemorate the reunification and the foundation, we created Jerusalem Defined," Leventhal says. "The exhibition is a fundraiser, with the artists donating a significant amount of the proceeds of the artwork to fund projects of the Jerusalem Foundation.

"The original Jerusalem Defined, which opened last October in Jerusalem at the Jerusalem Theatre, combined our Canadian artists' efforts with local Israeli talent. The exhibition was so successful that we decided to bring it to Toronto as a fundraiser and sale in April. For the Toronto exhibit we are only highlighting the Canadian artists."

Monies raised in Toronto will go to the Gan Hashalom, a peace kindergarten devoted to teaching 120 Jewish and Arab children, from two to five, love and tolerance, with an emphasis on Jewish, Islamic and Christian celebrations and festivals.

Jerusalem Defined opens with a gala on April 28 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Tickets are $60; admission to the exhibit is free at other times. The gala includes a silent auction of fine art and photography; El Al tickets to Israel; restaurant coupons and wine. Tickets can be purchased at System 4 Gallery, 70 Wingold Ave.; by phone at 416-741-5542; or online at infor@system4.ca.

For more information about the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada, visit www.jerusalemfoundation.ca.



Temple Mount by Ian Leventhal is part of the exhibit Jerusalem Defined.

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Rewarding Broadway Experience

Broadway entertainer lovingly lays on the schmaltz

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Bruce Adler

Simon Spiro

"Yiddish is the language of my heart," said the American entertainer Bruce Adler about midway through *A Yiddish Spectacular: Lach'n & Leb'n*.

He was not kidding.

In an April 6 concert at Beth Tzedec Congregation produced by Cantor Simon Spiro, Adler – a latter-day vaudevillian whose parents were stars of the Yiddish theatre in New York City – showed what he could do with a vibrant but dying language.

Whether he was singing a haunting Moshe Oysher cantorial melody or belting out a sparkling rendition of *I Love You So Much* with Spiro, his heart was always in it.

On stage, he evoked the memory of his parents, Julius Adler and Henrietta Jacobson, a renowned husband-and-wife team whose domain was the Lower East Side in the first half of the 20th century.

Easily switching back and forth between Yiddish and English, Adler transported the audience on a sentimental journey in both the Yiddish theatre and Yiddish radio before seguing into Broadway hits based on the plays *Crazy for You* and *Those Were the Days*, for which he earned Tony nominations.

And if he was not happily basking in schmaltzy sentiment, he was firing off a series of light-hearted jokes steeped in Catskills humour and, in one racy instance, tinged in eroticism.

In a biting reference to overindulgent food fests at Catskills resorts, he observed, "You check in as a guest and you check out as cargo."

Describing the rigours of old age, he reduced it to a brief exchange between an elderly couple. Wife: "Do you want to come upstairs and make love?" Husband: "I can't do both."

In a parody of a weather forecast on a Yiddish radio station, he said, "It could be better, it could be worse."

Resorting to gallows humour, he placed himself inside Jack the Ripper's mother's skin: "Why don't I see you with the same girl twice?"

Rising to the occasion in this bouncy and sardonic spirit, Adler, sometimes in tandem with Spiro, talked, kibbitzed and sang his way through his Yiddish-inflected routine.

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

ISRAEL BALLET AND DANCE SUPERSTARS PERFORM KOFFLER CENTRE GALA ON MAY 4

The Israel Ballet and dance superstars from Germany, Lithuania, Russia and Europe will grace the stage with principals from the National Ballet of Canada in an upcoming gala performance for the Koffler Centre of the Arts.

The Israel Ballet is to perform a world première at the seventh annual *Stars of the 21st Century* as a fundraiser for the Koffler Centre of the Arts. It takes place at the Toronto Centre for the Arts on May 4, 8 p.m.

Established 31 years ago, the Koffler Centre of the Arts offers a rich mix of classes in dance, music and visual arts, and operates the Koffler Gallery, the Koffler Chamber Orchestra, the Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards, the Jewish Book Fair and the Rikudiyah Israeli Dance Festival.

Executive director Lori Starr is working on plans to build a new multipurpose, 40,000-square-foot facility that she says will be "a signature building on the new Bathurst Street Sherman Campus" and a place "where people and art will come together to generate a true sense of community."

Tickets for *Stars of the 21st Century* range from $60 to $165 and are available at www.ticketmaster.ca or by calling 416-872-1111. For patron tickets, including a reception and dinner, contact Tobi Liederman, 416-636-1880, ext. 271. www.kofflercentre.com

* * *

Names in the News: Toronto author **Anna Porter** was named the winner of the $15,000 Nereus Writers' Trust Non-Fiction Prize last week for her 2007 book *Kasztner's Train: The True Story of Rezso Kasztner, Unknown Hero of the Holocaust*, a comprehensive account of a Hungarian Holocaust hero. Other Canadian authors honoured at the Writers' Trust awards include Burlington native **Lawrence Hill** (who won the $15,000 fiction prize for *The Book of Negroes*) and **Craig Boyko, Martha Brooks, Michael Crummey, Graeme Gibson, David Helwig** and **Diane Schoemperlen**.

* * *

Paul Goldman Photographs: Upon fleeing Budapest in 1940, Hungarian-born photojournalist **Paul Goldman** arrived in Palestine during the tumultuous period at the close of the British mandate. Working as a freelance photographer for local newspapers and international news services, he recorded many historic scenes during a time of sweeping change in the 1940s and '50s.

More than 100 of his newly restored images, shot with a chunky Speed Graphic news camera, were unveiled in a 2004 exhibition at the Eretz Israel Museum in Tel Aviv. The exhibition, titled The Forgotten Photographs: The Work of Paul Goldman, 1943-1961, From the Collection of Spencer M. Partrich, goes on view May 5 for about two months at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum. The showing is co-sponsored by the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation in honour of Israel @ 60.

David Ben-Gurion in one of the classic photographs taken by Paul Goldman.

Goldman's simply composed, brightly lit shots represent a panorama of events, families, leaders, struggles and hopes. His best-known image shows Israeli prime minister **David Ben-Gurion** doing a headstand on the beach in Herzliyah in September 1957. "Paul Goldman seemed to have been almost everywhere and at the right moment," said curator **Shlomo Arad**, a former *Newsweek* photographer. "He stood with his camera by the cradle of the state in the making… His subjects were refugees and diplomats, leaders and ordinary men and women."

Images include peaceful streetscapes and beach scenes in Tel Aviv, and many scenes of political significance. For example, Goldman was one of the first photographers on the scene of the 1946 explosion at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. All are welcome at the opening reception at the Beth Tzedec, 1700 Bathurst St., Monday May 5, 7 to 9 p.m. The exhibition runs until June 30. 416-781-3514, ext. 232 or 416-932-2260

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Jazz and Jewish music artist **Brian Katz** teams up with klezmer clarinetist/flutist **Jonno Lightstone** to explore some rarely performed klezmer repertoire. "The inviting texture of the classical guitar and flute will especially intrigue listeners who have yet to hear the quieter side of klezmer," Katz said. The duo perform at Mezzetta, 681 St. Clair Ave. W. $7 cover. Wednesday, April 16, 9 to 11 p.m. Reservations, 416-658-5687.

• New Generation Film and the Toronto Jewish Film Festival present *Six Days in June*, a recent documentary by **Ilan Ziv**, produced with partial Canadian involvement, which is said to chronicle the events of 40 years ago with a "fresh historical perspective." Check it out at www.sixdaysmovie.com. Screening (19+) is at Bloor Cinema, 506 Bloor St. W., April 17, 8 p.m. with a reception at 7:30. $15 in advance or at the door. 416-324-9121

• Markham Little Theatre presents *Over The River And Through The Woods*, by **Joe DiPietro**. $21, $18. 171 Town Centre Blvd. April 23 to 26, 8 p.m. 905-305-SHOW (7469)

• Five young musicians from the former Soviet Union join several young performers in Canada, including 11-year-old **Julia Mirzoev** of Thornhill, in *Young Stars of the Young Century*, an upcoming gala concert presented by Show One Productions. The concert features virtuoso players and singers, between seven and 20 years of age. $30, $50. George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Saturday, April 26, 7 p.m. 416-872-5555 or www.ticketmaster.ca

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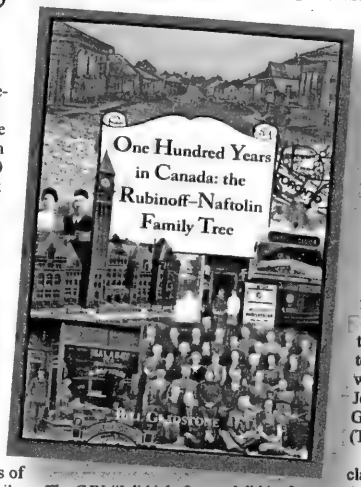
Books & Authors

CJN columnist pens genealogical tribute to his family

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN



"Labour of love" is an understatement.

Writer Bill Gladstone, a longtime *CJN* arts columnist and well-known genealogist, toiled for more than 20 years on his latest book, fuelled not only by an obvious love for the subject but also by a whiff of regret at not having pressed his grandparents for more information about his family's roots.

The results are a unique contribution to Canadian Jewish history: *One Hundred Years in Canada: the Rubinoff-Naftolin Family Tree* (Now & Then Books) is a 381-page treasure trove on a single, though greatly extended, family.

The illustrated history was launched earlier this month before about 125 delighted members of the sprawling Rubinoff-Naftolin family, which split into five distinct branches. Sub-clans include Cohens, Patliks, Slovins, Edsons and variations on Rubinoff (Rubinov, Rubin, Rubinowitz).

Gladstone, 54, whose late mother Shirley's maiden name was Naftolin, proves a dogged researcher whose results are nothing if not thorough.

The book contains 600 photographs culled from family collections, and brims with dozens of highly detailed genealogical charts, birth, death and marriage records, maps, clippings, ship manifests and other archival documents.

Part detective and part journalist, Gladstone pored over mountains of archives beginning in the mid-1980s. But it was the advent of the Internet in the early 1990s that helped the most.

"Researchers gain tremendously in the age of the Internet," Gladstone told *The CJN*. "I did it before and did it after. And before, it was really hit or miss. You paid a lot more and you got less.

"Today, you're still searching for needles in haystacks, but you're able to lift a whole haystack."

He went on to tap such rich online sources as JewishGen, the Ellis Island database, Canadian naturalization and citizenship records, and the *Toronto Star*'s Pages of the Past index.

He also interviewed more than 200 relatives.

There's a chapter devoted to the family organization, the Agudas Hamishpocha (United Families Organization), which marks its 80th anniversary this year. It operated much like any landsmanschaft, with its own loan society, ladies' auxiliary and charity committees. (It's planning an anniversary luncheon for later this year.)

The story of the clan starts in the mid-1800s in the Minsk and Moghilev provinces in the so-called Russian Pale of Settlement, translating to modern-day southeast Belarus. Five Rubinowitz siblings and their spouses are the family's earliest known ancestors.

Facing poverty, pogroms and the threat of military conscription, about 100 relatives fled between 1905 and 1914 to Toronto on a sea journey that began in the Latvian port of Libau. Like thousands of other Jews, they arrived hungry, frightened and usually penniless.

The book "stands as testament to the sacrifices they made," Gladstone told his relatives at the launch, which was co-sponsored by the Ontario Jewish Archives and Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto).

Despite the family's branches, clans and surnames, "it should be pointed out that we are all, genetically speaking, equally Rubinowitzes or Rubinoffs," Gladstone writes. The intertwinings happened as a result of various cousin marriages, so the Naftolins are woven into 2½ of the mishpochah's five branches – "far more extensively than any other 'clan.'"

For the author, the book began "as a curiosity. I remember when I first saw my grandfather's naturalization papers, I really didn't know where those places were. You just start asking questions, and one leads to another.

"When I started, I really had no idea where it was going to end up. For many years, I never really thought there could be a definitive product, because there were too many dead ends."

The book, completed with the assistance of David and Rachel Rubinoff and their children Penny and Robert, is available by contacting rubnaft@sympatico.ca.

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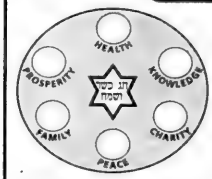

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List with us and appear on our Website: www.foresthill.com

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CENTRAL PROPERTIES

NEW HOME – FOREST HILL RD $4,295,000
4600 square feet + walkup Lower Level on 50 x 146 lot on Belt Line. Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

GREAT LOT BACKING ONTO FOREST HILL BELT LINE
Perfect to Add on or Build New, Lot Dimensions are 37.5 x 134, Preliminary Plans Available. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

SPECTACULAR PRIME YONGE/SHEPPARD CUSTOM BUILT
$1,178,000. New, next to park! 50' x 120' Lot, 4 bdrm, 6 bath, high ceilings, finished W/O basement. Boris Abramov* 905-881-7653

649 BRIAR HILL AVENUE! S/E CORNER CHAPLIN CRES!
$1,150,000! Amazing 4+1Br 4bth exec res! Mn fam+2pce! Nanny ste! Fab 47x125'! Walk to shul! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

PRIME CHAPLIN ESTATES!! $1,099,000 40 X 124' LOT
Det 2 Stry 4 Bdrm, 3 Bth Large Fam Rm Addition w/Bsmt, Priv Dr + Gar, Prof. Landscaped, Great Loc. Jay Bleiweis* 416-488-2875

CUSTOM BUILT HOME - FAYWOOD/SHEPPARD $999,999
Near Completion, 3600 Sq. Ft., 50 x 150 ft, Top Quality Finishes Thruout, 4 Bedrooms, 4 Baths. Faithe Eversky** 416-488-2875

NORTH/BAYVIEW PROPERTIES

ARJAY ON THE RAVINE – O'LOOKS GOLF COURSE $6,680,000
Fab New Chateau, Insp Masterpiece! Gated Ent, Heated Flrs, High Clngs, Walnut Lib, His+Hers Ens, L/L Wine Cellar. C. Feldman** 416-488-2875

HOGGS HOLLOW NEW PRICE $3,595,000
Breathtaking New Home on Secluded Lot with Walk-up Lower Level, Theatre Room, Wine Cellar, Exquisite European Finishings. Carolyn Feldman* 416-488-2875

HUGE POOL SIZED LOT! YORK MILLS/BAYVIEW!
$2,350,000! Stunning 5 bdrm,1.5 yr new. Huge 60x160' widens to 100'! 2nd flr lounge! Excellent location! Debi Stone*416-226-1987

171 HOLLYWOOD AVENUE! NOW $ 1,199,900!
Bayview N/Sheppard! Unbelievable find! Lux 4+1. 5bth! Mn fam-lib+Lau+2pce! Motivated! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

5 FAIRLEA AVENUE! THORNHILL UPLANDS GOLF COURSE!
$1,150,000! Most sought after local! Sensational 100x160' lot! Build your dream home! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

BUY NOW AND BUILD LATER
Great Investment Potential!! Currently generating over $4,000per/mth. Great Loc. on a 51x242 Ft. Lot. Call L. Reznik* 905-881-7653

THORNHILL WOODS GEM
Just Reduced!! Executive Home, Prof. Designed & Decorated. Call Marc Atkins** For More Details. 905-881-7653

STUNNING 4 BDRM HOME IN THORNHILL WOODS
Designer Decorated, Fabulous Layout, Top of the Line Appl's, & Upgraded Features Thru-out. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

GORGEOUS 4 BDRM VOGUE BUILT HOME IN THORNHILL WOODS
Immaculate and Totally Upgraded Home on Great Street w/Main Flr Office. A Must See! Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

EXCLUSIVE THORNHILL WOODS LISTING
Fabulous 4Bdrm Home on Sought After Street w/Limestone and Hardwood Flooring on Main Flr. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

BACKSPLIT 3BR WITH TWO RENTAL UNITS!!! $629,500
Excellent home w/added income, sep entrance for rentals. Interlock driveway & patios. Won't last!!! Mark Cowan* 416-226-1987 SOLD

CLARK/WESTMINSTER $589,000
Fab Bright + Spac'us 5 Bdrm, 3400+Fin Lwr Lvl w/Scarlett O'Hara Staircase, Hrdwd+Great Mstr Ste. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

NORTH/BAYVIEW PROPERTIES CONT'D.

$548,900! GORGEOUS, BATHURST & STEELES RESIDENCE!
Spacious 4 bedroom + sitting room with main floor family room + library. Finished basement. Leon Soberano** 416-226-1987

THORNHILL WOODS END UNIT TOWNHOUSE
Aspen Ridge Built w/Finished Lwr Lvl, Hardwood Flrs, 9' Ceilings on Main, Feels Like a Semi! Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

BEAUTIFUL 7 YEARS OLD HOME ON 41FT WIDE LOT
Large rooms, upgraded kitchen, family rm, oak stairs & parquet on both flrs, 9 ft ceiling, entrance to grge. B. Abramov* 905-881-7653

BRIGHT RENOVATED HOME BACKS ONTO OPEN SPACE
Prime R. Hill, on court, 2 car garage, newer windows, furnace, CAC(04), roof(03), fin basement. Boris Abramov* 905-881-7653

EAST PROPERTIES

MAGNIFICENT RAVINE LOT! GREAT INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY!
$649,900! View of Lake & in SOLD pool. One of a kind! Country style home w/mod kit, sunrm, 2 driveways. B. Westbrook* 416-226-1987

CONDOMINIUM PROPERTIES

SPECTACULAR CLASSIC 2500 SF, 3 BDRM + DEN $1,139,000
Upper Forest Hill Reno. Gorgeous Spacious Sunken LR For DR Eat-in Kit, Balc, All Custom, 2 Prkng. Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

10 DELISLE – RARELY OFFERED CORNER SUITE $$$ UPGRADES
1464 Sq.Ft + 750 sq ft Terrace, Fabulous View of the City, 2 Bdrms, 2 Bths, Many Built-ins, Fireplace. Faithe Eversky** 416-488-2875

10 TICHESTER $499,000 FOREST HILL SUBWAY
Lovely 2 Bedroom, 2 Bath, SOLD Hardwood, Bright, 2 Parking, 1500 sq ft, Close to All Amenities. Linda Reitapple* 416-488-2875

PRICE REDUCED TO SELL
Come see this spectacular Boutique Condo in the Heart of North York, too many upgrades to list. Lahav Reznik* 905-881-7653

BATHURST/SHEPPARD – 2 BDRM + DEN $424,900
Rarely Offered, 1464' Corner unit+2 Balc+2 Prkng+Lckr in Ashlee Terrace, Don't Miss This One!! Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

BAYVIEW/GREENLANE! 'THE LANDMARK' LUXURY BUILDING!
$329,999! Best price for this spacious, 2bdrm plus solarium condo. In mint condition! May occupancy! A. Eidlitz* 416-226-1987

YONGE/CLARK!- S/W PANORAMIC VIEWS W/OVER 1800 SQ.FT
Corner suite, w/hardwood floors, huge liv/din room, close to all amenities, Full rec facilities. Betty Copeland* 416-226-1987

AVENUE RD/LAWRENCE ELEGANT GEM $289,000
1 Bdrm+ Den Gourmet Granite Kitchen, Large LR/DR Open Style, 9 Ceiling, Prkng, Near Shops. Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

PRIME YONGE/SHEPPARD LOCATION W/SUBWAY ACCESS
1 Bedroom+Den+Balcony in Ultima South Tower Built By Menkes. Indoor Pool, 24 hr Security. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

RENTAL PROPERTIES

PRIME COMMERCIAL SPACE BATHURST/EGLINTON $2900/MO.
Approximately 1300 sq ft , Ideal for Showroom, cooking school, office, event venue, 1 parking. Faithe Eversky**416-488-2875

OUT OF TOWN PROPERTIES

LAKEVIEW 3+1 BR RAISED BUNGALOW 45MIN N. OF TO.
1.78 Acres, No Exit St., well priced, only $308,900. 45 minutes north of Toronto. Walk to lake & park. Rahman Y.* 905-881-7653

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NEW LISTINGS!
- 1121 Steeles Ave. West #1111 $329,900
- 7300 Yonge Street #1106 $369,900
- 80 Lord Seaton Drive $2,499,000
- 51 Old English Lane $1,649,900
- 2 Brendan Court $1,480,000
- 46 Donino Ave. $4,490,000
- 197 Edenbridge Drive $3,990,000
- 11 Purdon SOLD $599,900
- 257 Mullen SOLD $469,000
- 428 Spring Gate SOLD $829,900

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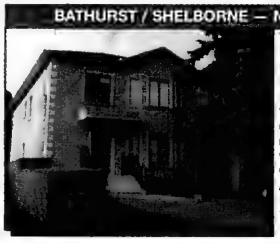
FEATURE HOME OF THE WEEK

BATHURST / SHELBORNE
Custom designed & built, approx. 3,600 sq. ft., 5 + 2 bedrooms, 6 baths, 10 ft. ceilings on main floor, French country kitchen, Tarion warranty, designer trim on baseboards, huge deck & front porch, luxury upgrades throughout. Prime central location close to schools, shopping, TTC. **Priced for immediate sale at only $1,199,000 — ACT NOW!** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

• • •

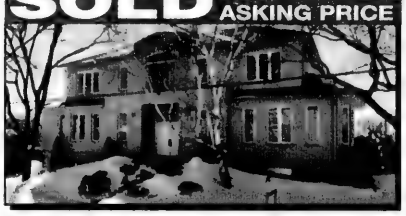
BATHURST / LAWRENCE — EXECUTIVE HOME FOR RENT
Spacious 3 bedroom sidesplit with family room on gorgeous 60 x 150 ft. lot, situated on quiet cul-de-sac in prestigious area. $3,900 /month. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

BATHURST / SHELBORNE — NEW PRICE



Exquisite 4 + 1 bdrm, 4 baths, surrounded by luxury homes, custom total renovation and addition, designer finishes throughout, modern kitchen w/granite counters. **ONLY $999,000 — ACT NOW!** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

SOLD FOR 95% OF ASKING PRICE



BATHURST / GLEN PARK — ARCHITECTURAL GEM
Magnificent custom exec. home, 3,500 sq. ft., lux. details throughout. Bright & spacious 4 + 1 bdrm., 4 baths, two heating & AC units / zones, designer windows, unique inlay hrdwd. flrs., granite floors & counters, crown mouldings, exquisite stone exterior, prof. landscaped. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

BATHURST / GLEN PARK — OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Spacious 3+2 bdrm. bungalow on generous 50 X 132 ft. corner lot in highly desirable location surrounded by luxury homes. Priced to sell fast at $689,000. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

PRIME RETAIL SPACE AT A PRICE THAT SPELLS P-R-O-F-I-T
Prestigious Bathurst / Glencairn, great opportunity for startup or existing business. **Priced for immediate rental at only $1,200 / MONTH — ACT NOW!** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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BATHURST & CLARK, ZAHAVY DRIVE
Walk to the Promenade Mall from this 4 bedroom home featuring a main floor family room with fireplace, a finished basement with a large recreation room, 5th bedroom, a 3 piece bath and office. Walkout from the kitchen to the patio and fully fenced private garden. Now offered at $459,900. View at www.rpt.ca/zahavy

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BATHURST / FLAMINGO $1,649,000

Brand new home on quiet, child-safe court, spectacular 230 foot lot with ravine setting. 5 bedrooms, 5 baths, Tarion warranty, superb finishes, hardwood floors, 2 fireplaces, family room, library, state-of-the-art dine-in kitchen, s/s appliances, w/out to deck, main floor office, 2nd level den/computer room, separate entry to guest suite, 3 car garage, interlock drive, walkout basement. Call Michelle Kahn at 416-441-2888 x 612.

BATHURST / CLARK $2,589,000

Magnificent custom built residence, exquisite living/dining combo, 10+ for entertaining. Elevator to all 3 flrs. Stunning foyer w/Scarlett O'Hara staircase. Main flr family room, w/o to garden & pool, huge kitchen with loads of cupboard & counter space. Main flr office & laundry, entry from garage. 5 bdrms + fin bsmt with fully equipped in-law suite. The list goes on and on. Call Michelle Kahn at 416-441-2888 x 612.

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Chag Sameach

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ETHEL SAPERA — TERRI SAPERA

349 Cortleigh Blvd. — By Valentino Fine Homes

$3,495,000 Magnificant! New Stone House on 50' x150' South Lot, 4+ Bdrms, Finest of Finishings, Outstanding kitchen & family rm w/walk-out to pool. Best block w/Gorgeous Country Setting!

521 Spadina Rd. — 5 Bdrm in Forest Hill

$2,295,000 Exceptional Home w/impressive 2 storey foyer, 9' ceilings, sunk-in living rm. Main flr family rm w/several walk-outs to pool & cabana Gated entrance w/lots of pkg.

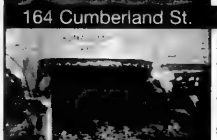
The Prince Arthur — Exquisite in Yorkville

$2,750,000 Great floor plan, Feels more like a house than an apt. Robert Noakes Design, Exquisite Finishes, Luxurious Master, Large LR w/built-ins, Sep. DR +2nd bdrm+den! 2 pkg, Direct Elevator into suite.

10 Bellair St. — Magnificent Condo

$1,690,000 Perfect Pied-A-Terre in the heart of Yorkville, 1762 S.F. 10' ceilings. Large master w/walk-in closet & Marble ensuite, paneled library. 2 marble frpl, 2 balc, 2 pkg, 24 hr. Concierge/Valet. Many Extras!

164 Cumberland St. — 2 Bedroom Penthouse



$1,020,000 Yorkville, Sun-filled quiet apt. facing the courtyard in small boutique bldg. 1724 S.F. Spacious master, frpl in Living rm, Renovated kitchen, 2 skylights, 24 hr. Concierge.

PICS AT WWW.ETHELSAPERA.COM

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46 BROCKINGTON CRES. - Updated 4-bedroom backsplit ready to move in home. Double garage with direct access. Eat-in kitchen with formal dining room, living room, main floor den and family room. Great social neighborhood close to synagogues, schools, shopping, TTC, BJCC. **New Price.**

118 FAIRHOLME AVE. - Bathurst & Lawrence. Ideal for builder or renovator; close to Lawrence Plaza, subways and much more. **$459,000**

3724 ST. CLAIR AVE. E- 4 Bedroom with updated washrooms and modern eat-in kitchen. 70 x 106 double wide lot for possible expansion. **$339,000**

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16 ARLSTAN DR.
Pack the family and move-in to this spacious 5 bdrm with den.
Offered at $749,000.

53 GARTHDALE CRT.
"Perfect Starter Home". Gorgeous, fully renovated, 3 bedroom semi, 2-storey.
Offered at $429,000.

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2 custom 4,500 sq. ft. homes on Alexandra Wood Blvd. Top finished, ready for summer.
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Allen/Egl., 1 bdrm., new bsmt. apt., $875., incl. utils., cable/intrt/hydro & indry. 416-830-0601.

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A unique 3 + bdrm, 2200 sq ft home on a lg corner lot. Always well maintained & in move-in condition. 3 baths, family rm, lg. rec room, Hardwood floors throughout, loads of storage space, dble garage, fully fenced & private rear yard & much more. Asking $670,000

Upper Forest Hill

A Most Desirable Neighbourhood. 4 bdrm home on a 40 X 120 Lot. Main fl powder room, good size living/dining rooms. Rear extension off kitchen, ez access to Spadina subway, Allen Expressway, schools, shopping & all amenities. Asking $878,000

Ron Kirshenblatt, sales rep, **for all particulars & viewing.**
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30 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE

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SKYMARK DON MILLS & FINCH

Skymark 55 Zenith : corner 2 storey bedroom + family. Approx. 1,711 s.f. 2 ensuites. 2 parking. SOLD priced right.

Skymark 65 Elegance: well appointed + upgraded. 2 bedroom + family. W/S exposure. 2 baths, 2 parking. Approx. 1,775 s.f.

SANTEE LEUNG, E.R.L., BROKER OF RECORD

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55 ACCOM. WANTED

Prof. Jewish male in Ottawa, seeks 1 bdrm. accom. when visiting Toronto monthly. Prefers central res. setting (e.g. Forest Hill, Bath/Lawrence). Refs. David 613-733-2455 or email: rtdlf@aol.com.

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Open House: Sun. 10:30-2:00pm
Call 416-781-4672
or 416-931-2206

OLD FOREST HILL
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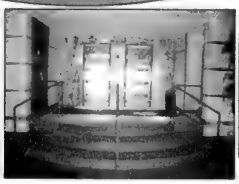

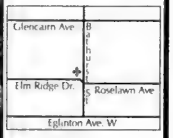

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Israel & the Jewish World

Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and Israeli President Shimon Peres [RNS/Reuters]

Israel hosts Polish PM

JTA

JERUSALEM — Israel and Poland are upgrading ties. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert hosted his Polish counterpart, Donald Tusk, last week for talks on improving bilateral relations.

A major killing ground during the Nazi Holocaust, Poland has made efforts to come closer to the Jewish state and is regarded by Jerusalem as remarkably important given its Economic Union membership and support for the U.S.-led war on terror.

"If you here – and I speak of the citizens of the State of Israel – have a justified feeling of being threatened, not only because of terror but also because of actions or lack of actions taken by large countries in the world, I want to tell you that Poland, in the framework of our modest abilities, is a country which now and will in the future demonstrate great determination and sensitivity to threats like terror," Tusk said last Wednesday at a press conference with Olmert.

The two leaders agreed on a series of joint initiatives including in commerce, in culture and in exchange programs for Israeli and Polish youths.

Tusk visited Yad Vashem last Thursday.

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Hoops tourney a highlight for young Ethiopian Jew

By ELI SHUPAK
Special to The CJN

A recent trip to Toronto was without a doubt the best six days of Yisrael Desta's life. Travelling outside of Israel for the first time, the 17-year-old basketball fanatic was determined to make the most of the opportunity before joining the army this summer.

Accompanied by 19-year-old Yitzchak Adgo, the two boys from Kiryat Moshe, an impoverished community of 8,000 that is a suburb of Rehovot, were selected to represent their peers in Canada. The two, chosen by local social workers as successful kids who have made exceptional strides, were rewarded by taking part in the second annual Hoops 4 Israel three-on-three charity basketball tournament.

Just a couple of hours before going to watch his favourite player, Allen Iverson, torch the Raptors for 36 points, Desta performed some magic of his own, winning the event's three-point shooting contest by dramatically hitting his final attempt of the competition. He beat out Adgo and 27 locals, which included York University basketball players Elliot Siemiatycki and Eylon Zemer, as well as former Ontario university all-star Ben Katz.

Arriving in Toronto three days before the tournament, the boys spent their time taking in local sites, going up the CN Tower, touring the Air Canada Centre and visiting Niagara Falls.

The boys were hosted by a Canadian family in the Forest Hill area, and during their visit, they attended a Purim seudah at an Israeli family's residence.

Before they returned home, they were planning to visit The Score television network to be with Cabral "Cabbie on the Street" Richards, a personality who bonded with them when he travelled to their community last summer to help build new basketball courts.

An outdoor sports court was part of what was built with the more than $100,000 raised at last year's inaugural tournament. This year's event held at Downsview Park's Hoop Dome brought in more than $130,000.

Yitzchak Adgo, left, and Yisrael Desta get ready to play at the Hoops 4 Israel tournament.

With this year's funds, the plan is to renovate a community centre for indoor sports, as well as fund sports and recreational programs focused on at-risk youths.

"With the new courts, people are always playing basketball," said Alan Richter, who led a group of seven York University students on a six-week volunteer mission last summer to Kiryat Moshe. "With their basketball skills, that connection to the community makes them feel part of things. It keeps them entertained and their self-esteem has been boosted as well. They feel a part of Israeli culture.

"The idea is to boost their learning curve and get kids off the streets and out onto the playing fields, getting them involved. There is much more programming for them, a lot more hope for the future than there was before. And that's the key."

Over 130 young adults from Toronto's Jewish community, many of them Birthright Israel alumni, helped support the cause. Jeffrey Gottesman was the top fundraiser, raising $5,600 to win a trip for two to Israel. David Sadja was close behind, at $5,419, winning a trip for two anywhere in North America.

The funds give hope to families such as Desta's, who came to Israel in 1991 as part of Operation Solomon, a covert Israeli military operation that brought Ethiopian Jews into the country.

Richter said one of the biggest deterrents to Ethiopian immigrants getting jobs is the lack of skills and education. That should start to change as programming such as Hoops 4 Israel provides funds to Kiryat Moshe.

Tournament founder David Goodman spent last summer getting to know the kids. He said he would like to bring some of their better students to a summer camp in Ontario for free.

"[Yitzchak and Yisrael] are involved in the programs that we sponsor and it's really helped them get on the right track," said the 25-year-old Torontonian, who takes his Birthright groups to visit the community and see the results of last year's contributions for themselves.

"If these kids [in Kiryat Moshe] aren't in these programs or playing basketball, they are wandering the streets, getting involved in crime and violence," he said.

"Here, they go to school, get educated, go to the army, come out and go to university, get a nice job, and come out of that lower class and become part of middle-class society. That's what we want. These kids have so much potential."

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Trying to get a message to you

In the world of relationships, it used to be customary to wait three days before calling your latest love interest after a first date.

Personally, I always found this unspoken rule amusing. Are the three days supposed to make me think someone has too much going on to call? Not likely.

Am I supposed to breathe a sigh of relief when the call finally does come? Again, not likely.

But thank goodness that with the onslaught of text messaging, this silly charade seems to be becoming a thing of the past – not because people are wising up, but because lovers just don't use the phone anymore.

Why should they? With text messaging, you can take your time to think twice before every flirtatious comment.

When someone asks you out over the phone, you might regret yelling out, "Of course! I'm free every night!" instead of giving a much cooler response that you can think about before you type it.

Or better yet, if you instantly regret the "Yes, I'm free tonight" text you just sent, you can quickly call it back before the other person receives it.

Heck, text messaging even brings an improved twist to the old crank call. Guys, remember the days you'd call your crush Sarah just to pretend you wanted to call someone else? "Oh I'm so sorry, I meant to call Rebecca but how are you anyways?" would always do the trick to not only strike up a conversation but make her jealous.

With text messaging, you can take it a step further by pretending you pressed the wrong address on your phone list.

"Hey Rebecca. On my way now. Can't wait to see you," should definitely drive Sarah nuts.

But if the whole point of a good relationship is to stop playing games, then is text messaging just making it harder to connect with one another?

I have a friend who says she's connecting with her crush all the time, but she almost never actually speaks on the phone with him. They just send each other random text messages throughout the day.

I always thought it was pretty romantic to talk on the phone until all hours of the night, but apparently I was wrong, because she loves this new system.

"It's better this way. We can speak all day, at any time of the day," she said.

"Plus, he's not going to think I'm crazy if I send him a text message that first night to tell him I had a good time," she said. "If I called him the same night I met him, I'd never hear from him again."

Note: text messaging makes you seem less like a stalker – good point!

My guy friend is a big fan, because "it eliminates awkward, uncomfortable sentences," he said.

"Plus, if I don't feel like picking up, I don't have to. I just respond whenever I want."

So, text messaging allows us to communicate in a way that feels comfortable – at arm's length.

We might not be waiting three days anymore to speak to each other, but with text messaging, it might take us three years to get to know one another.

Maybe I'm being too tough. After all, isn't it better to talk in person while you're staring into the other person's eyes? Surely that's romance.

But apparently, that's also a thing of the past, as text messaging your entourage during dinner has become as acceptable during a date as an end-of-the-night kiss.

Unless you're like one old-fashioned girl I know who decided to stand up for relationships everywhere by quietly excusing herself during her date's fifth texting episode of the night.

"Where did you go?" he wrote a few minutes after she left.

"Home," she replied.

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4-6 matzoh boards
1 c Passover margarine
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Preheat oven to 375°F.
Line a cookie sheet COMPLETELY with foil, then parchment paper. *Important as mixture becomes sticky during baking. Line bottom of sheet evenly with matzoh boards, breaking extra pieces of matzoh, as required, to fit any spaces on the cookie sheet.
Combine margarine and brown sugar in large, heavy-bottomed saucepan. Stir continually over medium heat until mixture boils. Continue cooking/stirring 3 more min.; do not let brown. Remove from heat; pour immediately over matzos. Reduce oven heat to 350°F. Bake 15 min., checking every few minutes to ensure matzohs are not burning (if browning quickly, remove from oven, lower heat to 325°F, replace).
Remove from oven VERY CAREFULLY; sprinkle immediately with chopped chocolate or chips. Let stand 5 min. then spread melted chocolate over matzoh. Chill in refrigerator until set and break up into chunks.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

No one in our family is looking forward to the seders this year. We even talked about each of us just doing our own thing at home instead of having our usual large family seder.

You see, our mother passed away, and this will be our first family seder without her. The woman who held it all together for us, the woman who made everything from scratch, who laughed while she served, who sang while she cooked, who organized and always looked beautiful at the table is gone. If we could just snap our fingers and "pass over" this holiday, I think we all would. Even the grandchildren are feeling the terrible loss. I don't know how we are going to get through the seder this year. She was truly the matriarch of our family.

Heavy-Hearted Passover
Dear Heavy-Hearted Passover

Losing a parent is always difficult, but holidays are that much harder. Many grieving people will be coming together to try to go through the motions of what used to be a happy and memorable experience. You will be in unfamiliar territory, and none of you will even feel like going through the motions. No one will feel like celebrating.

Seders as you knew them will never be the same without your mother, and there is nothing you can do about that. What you can do, however, is embrace and honor your mother's memory. Prepare the dishes she would have made and then talk about how no one can make them like mom. Sing the songs that she would have sung. Laugh, cry, talk, tell stories, share memories and make her spirit part of your seder.

This year's seder will be like no other before it. Don't try to make it what it can't be. Allow yourself and others to feel the loss and embrace the values and tradition she put in place for all of you.

Keeping her spirit alive is how she will continue to be with you forever. Each holiday, birthday, and anniversary will be a time to remember. "Firsts" are the hardest, and you will get through each one in your own way. Don't try to mask your feelings. Instead, embrace the help of other family members and friends.

This year, your mother will be seated at the seder table with each and every one of you, firmly in your hearts and minds.

Chag Samayach.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN., *email: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Were we slaves in Egypt?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

"We were slaves in Egypt." These are highly important words that we read in the Haggadah on Passover.

This line, when read with fervour, reminds us that Jews are no longer enslaved, no longer suffering from the whips of the taskmaster. It is truly amazing to recognize that we, the Jewish people, so independent and free in nature, were forced to live lives that were not our own but instead based on the whims of a pharaoh, a man who believed he was a deity.

On Pesach, when we sit around the table, this is the main focus of the seder. We are to talk about it with great intent. Yet how real is this to most of us?

Living in Toronto in 2008, in perhaps one of the most peaceful and comfortable places and time in history, how do we process this message of "slavery" and then juxtapose it with the thought that today we are free?

Have you ever imagined yourself in chains? Can you fathom whip marks on your back or worse on the body of someone you love so very deeply? Can you feel the hunger a slave feels regularly? Consider the longing a slave feels to simply touch his wife, or her husband, a right denied slaves and a punishment worse than a beating?

Seeing ourselves as slaves is difficult because we are not. We are instead surrounded by infinite possibility to practise Judaism in any way we see fit and to buy the ripest of pears and the freshest of breads every day, any day we so choose. Our lives are filled to the brim with freedom.

So when Pesach arrives and we are sitting at the table saying the words "we were slaves in Egypt," what are we to do so that this message is real? How are we truly supposed to be thankful to God for bringing us out of slavery and how can we maximize our appreciation for what we have today and for what the Canadian Jewish community has today – a gift of freedom that likely has never been so great?

One way to empathize with the plight of the slave, to vaguely feel we were slaves in Egypt, might be to talk about those individuals, those nations, those tribes that are truly slaves today, be they slaves to the fear of terrorism or bullying; or talk about actual slavery, which exists in many countries around the world.

At your Passover Seder then, talk about the Jewish people of Sderot, who are bound to their bomb shelters by fear and the need to secure themselves from missiles fired at them day and night by our enemies. They are slaves in 2008, lacking the freedom to walk where and when they want.

At your Passover seder, talk about the more than 12 million slaves in the world today who are chained to sewing machines by people with evil intent, prepared daily to allow a human being, a child, to suffer for profit.

At your Passover seder, close your eyes for a long moment and meditate on what it must be like to be a slave then and to be one today. Create an image in your mind of yourself standing in a line of Jews shackled to one another, as we were during the Holocaust in the camps, forced to build, dig, shovel and construct. Remember African-Canadians, some of whom are descendants of slaves, and African-Americans, who only recently won the right to vote and fought arduously to drink out of the same taps as white people do.

See slavery. Feel slavery. And then you will sense freedom. Recognize that we were once slaves in Egypt, whether you accept this metaphorically or in reality, and that what is today in Canada was not always.

Chag Samayach. Happy Pesach. Change the world by facing reality eye to eye.

Avrum@veahavta.org Sderot/Sudan

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The Canadian Jewish news

Twelfth Annual

Passover Literary

Supplement

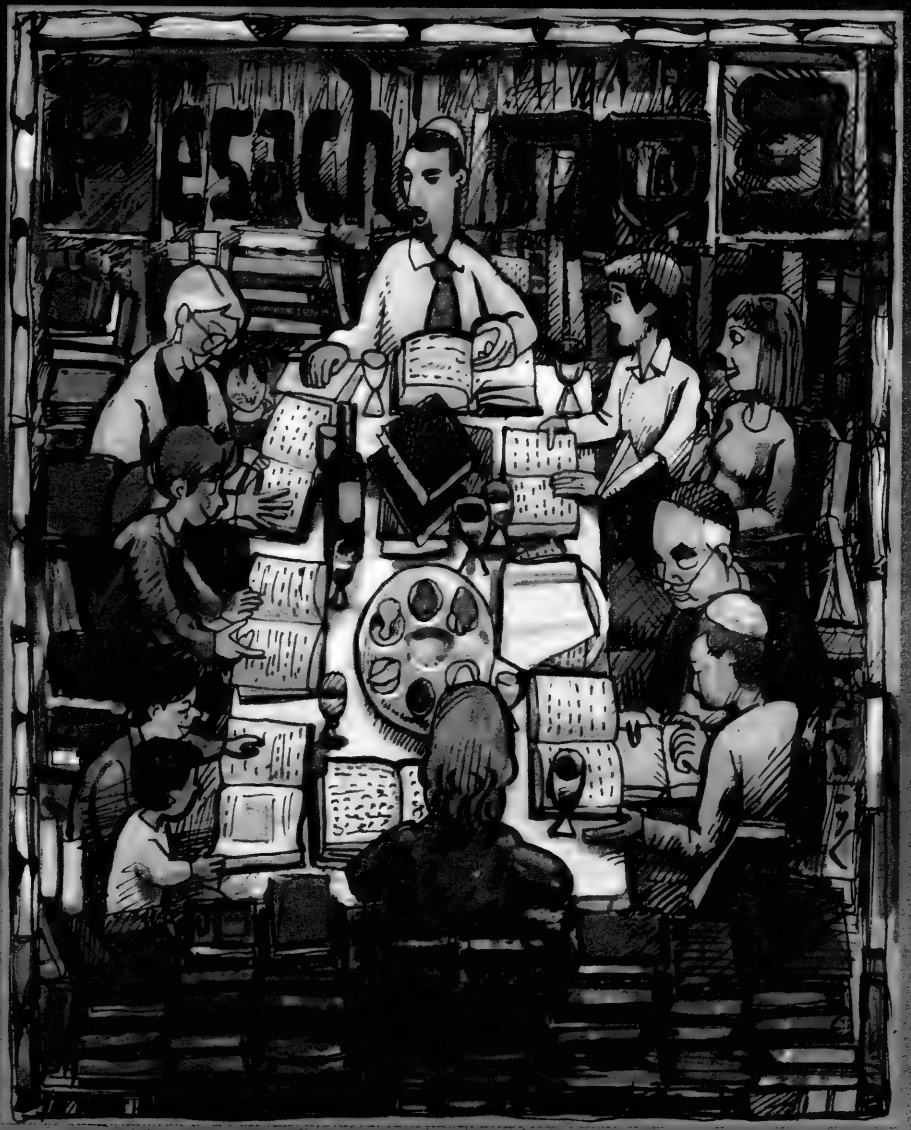

Illustration for The CJN by Avi Katz

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Dear Israel

By ELLIE KUNIGIS MOIDEL

Dear Israel,

Happy, Happy 60th Birthday! Sixty isn't old – it's young. However, you really are older than 60, aren't you?

In 1947, you were about to be reborn. In May 1948, you once again emerged. Although it was a difficult birth, we all prayed for you. What a joyous occasion it was. Jews in towns and cities all over the world danced in the streets. Those who didn't know how to dance the horah joined in and quickly learned the steps. Blue and white were the colours seen everywhere; schoolchildren, teens and adults wore those colours with pride. We seemed to merge with the blue skies and white clouds.

You showed your strength right from the beginning. Surrounding enemies wanted to defeat you, but you wouldn't give in. You fought many battles but wouldn't succumb.

You had quiet moments as well, but paid dearly for them. You were at war in 1956, 1967, 1973, 1981 and in so many other years. You never gave up. You were steadfast in your resolve to survive and grow.

We supported you in your difficult moments. We formed clubs and organizations, attended rallies in your name, sponsored your speakers, singers and dancers, especially your wounded soldiers whose spirit and joie de vivre boosted our morale. We visited you as many times as we possibly could. Each visit brought us to tears. Why? Because we could see your advancement and progress.

Arid land turned green in your hands. You developed irrigation systems that were the envy of other parched lands. Where there was desolation magically became kibbutzim and towns. Your cities grew. All of this took place amid wars, ongoing threats and suicide bombings. The enemies' mandate was to eradicate you and your people. Yet you never gave up.

Instead, your resolve to be strong influenced us all. Yes, you've made mistakes. But you're only human.

Moved to tears

We are moved to tears when we hear school choirs, cantors, assemblies, radio programs and television specials include songs such as *Hatikvah*, *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* and so many others.

Babies born in Israel and abroad are given new, beautiful and meaningful names – Noam, Reut, Sapir, Inbal, Shahar, Agam, Ornit, Stav, Yigal, Ze'ev, Uri, Asnat and so many more – reflecting the modern Jew in you, Israel.

You have achieved so much for mankind in the fields of medicine, science, electronics and land conservation. You have created vineyards, orchards and spas, and produced natural products from Israel's resources. Those are just a few examples.

Scholars, writers, poets, musicians, orchestras, art and films abound. And this all in 60 years!

How do you do it? We know. It's done with love and vision and above all, hope. Right?

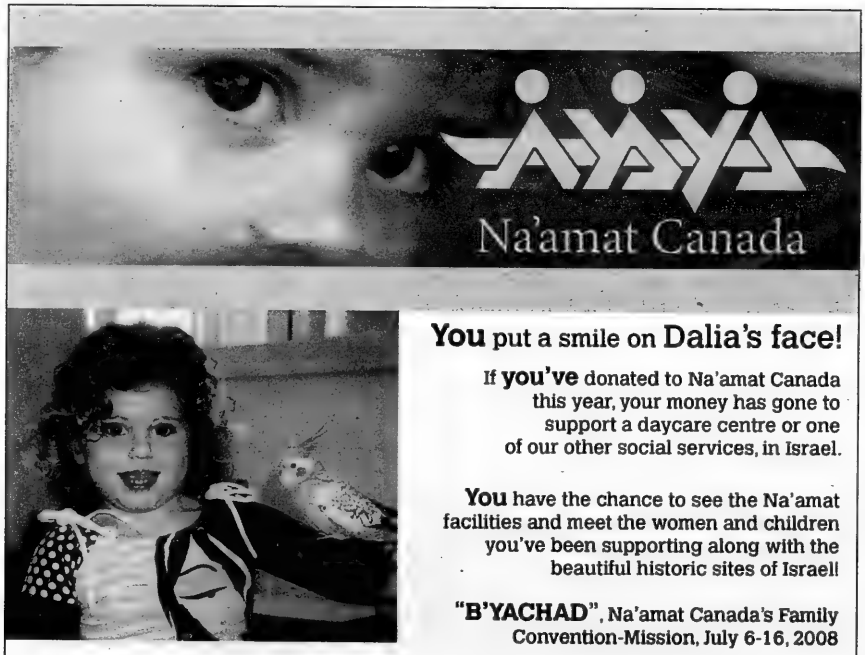
You are an incomparable example to your people everywhere. We gain our strength from yours. We are encouraged by your bravery. We learn under your tutelage.

Many thanks Israel for being alive. We look forward to celebrating many more birthdays with you.

Am Yisroel chai. Yom huledet samayach.

B'ahava, with love; Jews *m'khutz la'aretz* – Jews throughout the world.

Ellie Kunigis Moidel



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Homecoming

By RHODA HASSMANN

The furniture's arrived today from Europe
and with it
remnants of embroidered linens, brown-edged
photographs, a painting
someone did in 1944; who would have thought anyone
could paint in that great storm?

These massive pieces
stand in my dining room, dwarf
everything I've ever owned before;
their key-holes stare at me, and the carved grapes
outshine my bowls of fruit.

It's taken fifty years –
we're back now where we started from
in a new land;
I can tell those aged relatives still surviving
and the ghosts of the dead

that I've ended up
where they started off –
a quiet life, graced by a few pieces
of craftsmanship and silver –
the way they lived
before their world
splintered in the flames.

Rainbow in the Sky

By MIRIAM PRESZOW WEINER

There's a rainbow in the sky
And the birds are flying high
And the Wailing Wall is sparkling all aglow
And I could see the sun, it shines for everyone
God's promise for world peace so long ago

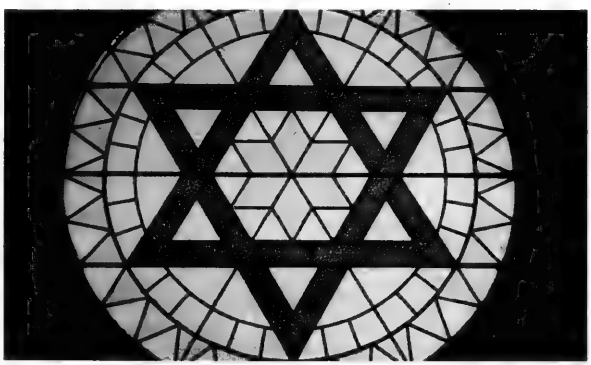
Come and walk with me, come and talk with me
Come and dance with me, swing to and fro
Tell me you understand the painting by God's hand
A promise for world peace so long ago

Together we will stand, facing the promise land
Across the oceans blue we all will flow
We'll form a giant ring around the worldly king
A promise for world peace so long ago

We'll sing in harmony over the oceans free
At rainbow's edge the seeds of peace we'll sow
United we will stand, before the Holy Land
A promise for world peace so long ago

There's a rainbow in the sky
There's a rainbow in the sky
There's a rainbow there's a rainbow in the sky!

Inspiring



We wish a healthy and happy Passover to our many clients and friends, during this time of celebration and reflection.

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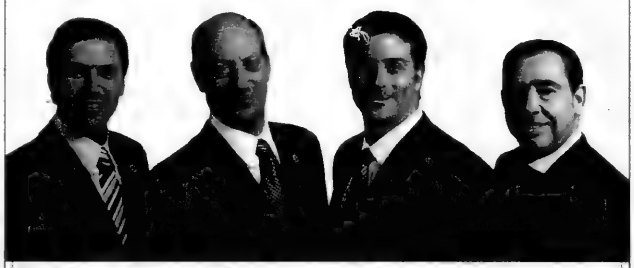

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The Burning Bush

By JENNIFER (JINKS) HOFFMANN

Exile and redemption.
The ongoing,
eternal
story
of my people,
of my own soul.
Exile and redemption
occur eternally
because creation too
is
eternal
and contemporary.

No Moses, no Miriam I,
yet the bush burns forever
if I
but turn my head, my heart.

I am only exiled if I do not know
that redemption
is turning
toward the eternally burning bush
and asking of the One
who creates the NOW,
of asking

what is Your desire of me
in this very moment?

Most often Your desire is simple,
undramatic;
a tiny moment of *Tikkun Olam*
of turning towards healing our fractured world
but a fraction.

Listen to this anxious mother,
I intuit,
as I move impatiently from one foot to another
in the little store.
Give of yourself for a moment.
If I curb my desire for escape,
am I lifted from *Mitzrayim*,
from my own narrow consciousness
even as the young mother
is lifted too?

My ordinary, everyday, my so human selfishness
cannot be transformed in an instant.
I will be pulled back to *Mitzrayim*,
many, many times.
Yet each time I hear the call,
the call
of the One who guides,
who burns eternally,
if, if I turn my head, my heart,
each time I hear the call,
I can be a little kinder, a little less selfish,
in the simple, the ordinary ways of everyday life.

An anxious mother may be cared for,
a lonely widow may be a little less lonely
when I visit her,
if I do my part
in a tiny moment of *Tikkun Olam*.

Our fractured world needs healing.
The journey from *Mitzrayim* to wholeness
to holyness
is eternal.
You cry from within the fire
forever.

If I but turn my head, my heart…

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Matchmakers

By RACHEL PIUTI

Mrs. Shleifer became a widow about a year ago. Mr. Shleifer died suddenly from a heart attack and left Mrs. Shleifer with two young daughters, 11-year-old Ruth and nine-year-old Hanna. Mr. Shleifer, while alive, was partner in a leather goods business. The remaining partner had since paid the widow for Mr. Shleifer's share in the business.

Mrs. Shleifer invested the money very carefully and tried to make sure that they continued living as comfortably as they had before her husband died, but now on a much reduced income. She wanted to keep the nice five-room apartment on the quiet tree-lined street, to keep the maid, and most importantly, to let the girls continue in the Jewish school.

This was a private school and the tuition fee was 110 zlotys a month for both girls. It was a lot of money (the average worker earned from three to four zlotys a day).

Mrs. Shleifer thought about the problem for many weeks. She knew that the school was reducing fees for needy families. But how could she, a seemingly wealthy woman, living in an elegant apartment on one of the nicest streets in Lodz, with a maid, with her and the children dressed in the finest clothes, how could she stoop so low and ask for a reduction?

It had to be done, however, and one morning, Mrs. Shleifer went to see the school principal in his office. She told him about her situation, how she struggled to keep up a certain standard and how important it was for her to give the girls a Jewish education. The principal, a chubby man with rosy cheeks and friendly blue eyes, was sympathetic.

"I understand how hard it is, and I will give a positive recommendation, but the matter would have to go to a committee that will make the final decision," he said.

They shook hands and Mrs. Shleifer went home, a bit humbled, but hopeful. She didn't tell anybody what she had done.

One morning a couple of weeks later, when Mrs. Shleifer was out, the girls were at school, and only Masha, the maid, was home, busy cleaning and polishing, the door bell rang. Two gentlemen in dark suits and hats, with neatly trimmed goatees, stood at the door.

"Good morning. Could we speak to Mrs. Shleifer?" inquired the taller of the two men.

"Nobody is home," Masha said. "My lady is out and will be back in the afternoon. I only work here. I am the maid."

"That's all right," said the two gentlemen, almost in unison.

"It doesn't matter that the lady is out. You look like a smart young girl and we are sure that you will be able to answer some questions about your lady," the taller one responded again.

Masha was flattered by the attention she was getting

Masha was flattered by the attention she was getting – nobody ever asked her any questions – and she felt that this might be important to her lady. For all she knew, the two men could be matchmakers, she thought, especially after they started asking such significant questions as: Was the lady of the house rich? Was she spending a lot of money on clothes? Did she keep a nice table? Did she entertain a lot? Masha gave an enthusiastic yes to all questions.

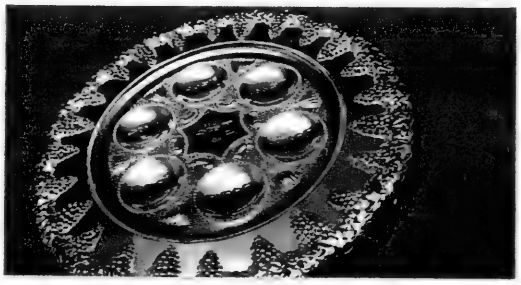
"Yes," she said, "Mrs. Shleifer had a very good income, her late husband left her well provided. She had very good taste and bought only the highest quality clothes for herself as well as for the two girls. She had high class friends and her elegant dinners were known far and wide."

The two gentlemen listened attentively to all that Masha said, thanked her and left.

Mrs. Shleifer, Masha thought, was a nice lady, still young, in her mid-30s, and should remarry. She should marry a wealthy man who would appreciate her good qualities.

Masha was an orphan. She had spent her childhood unwanted and hungry, being shuttled around between relatives too poor to keep her. She had worked here for the last five years, since she was 17. She slept in a little alcove off the kitchen and was treated with respect by the family. Yes, she was grateful to her lady, and now fate had given her a chance to show it.

A few weeks later, a letter addressed to Mrs. Shleifer arrived from the school committee: they were sorry, but her application for a tuition reduction had been rejected.



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The Fiery Shawl

By HOWARD S. JOSEPH

I see him in the distance
A fiery shawl of white and black
– Fringes on the corners –
Flowing down his back.

He stands and sways as if in prayer
But I cannot see his heart
If he's kind and gentle
Or if in love he's smart.

Share with us the rhythm
Share with us the grace
Share the holy moment
Of that sweet embrace.

Is his God near enough
To justify our love
Is his God sublime enough
To inspire reverence?

Does his God reward him
With a gentle kiss
Then hide and leave him hungry
For a life of bliss?

Does his God inflame him
With arrogant conceit
Or does his God encourage him
To holy modesty?

Is his God at the core
Of all that does prevail
At the very centre of
All of his travail.

Share with us the rhythm
Share with us the grace
Share the holy moment
Of that sweet embrace.

Is his God like mine
Who demands our love and trust
And asks from us that we take on
A life that's kind and just?

Or is his God a thief
Who only asks belief
And does not send him back to us
To bring the world relief?

If he truly loves
The Holy One above
Then let him join us
And give his hands in love.

These questions come to mind
As I see him swaying, swaying in the wind
The fiery shawl of white and black
– Fringes on the corners –
Flowing down his back.

If you have really heard the voice
And also seen the light
Then there really is no choice:
Act with all heart and might.

So as you leave the Presence
Uplifted by the grace
Return to life in earnest
Show your hands and face.

Share with us the rhythm
Share with us the grace
Share the holy moment of that sweet embrace.

A
Very
Happy Passover

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Requiem for the Temple of Fressing

By BRURIA LINDENBERG COOPERMAN

Let me start with an apology. I teach teachers. To be more specific, I teach teachers about racism. In every class and in every way I can, I try to impress on my students that racist notions are not fixed, nor are they absolute truisms. But when it comes to food and Jews – here comes the declaration – all theory goes out the window. There, I've said it! Now, let me explain.

We Jews love food. Jews live for food. We not only love to eat food, we love talking about eating food – even while we're eating it. Being the first to eat at the trendiest restaurant in the city is an Olympic competition. Jews eat food as they're waiting to eat more food. I'm sure it was a Jew who invented appetizers. We Jews judge each other not only on the quality of the food but also on the quantity. This is a Jewish benchmark. But for sheer volume and excess, eating is an extreme sport in only one place – our second homeland – Miami, the land of early-bird specials, headless drivers and surgically enhanced women who roam the malls, relentlessly pursuing single men.

For countless daughters and sons, the annual ritual is set in place, first morning, crack of dawn. Crawling out of the 20-year-old pullout couch, all you can think of is getting to the bathroom without stubbing your toe. Your parents, up since 6:30 a.m., ask the question – do you want to have brunch at the Rascal House? The weather shows cloudy, so why not go today?

At the height of the season – when gentiles have returned to their hometowns for their own brand of family craziness and Jews have migrated south – brunch at the Rascal House is mandatory. Both landmark and cultural phenomenon, the Rascal House is unlike anything, anywhere, and has been for many generations of snowbirds and their progeny. Keep in mind, this is more than simply eating food.

As you approach the corner of Collins and 165th, your cholesterol metre begins to jitter in anticipation. But not before having a near-death experience riding in the back seat of your father's car. You have just witnessed the Florida gladiatorial game of who gets that coveted handicap parking spot. I can only think that a combination of luck, serendipity and a guardian angel protects these people.

Once at the front doors, the real action begins. If you want a seat at the counter,

Continued on page B8

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Requiem for the Temple of Fressing

Continued from page B7

that's easy. But if you want a table, be prepared. You are about to be introduced into the world of Rascal House protocol. First, imagine a restaurant the size of a gymnasium. Fixtures and furniture, stuck in a 1950s time warp, transport those old enough to remember back to the days of *American Bandstand*. It is a world where linoleum and arborite-marble rule, and where Zen décor has yet to wield its influence. With the Rascal House's Miami blues and pinks fading to grey, rumours of its imminent demise resurface every year. But every year, like lemmings, parents and grandparents, their children and grandchildren, and any friends or relatives who are available that morning, dutifully line up to wait their turn.

Rope dividers and chrome posts designate your place in this world, depending on the number in your group. There are no reservations. No one gets seated until the entire party is present. "They're just parking the car and will be right here" does not cut it here. Beginning from mid-morning to about 1:00 p.m., lines routinely extend out the front doors, out into the parking lot and along the side of the building.

You are now ready to embark on the next stage of the journey. Inching forward, you squeeze in with strangers who are also paying homage at the temple of excess. The maitre d', as round as he is tall, plays the crowd. And despite the black-rimmed, Coke-bottle glasses and trousers pulled up to his mid-chest, he still manages to command respect. After all, we're hungry and our future is in his hands. Miraculously, he never loses that engaging, patient smile. Jokes and laughter are encouraged and soon, the mood changes from menacing to guarded optimism.

We are a gregarious group of people. Anything above a whisper is automatically considered public property. Any utterance – especially regarding food – is an open invitation for comments. In a matter of seconds, people are animated. Within minutes, we are playing Jewish geography. This game is our cultural version of six degrees of separation, but which we've been playing for 5,000 years. Conversations invariably lead to food-related experiences, both happy and scary. When culinary horror stories have been exhausted, you move on to medications and ailments.

With patience, we move ever closer to the coveted front of the line. Finally, it's our turn. What we've all been waiting for. Our tushes have barely come to rest on the vinyl banquettes when our waitress appears. Balancing bowls and baskets along the length of one arm and holding two pots of coffee – regular and decaf – in the opposite hand, she throws down the dishes, sending them spinning along the table. Her dexterity brings to mind the plate spinner on the *Ed Sullivan Show*. Her bouffant bee-hive hairdo and shoulder-corsage-cum-handkerchief perched stiffly, our waitress simultaneously pours coffee and takes your order. No menus are necessary. Serious eating is about to commence. We begin the preamble. The food before the food.

Rolls and danishes – the prunes put aside for taking home later – are passed around in one direction while the various bowls of pickled cucumbers and tomatoes travel the opposite way. And don't forget the coleslaw. Selections vary only with the time of day. Just about each culinary delicacy is a heart surgeon's nightmare. And always, there's the bottomless cup of coffee. But no matter the dish and no matter the time of day, portions are beyond mortal man's imagination. We expect this. Anything less is unacceptable. Woe to any restaurant owner who tries to veer from this path. (When was the last time you had nouvelle cuisine? Obviously, not a Jewish idea and one that was doomed to failure.) Six-egg omelettes with a plate full of french fries become the new normal.

The world of Rascal House protocol

The meal draws quickly to a close. This is not exactly fine dining. The busboy is already clearing the table and wiping it down for the next group, hovering in the background. As you peel yourself off the plastic banquette, there is a fight over the bill, though in no time, the argument is settled. On cue – this must be part of our cultural antennae – the meal ends but not before your waitress runs over with a paper bag filled with the leftover danishes. If you're a regular and a favourite, there are always some extras thrown in to take home. Your heart is racing from the caffeine jolt. Your hips have expanded exponentially with the amount of consumed carbs. You are now ready to face the day.

As we step outside, squinting from the glare of that welcome Florida sun, talk turns to where you're going for dinner that night. Some things are just too good to let go of.

Postscript: by the end of the week, a strange spirit begins to take over my body. I feel I should dye my hair honey blond, and I ask my husband to buy me a Cadillac. I also think I've started to shrink.

Post-postscript: After years of hearing of its demise, our son and daughter-in-law returned from a recent sojourn to the Rascal House, where they heard from their waitress that, yes, it is true – the Rascal House is closing.

A Passover Scandal

By JOSHUA LEVY

"That's nothing!" called out the man with shiny round eyes like Porsche headlights, who had been sitting all this time in a corner by the window, seducing scotch after scotch and listening to our stories of divorce, debt and lawsuits.

"I'll tell you a story of a theft that took place in our neighbourhood, at my aunt's Passover seder during a playoff game. Against the Leafs, no less! This is really good stuff so listen up."

* * *

Our neighbourhood, Hampstead – that's where I grew up, you know – is a quiet, modestly posh suburb of Montreal. Every house has either a swimming pool or a dog, and the lawns are various shades of green. There is no crime there. Nobody steals, for the simple reason that no one knows anyone well enough to know if they have anything that's worth stealing. A Jew isn't a thief by nature, anyway. He may be a shady bastard, a real son of a bitch, but not the sort who'll climb through a window or blow you away with a machine gun. He'll sue the pants off you, argue to the city that your tree's roots were on his property, sleep with your wife, talk behind your back, or not invite you to his country house; but he won't pull anything out of your pocket. Imagine then, a theft taking place in Hampstead, and a real whopper at that. Eighteen diamonds in one swoop.

Oh the suspense! The indigestion

Here's how it went down. At the Passover seder, just before dinner, an out-of-town uncle rang the doorbell. He was a salesman of some sort from New York who always smelt of leather. Coming in just as we were closing our Haggadahs and the housekeepers were marching out the soups, he stood at the dining room entrance with large crinkly bags dripping from his fingers.

"Shalom Aleichem," said he.

"Uncle Morty!" we answered. "What are you doing in Montreal?"

"I had a business meeting, don't ask. Cindy and the kids? They're at her side of the family probably having a terrible meal."

"And you're here?"

"Where the hell do you want me to be, a soup kitchen?"

"Then you're hungry?"

"Not really."

"What's in the bags, Uncle Morty?"

"Ah, you don't think I'd come empty handed, do you?"

"Our houses are too small for more tchatchkes," said the wives.

"Shit, the game's starting," said the men.

The men charged like Israelites escaping Pharaoh into the den, and the hired help was instructed to serve dinner on stainless steel serving platters, with disposable cutlery.

"If they wanted my good china, they should have stayed at the table," said Auntie Sheila to her housekeeper as she opened drawers and gathered white plastic cutlery packages of fork-spoon-knife, which she had been pillaging from the fast-food cafeteria on her lunch breaks.

The TV was turned on and the proper channel quickly found. *Hockey Night in Canada*. Canadiens vs. Leafs, Montreal vs. Toronto, Game 1 of the quarter finals. Oh, the suspense! The indigestion! This game was certainly more perilous than 40 years in the desert without bread. I don't need to tell you what was at stake. After decades of the Montreal Jewish population oozing down the 401 to Toronto like a wound that wouldn't heal, this game was for bragging rights. But I'm getting off track, forgive me.

Continued on page B10

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Photo of actual model suite. E. & O. E.

A Passover Scandal

Continued from page B9

* * *

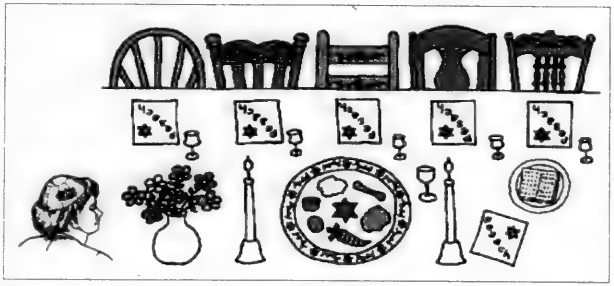
The man with the eyes that bulged like Porsche headlights paused, looked to see what effect his words had on us, and continued.

* * *

We found Uncle Morty a spot on the couch. He kept a black sack balanced on his knees with one hand on it at all times as we ate. He did it all while e-mailing on his blackberry – that, only a New Yorker can do!

But when it was all over, when the final blast of the third period had died down, the three stars announced, Manishewitz bottles emptied, and when the Montreal Canadiens, doubled over and sweaty, had marched back to their locker room to explain the loss to the press – "they capitalized on some key turnovers…" suddenly screams were heard. "Shit! Fuck!"

We looked around: Uncle Morty was



bent over the couch, strangling the pillows. What was his problem? You wouldn't believe me if I told you! He tells us that he had brought with him a black sack filled with 18 diamonds. To leave diamonds at the hotel – think of it, 18 diamonds – he had been afraid. Where would the diamonds be safe in Montreal? Only with him. Hindsight is 20/20, but Jews have such lousy eyesight to begin with that we don't even trust our hindsight… And somehow the sack had disappeared at the end of the game when everyone was crying onto his neighbour's shoulder.

Well, the poor guy cried, tore his hair, shook his fists. What was he going to do now? They weren't his diamonds, he said. He had just been doing his friend a favour by picking them up in Montreal. He himself couldn't afford 18 diamonds – not with his children's private school tuitions and his wife's ravenous appetite for sandy vacations, anyway.

The crowd stood petrified, forgetting that they all had work or school the next morning, that the dog needed to be let out and it was already getting late. It was disgusting that this had happened to our family, an embarrassment and a scandal in our own eyes. A theft like that – 18 diamonds! And when? While the Habs were wheezing down the final seconds of a painful defeat.

"Honey, lock the door!" ordered Auntie Sheila's husband, Dr. Larry Finklestein the dermatologist.

When the door was locked, Dr. Larry climbed on to his wobbly chair, his face red as a lobster and his hands waving, making broad gestures in the air.

Continued on page B11

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A Passover Scandal

Continued from page B10

He said, "Now everyone listen to me. Under my roof there's a thief, a disgrace to our family, who has the chutzpah to steal from Mordecai. And on what day? Game 1 of the Stanley Cup playoffs! I swear this probably jinxed the whole game. We lost to the Maple Leafs because of this, I just know it. Bad karma. Someone will be held accountable. There will be a reckoning, oh yes! Whoever stole those diamonds is giving them back and they're giving them back right now. Let's search each other now, go through each other's pockets, shake out our purses and wallets – all of us from the oldest to the youngest, not leaving anyone out. Start with me. Search my pockets first."

That's what Larry said, and he was the first to pull his pockets inside out. Following his example, we all loosened our belts and emptied our pockets. The men searched the men. The women searched the women. The women searched the men – since we are not such good lookers, it's true. Purses were spilled, wallets were emptied. Until it came to David Applebaum's turn, who first pretended that he had already been searched and who, when seeing no one believed him, argued that, in the first place, Morty was a liar, that his story was pure fabrication. There had never been any diamonds in that sack. Couldn't they see that he was just looking to make a quick buck off his gullible Canadian relatives?

The room got very loud. What did he mean? All the uncles and aunts had allowed themselves to be searched, lawyers and doctors among us, so what makes David Applebaum so special? There were no exceptions here.

"Search him! Search him!" the crowd roared.

David Applebaum began to plead for mercy with tears in his eyes. He begged us not to search him. He swore on his father's life that he was innocent in this – and anything else, while we were on the subject. How do you like that? Do you think we listened to him?

Hold on a second… I forgot to tell you who this David Applebaum was. He wasn't a Zunenshine by blood. He came from somewhere near Winnipeg, if I remember correctly, and he had met Larry and Sheila's daughter while studying at McGill. A great addition to our family, Auntie Sheila had boasted: from a rich family, related to the Bronfmans, a real Mr. Bigshot. He knew how to network and he got a Christmas card from every big name in town. He owned both a summer Mercedes and a winter Mercedes, a city house and a country house. And educated? Forgetaboutit. Even though he was a businessman, David Applebaum seemed to know more about the law than a lawyer, more about history than an historian, more about plants than the craziest gardener. He was a master of Scrabble, too, and had been a ranked tennis player in high school; a man faster on his feet you have never seen.

Soon after their daughter had introduced him, David began going to hockey games with Larry. He took to the Habs like he took to everything else: with complete determination to be the best. Well, the man devoured statistics, watched biographies – even bought Canadiens socks and underpants.

We all tried our best to stump him. "What was Maurice Richard's brother's name?" "How many overtime victories did we win in the 1993 playoffs?" "What were the most Stanley Cups won in a row?"

But nothing tripped him up. This guy was good – a little too good, if you catch my drift. He was too clever, too knowledgeable about the Habs' regular season schedule. When we watched hockey games at Larry and Sheila's house, he was always the last to arrive and the first to leave. He would follow the game, but not cheer at the right places, often looking like he wasn't even paying attention to the game – and he didn't look like he lost much sleep when our captain, Saku Koivu, was battling cancer.

And so, when it was his turn to be searched and he refused, that was all the proof most of us needed that he was our man. He begged us to forget the whole matter, begged us to chop him, roast him, cut him up – he even offered to write a cheque to replace the diamonds if we would just not empty his pockets out.

At this point, even Larry went apeshit on the guy and started to yell.

"You!" he cried. "You've got some nerve! Do you know what you deserve? You see what all of us have gone through? Do you see how upset you've made your mother-in-law? Everyone else has endured the embarrassment of being searched, but you want to be the only exception! Jesus Christ! Either come clean and hand them over, or let us see for ourselves what's in your pockets."

To get to the point, the uncles seized him by the shirt, wrestled him down on the floor, and began to search him all over. And finally they shook out… Well, guess! A well-gnawed bagel and a crumpled Mise-O-Jeu ticket with $200 on the Leafs to win. You can imagine what an impression this made – to discover he had placed money against the Habs on this most sensitive of days.

Poor Uncle Larry! He turned away in shame. He couldn't look anyone in the face. Betting on the Leafs, and in his house… As for the rest of us, tired as we were, we couldn't stop talking about it the whole drive home. We laughed hysterically. Only Larry didn't laugh, but walked upstairs to bed, his head lowered, pained, as though the ticket had been shaken out of his own pockets.

* * *

The story was apparently over. Casually, the man with the round eyes like Porsche headlights turned back to the window and started sipping his Martini.

"Well," we all asked in one voice, "what happened to the diamonds?"

"What diamonds?" asked the man innocently, looking at something out the window.

"What do you mean – what diamonds? The 18 diamonds!"

"Oh," he drawled. "The 18 diamonds. They were gone."

"Gone?"

"Gone forever."

A modern adaptation of the short story "A Yom Kippur Scandal," by Shalom Aleichem.

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Jerusalem Serenade - An Anniversary Remembrance

By PENNY BLOCH

A decade has passed since the year of purple sunsets and fragrant jasmine growing wild.
Faded footsteps reawaken and converge at dusk under a tide of clouds.
Deep lines – etched in time.

Tonight and often, a circle of memories stir and unite.
Autumnal vistas blur and a landscape of pink sandstone and olive green emerges.
You vibrate. Plum, lime, flame orange.
Clothes of many colours.

Petrol fumes give way to the mingling of turmeric and cinnamon,
A union of orange-yellow and rust.
Lush tangles of dates bound by their stems.
Stacks of soft pita, steamy white circle on white circle. Swells of red berries.

High beams on the Jerusalem hills glimpse thyme rising through the cracks.
In the still warm afternoon sun, gazelles have come to the dry river bed.
Grace is silent.
Biblical, then and now.

Wailing traffic, Kol Nidre, closing gates and heartache.
Mysteries unfolding – all over again.

Songs of the Old World

By LINDSAY SOBERANO-WILSON

When I'm in the car
with my *Bobe*
she hums the same song
and as she hums
a couple's feet circle
a ballroom
a scarf floats
in the wind
and a baby is cradled

With every beat
her pupils spin like a gramophone
and the surrounding crystal fairy
blue ripples

Her *hum um dum dum um*
opens the velvet red diary
and spills out memories
of resting her head on her mother's lap
of her last dance before the Gestapo
came to concentrate her

The melody that sounds like
a music box or a carousel
a lullaby or a nursery rhyme
hum um dum dum um

But as she says: "It's a Yiddish song
about the *zeyda* who was the first drunk
of the world."

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My Grandmother's Candles

By ORITTE RUDSKI

Vanished. Gone. Taken away.
Majestic twin towers of silver,
Sparkling with hopes and dreams,
Glowing with warm memories…
My grandmother's candlesticks.

These silver treasures that had
Graced the royal Sabbath table
Of her illustrious ancestors,
Were polished to perfection by her servants,
And lit as the sun began to set,

With just a hint of a tremble in my grandmother's hands
Reflecting the awesomeness of the moment,
As she ushered in the Sabbath Queen.

In a tiny, rundown shack by the sea shore
On a simple wooden shelf, my grandmother's candlesticks,
Listened to the sweet sound of
The happy tune she was singing to her children
As she washed their soiled clothing by hand
In the water of the Holy Land.
When Sabbath came she lit her candlesticks at her modest table
Feeling truly at peace and at home.

Years later, my mother travelled far from her family
In the days when phone calls were few and far between
And e-mails were not yet a distant dream.
She crammed the week's news into the blue page of an aerogramme
Sealed it with lonesome tears, and sent it off lovingly to my grandmother.
When Sabbath came she was comforted by glow of the candles
From the candlesticks that grandma had sent along with her.

When my turn came to leave home and family
My mother wrapped grandmother's candlesticks in an old blanket
And tearfully packed them in my suitcase as I set off for a cold climate,
Hoping that the light from their fire would keep me warm.
For many years they shone on my crowded Sabbath table
Listening to the joyous sound of many children singing and laughing
about "Big Gedalia Goomber" who made Kiddush on a barrel full of wine,
Hearing miraculous stories of landowners, and beggars and holy men.

Vanished. Gone. Taken away.
Majestic twin towers of silver,
Sparkling with hopes and dreams,
Glowing with warm memories,
My grandmother's candlesticks.

What would I do now, without them?
I shivered in the cold of the loss of my candlesticks,

Until… my Sabbath candles became grandmother's Sabbath candles
With strength and warmth for future generations.
As I held my granddaughter gently and breathed in her sweet baby smell,
I felt the warmth of her soft baby skin surrounding me with love like the warmth of Sabbath candles.
The sparkle in her eyes shining brightly kindled new light in my heart
Like the flames of my grandmother's candles.

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The Forgotten*

By STAN WEISBERG

What is this dripping
On my cheek?
Blood, warm and wet
Dripping from above me.

I can barely breathe
Under the weight
Of this strange bleeder.
Smelling of sweat and urine.

He pissed himself
At the first shots.
Standing like a row of trees
At the edge of the trench.

And then the screams.
No screams now.
Just soft moans
From above.

A single shot.

And the moaning stops.
I make no sound.
I want to live.

I squeeze my eyes shut
To hide
The terror
That engulfs me.

I cannot cover my ears.
My arms
Are pinned
By the weight above.

Then comes
A new sound.
A muffled thud.
Closer and closer.

Thud, thud.
I smell lime
From above.
Shovel after shovel.

I clench my teeth.
My heart pounds
Like a loud drum
In my head.

My brain cries out,
"Shma
Yisroel."
I want to live.

It is harder
To breathe now.
Thud, thud.
I want to live.

I want to live
I want to live.

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2008 Literary Supplement
Passover Greetings

Ode to the Hebrew Language

The Hebrew language is one of Israel's dearest possessions. The truth is that Israel is the only nation in the world that speaks the same tongue, upholds the same faith and inhabits the same land as it did 3,000 years ago. Its language unifies the nation. For this reason, the Hebrew language is Israel's dearest possession. The following is my ode to the Hebrew language.

By BARUCH COHEN

In loving memory of Malca
and in honour of Ariela and Irwin Cotler

This language
is Poetry.

Language of wisdom
and compassion,
this language: Hebrew,
written with letters of fire

The language of Moses,
Abraham, David,
Ben Yehuda, Ibn Gabirol
and Yehuda HaLevi.

A brass trumpet blasting
the cosmos
destined to pour out
floods of rage
against the world's
indifference;
Against the world's
Abuses.

This language,
this Hebrew language
calls on all four winds
of heaven
to praise life!

A brass trumpet
blasting the air;
a basket brimming with golden
arrows.

The language of
written tears by
S. Yizhahr, Rachel,
and Zelda,

The language of
written melody,
by Naomi Shemer,
the trumpets of
Yehuda Amhai
of love and passion
of Amoz Oz.

Thus, this language,
the Hebrew language,
written with letters of love for life
is Poetry!

Baruch Cohen is research chairman at the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research.

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A Good Mother

By RACHEL PIUTI

It is only about 10 days since we came back from Israel where we spent three wonderful weeks visiting with family and friends. We spent endless hours catching up on all that happened since our last visit more than eight years ago. Just like last time, the occasion for this trip was a wedding in the family.

We stayed in a small apartment in Tel Aviv. Israel came calling one evening. He is the husband of my cousin, Hanna. Hanna has been in a nursing home for the last five years and was in no condition to have visitors.

Instead, we had a one-sided chat over the phone – that is, I spoke and she barely answered. It was hard to accept what happened to the vivacious Hanna. But Israel is a slim and youthful 83, with an active social life, he told me. He is a retired judge and is still sometimes called in for arbitration or occasionally asked to go abroad as a good-will ambassador to speak at Israeli functions.

Why not tell these jokes, I thought

Israel has a wonderful sense of humour and a gift for storytelling. Thus, while we were enjoying a glass of wine with the delicious fish dinner that my son, Jake, prepared, Israel told us the following story.

"My mother was a very thoughtful person, a loving mother and a great Zionist. I was seven years old in 1930 when my family emigrated from Lodz, Poland, to Palestine. We soon learned to speak Hebrew, and we used the language at home and abroad. Lately, however, a few years before my mother died at the age of 93, she seemed to have forgotten Hebrew and reverted to Yiddish, her first language. She was by then in a home for the aged in Raanana. Her memory was also quite poor by then. I found it difficult to carry on a conversation with her on my weekly visits. For one, my knowledge of Yiddish was limited.

"One day as I was struggling to keep a conversation going, I remembered some Yiddish jokes that I heard occasionally here and there. Why not tell her those jokes, I thought. She might enjoy them. The jokes were a success. She laughed at each one of the eight jokes that I told her in my struggling, Hebrew-accented Yiddish.

"On my next visit, after the usual questions about her health, meals and about social activities, I found myself again short of topics. I didn't know any new Yiddish jokes, but I thought that maybe I could repeat some of the old ones and see how they go over. After all, her memory wasn't very good and she might not remember them from last week.

"Sure enough she laughed at each one of them and I was happy and sad at the same time. I was sad to realize how bad her memory was. But I was glad that I found a formula that would spare me the awkward silences and would instead fill the visiting hour with laughter. Thus, I continued to use this solution on all subsequent visits, and my mother continued to laugh at the jokes every time.

"A few months after my mother passed away, I was invited to spend an evening at some friends' house. There was an interesting crowd, most were professionals in their 60s, and after a while the conversation drifted towards aging. I decided to tell about my mother's reverting to Yiddish in her old age and about the way I coped with the situation. I started explaining in a self-congratulatory tone how every week I would repeat the Yiddish jokes and how much my mother laughed and enjoyed them every time.

"Suddenly I heard a woman say in a clear, loud voice: 'Oh, now I understand everything.'

"Someone asked: 'What do you mean?'

"'My mother was in that same home for the aged in Raanana. She became friends with a lady whose son was a judge. One day she confided to my mother that she was worried about her son. She couldn't understand what was happening to him. Each time he came to visit he repeated the same jokes that he told her the week before. She didn't want to tell him that he was repeating himself so she laughed and pretended that she heard them for the first time.'"

Jake and I laughed so much at the turn this story had taken that tears were flowing from our eyes.

"Wait a minute, this isn't the end of it yet. There is a more serious sequel to this story. I told you before that not only was she a caring mother, but she was also a good Zionist. It is true that she didn't accomplish anything spectacular during her lifetime besides living in Israel and being a good Jew. But she did accomplish something important after her death. And this is how it happened," Israel continued.

"I was asked to go to the United States with a group of Israelis to promote the sale of bonds. I was scheduled to speak in a town in Texas at a breakfast meeting attended by many prominent people. I started talking about the importance of the State of Israel to World Jewry and about the need for funds for the absorption of Jews from around the world. I could tell that I wasn't reaching them. The air was polite but cool. I almost gave up in despair.

"I was sipping my coffee and pondering how to soften the hearts of these seasoned lawyers and judges, when a woman, my neighbour at the head table, asked to be excused."

"'I am sorry,'" she said, "'but I must leave. My mother is in a home for the aged, and I visit her every Sunday morning.'

"Suddenly an idea popped into my head: I am going to enlist my mother's help!

"I told them the story of my Yiddish jokes and how my wise mother dealt with them. My mother received a standing ovation, and that morning she sold a million dollars' worth of bonds."

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A Bitter-Sweet Mood

By ROSE BROMBERG

It all began when I opened the siddur.
It's amazing how one little incident
can set off a kaleidoscope of images,
which can fill pages.

I recall one particular night
sitting in Temple Anshe Shalom
always with eager anticipation,
drinking in the eloquent and
profound words of the rabbi's sermons.

The service always began with
Lechah Dodi, "Come my friend
with joy serene to greet the
Bride the Sabbath Queen."

You turned to me and lovingly
kissed my cheek.
When quick as a wink,
our little girl reached up
and kissed my other cheek.

Then I felt a gentle
touch on my shoulder.
I turned to see a stranger,
who smilingly whispered:
"That was beautiful to see.
I never get that kind of
attention from my family.
I must get your recipe."

I suppose you're wondering
what has happened to trigger
off this bitter-sweet mood.
Well, friend husband, I'll tell
you.
Since I was unable to attend
shul
this Sabbath morning, I picked
my mother's siddur off the shelf.
Its golden-brown pages aged
by time… to do my praying at home.

The book opened where the pressed
rose lies in state, enclosed in wax paper.
That's when you invade my mind.
I remember…
When I opened the door,
there you stood smiling;
holding a long stemmed red rose.
"Our first date"

That single rose perfumed
my life and its fragrance
still lingers on……..!

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Dr. Reuven

By MILTON VERSKIN

No one liked Dr. Reuven. From the day he joined the shul, he made a nuisance of himself.

No one could believe it when he demanded that they make the man sitting next to him move to another seat. It was his underarm deodorant, he said, that was disgusting. He fought with the staff committee because they refused to fire the office manager; with the youth committee because they used the boardroom for children's services, and with the caretaker and cleaning staff because the garbage containers were not cleared often enough. Each dispute was taken to the rabbi, who always made them accommodate Dr. Reuven, mainly, it seemed, because he was so old.

No one knew how old he was. Some said that he was probably in his mid-70s but looked over 90 because of the sad life he had led. Others said that he was in fact over 90. Everyone agreed that he had led a sad life. His wife had left him many years earlier, and his children never spoke to him. He had left his previous congregation after a series of bitter fights with everyone there, including its rabbi. He had been in business and had broken up acrimoniously with his partners. There were rumours that he had been in jail.

One Saturday morning during the Torah reading, a little boy of seven or eight ran past him laughing – there was a game going on and he was running away from his pursuers. Dr. Reuven grabbed hold of him. The boy screamed, there was something of a struggle, and he kicked Dr. Reuven. Dr. Reuven screamed and let go. The Torah reading was stopped. The child continued screaming and had to be pacified. Dr. Reuven, likewise, continued screaming, threatening to sue the child and his parents, as well as the rabbi and the whole congregation.

"No child like that should be allowed to run around loose," he shouted. "He is a danger to everyone. There are old people in the shul. Are parents no longer responsible for their children? What kind of a rabbi is it who allows a child like that to run around wild?"

But the child, once he was pacified, told an interesting story. He said that when Dr. Reuven grabbed him, he fondled him in places that were forbidden, and he said that Dr. Reuven had tried to do that before.

A few philanthropists in the congregation who had been helping Dr. Reuven with his rent and grocery bills defended him. You cannot condemn a man on the evidence of a small child, they said. Everyone knew the boy. He was a nice enough child from a nice enough family, but he was undisciplined and wild. He could make up anything. They quoted a verse from the Torah portion of the week – "On the testimony of two witnesses shall a matter be established" – and that, they said, meant not one witness, but two, and not children, but adults. But the members of the library committee and the seating committee, joined by the committee on house and staff affairs, quoted another verse from the same portion: "Justice, justice you shall pursue."

"That is precisely it," the philanthropists said. "How can you condemn an old man, a professional person, a doctor, by the mouth of a small child?"

"What are you talking about?" This from the chairman of the building and maintenance committee, Robert Feinblum. "I can tell you as a matter of established fact that that man is no doctor. No one ever heard of him being a doctor. You ask anyone – that title is a fraud, a con. It's a piece of made-up nonsense invented by a crook. You show me his doctor's diploma."

"I don't care if he is a doctor or he isn't a doctor," said David Koppelowitz, one of the philanthropists who had been contributing to Dr. Reuven's rent for several months. "This is an old man. You don't accuse him of a disgusting crime on the word of a small child."

"You tell me what the hell that means?" Robert Feinblum said. "Are you trying to tell me that any time he likes, this old, son-of-a-bitch bastard can attack a small child, and that it's okay because no one is allowed to believe a small child?"

"Justice," he said, pointing a large middle finger in the philanthropist's face, "justice you shall pursue."

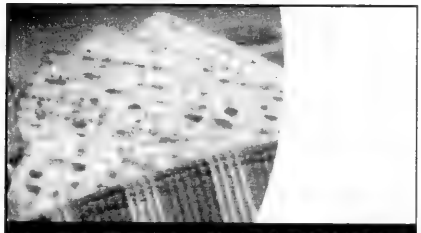
Dr. Reuven, who had been quiet for a few minutes, panting and struggling to get back his breath, suddenly came alive again. "I will sue each and every person in this congregation," he shouted. "I shall sue the rabbi. I shall sue the board of directors. I shall sue each and every one of you. It's disgusting that you allow a child like that – a wild, untrained boy, a wild animal from a filthy family – to run around the shul like that, in the middle of the service, and let him assault any old person he wants to assault, and insult anyone he likes, and nothing happens to him. I promise you one thing. I will see to it that this gets into every newspaper in the country, and you will pay. Each and every person here in this congregation is responsible for this, and I will see to it that I drag you through every court in the country, every newspaper will know about it, every radio station, the Internet. I will sue the pants off you, just you wait and see."

The secretary of the library committee was a quiet, rather eccentric man. "It seems," he said, "reading between the lines, that someone has upset Dr. Reuven."

Immediately after the service, one of the philanthropists invited Dr. Reuven to his house for lunch, and, in the ensuing quiet, Robert Feinblum got together a group of men in the shul library to form an ad hoc lobby group to have Dr. Reuven expelled from the synagogue.

They found David Koppelowitz there, preparing for a Talmud class. He asked, "How can you do this to an old man?" and Robert Feinblum replied, "If that was your child, my friend, if you had been the father of a child and this bastard tried out his disgusting practices on your child, let me tell you, you wouldn't be sitting on your ass in this library coming up with quotations from the Talmud about how you must have two witnesses. And I don't care how learned

Continued on page B19



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2008 Literary Supplement
Passover Greetings

Dr. Reuven

Continued from page B18

you may be in talmudic affairs. You can be the biggest genius in talmudic studies in the whole world. I am not impressed with your learning. You ask how can we do this to an old man? And I tell you, my friend, there is one thing I know for certain: if that child was your child, if you were the father of that little boy, you would not be sitting on your ass in this library asking me that kind of stupid question."

The rabbi was brought into the dispute. He said, "I can't say that I understand the issue. The man is old. I look at him and see that he is wasting away. Perhaps someone can explain to me the great danger you see emanating from him?"

There were some who saw some force in what the rabbi said. Dr. Reuven was skinny beyond imagination, with a long, narrow face, long thin ears, narrow shoulders, and slanted, pathetic eyes full of anger and suffering.

The president of the shul, Josh Dickson, was a tall, careful, pedantic, idealistic man with a soft voice who called many meetings, made many telephone calls, and exchanged hundreds of e-mails.

He took a strong position.

"I agree with you entirely," he said. "How can you do that to an old man? On the testimony of two witnesses shall a matter be established. Not by the testimony of a small child. A naughty child. But I have a problem. There are people who have very strong feelings about this, people who have a lot of influence in the congregation."

That's what he said to the philanthropists.

With the ad hoc lobby group, he took an equally strong stand.

"I agree with you entirely," he said. "The man is a danger. Even just on account of the fact that he has been a constant nuisance to the shul since he arrived, that alone would justify us in kicking him out. But, after this, there is no doubt, this man must be told to leave."

"So tell the son-of-a-bitch bastard to leave," Robert Feinblum said. "You don't need to call 100 meetings. You take the bastard by the collar and you tell him, 'Out, or we'll knock the shit out of you!'"

"I agree with you entirely," Josh Dickson said.

"So do it," Robert Feinblum said. "Get off your ass and do it."

"But I have a problem," Josh Dickson said. "There are people who have very strong feelings about this – people who have a lot of influence in the congregation."

At one of the meetings, the philanthropists came up with an important point.

"What are your rights?" they said. "The shul is a public place. Can you tell a man that he can no longer be a member? Perhaps you can't."

No one knew. The matter was taken to Robert Feinblum's brother, who was a lawyer. Some of the members of the ad hoc lobby group were invited to a meeting.

Leaning back in his chair, his arms stretched out and resting on the chairs on either side of him, the lawyer gave his advice. There was no problem, he said. The obvious answer was to report Dr. Reuven to the police, who would take a very serious view of the matter. After that, the shul would never see him again.

But the chairman of the library committee was also a lawyer and he said that you don't report an old man to the police. If you want him out, you simply look at the law. Any congregation is entitled to tell a man that he is not welcome in its precincts. No one can be forced to associate with someone he doesn't like, and the congregation is entitled to tell Dr. Reuven that its members don't want to associate with him.

More meetings were held. Some said expel him. Some said keep a watch on him in shul to see that he does not interfere with children. Others said ask another shul to invite him to join them, as there are some shuls who will reach out to anyone.

A new lawyer was asked to research the matter, a young man from a distant congregation.

Two members of the ad hoc lobby group took it upon themselves to speak to Dr. Reuven: Robert Feinblum, chairman of the house and maintenance committee, who was twice the old man's height and three times his width, with a strong, loud voice, and his friend Fred Halpern, who was even larger.

They called Dr. Reuven aside one day after shul and told him that he was no longer welcome there, that he had never been welcome there, and that he should find somewhere else to pray. They expected him to lose his temper, to shout, to threaten. Instead there were a few seconds of silence, his thin body shook a little, his hands trembled, and tears began to flow from his little eyes.

He stayed away for a few weeks, and then he returned. Where else did he have to go?

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Promises

By RACHEL PIUTI

I have been promised 22 more years on earth and a place in heaven thereafter. This promise was given to me three years ago. Thus, I can look forward to another 19 years on earth before I attain my place in heaven.

I think about my prospects with mixed feelings, however. I'm not sure that I like the idea of watching the ticking clock, or of knowing exactly when I will ascend to heaven, even if it means that I will reside in the company of saintly souls.

I am sometimes uneasy about this whole business of prediction, and I think that I would rather remain in the dark as to my future. These thoughts assail me sometimes, but most often on the days between Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, and Yom Kippur, the Day Of Atonement, because it was at that time that the promise was made to me.

Here is how it happened.

It was late in the afternoon on a sunny day in September. I was driving south on Bathurst Street, going home from a bridge game, when I decided to drop in at the No Frills store and buy a head of lettuce and a few tomatoes for a salad. I was ready with the purchase in a few minutes and was almost at the door on my way out when I heard someone calling: "Excuse me, lady! excuse me!"

I turned around and saw a heavy woman with a puffy face, sitting on a walker, surrounded by bulging shopping bags.

"Yes," I said, "are you calling me?"

"Could you give me a lift home?" she asked. "I live only a few blocks from here, but I can't manage with these bags."

I looked at her swollen legs and the bags beside her and wondered how she ever expected to take so much stuff home.

"Where do you live?" I asked.

"At the corner of Bathurst and Prince Charles," she replied.

"OK. I'll take you home. I'm going that way anyway. But why in the world did you buy so much stuff? And how did you get here? Did you walk all the way?"

"Yes, I walked here. And you know how it is, one gets carried away and buys more than one planned to."

I put her bags in a yellow shopping cart and walked to the car, with the woman pushing the walker beside me. She could barely move, and I helped her into the passenger seat. I folded the walker and put it on the back seat; it was heavy. I put the groceries in the trunk and we started on our way.

I could see that she was Orthodox: she had on a brown wig and wore a long dress of some dark fabric. She thanked me for helping her and showered me with a profusion of blessings. She asked if I spoke Yiddish, and when she heard that I did, she spoke to me in Yiddish only. She told me that she was from Zwolen, a small town in Poland; that when the war broke out in 1939, she was newly married and that she and her husband ran away to Russia where they survived the war, although they suffered much hardship. She was a widow now, had a married son, an accountant, and a daughter, married to a businessman. She had eight grandchildren.

Good deed counts as a double mitzvah

She spent much time in prayers and in studies of the Talmud and the Torah. She promised to pray for me.

"In fact," she said, "you did today a big mitzvah, a good deed, and because it happened between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, it counts for a double mitzvah.Thus, you earned today 22 more years of life instead of only 11, were the mitzvah performed at any other time of the year.

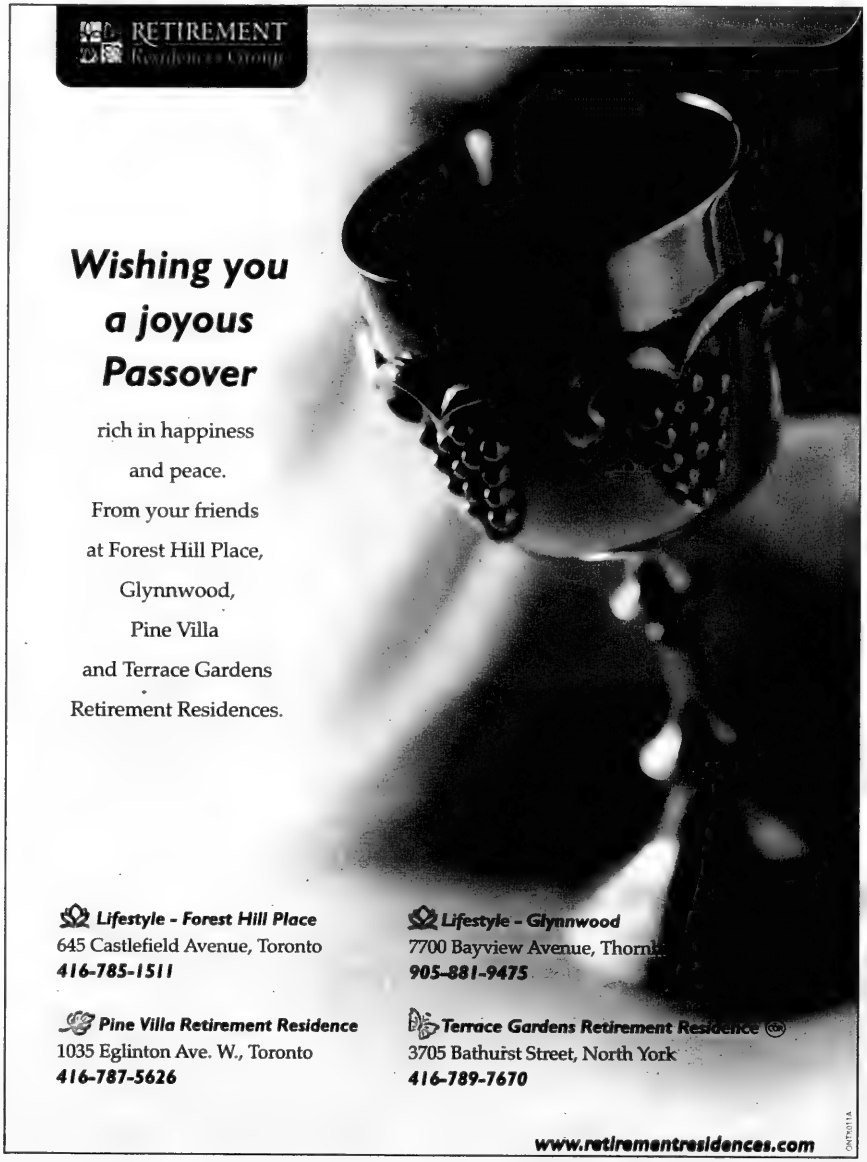
"And you will also go straight to heaven and spend there your eternal life near to God and all the saintly souls."

The woman noticed my skeptical smile.

"It is all true what I am telling you. You can believe me. It is all written down, I study the books every day. And besides, you were very lucky to have met me today. It was I who made all this possible for you. It was I who gave you the means to do a mitzvah and to earn so many blessings and such generous rewards here and in the next world," she concluded emphatically.

We had arrived at her building. I took out the walker and the bags from the trunk and carried them in two trips to the elevator, while the woman kept the button pressed down to hold the door open. We went up to her floor, and I carried the bags to her door. We said goodbye and wished each other a Happy New Year.

As I was leaving I wondered if I should, maybe, thank her for all she did for me that day.



Paper Prayers at the Kottel

By MARINA MASHAAL

Where there is a will, there is a way
through a hole or a door,
no matter the inaudible hopes,
no matter the inaudible hurts.
There's even a ladder and a moon for us,
and an angel who sometimes weeps.

There are letters of summer to fold
in between the white sparks of brick.
They sleep in the grassy crevices like baby bluebirds
with tiny poems taped to their beaks.
There are springtime songs to rise
and fall's prayer with wings grown strong,
faint as in a dream stitched from the belly
and here, God, is mine.

Mothers

By MANDY LIRIT GINZBURG

Alone on the road, Rachel paces and
waits, waiting for life to return, but the
brambles have grown thick, the weeds spread wild,
around her moss-infected grave. If
the mother of one cries a million
prayers, then how many the mother of
a nation? Until she is soaked.
Splotching the ground as she paces

alone in the temple, Chana paces and
waits, waiting for life to grow. Mocked by
Peninnah's fertile womb, Chana mourns her
sterile doom. Not a drunk, but an empty mother
sending up careful pleas and promises,
hushed but howling, in chorus with the nation's
mother. Staining her shirt, the floors, with
fresh-dripped prayers as she paces

alone in the dining room, the mother paces and
waits, waiting for Shabbat to come in. She
rubs her swelling belly, full with prayers,
a new life for the nation, who will clear
the brambles, and pull the weeds, and say the
Kaddish, and place the stones around the grave
of the nation's mother. Tonight she lights an
extra candle, no one will pace alone.

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A Blur

By PEARL ADLER SABAN

The woman... she sat across from me in the medical centre's waiting room.

I noticed...her jewelry, her tan, her shoes and then her arm.

Were those bruises? Was it dirt?

And then it hit me – a number embedded on her delicate, tanned skin.

Embedded on the outside of the arm... for all to see.

Numbers – not so legible, but never truly fading.
A blur.

A memory, in fact a nightmare of something too difficult to comprehend.

My heart clenched.

My heart clenches each time it sees one of these numbers, one of these blurs.

Those times are becoming much more infrequent.

She passed close by and asked me a question. I answered, then grasped her arm and told her how I was taken aback... by that number. I told her I hadn't been sure it was a number –

I was used to numbers on the inside of an arm, more hidden.

I told her it seemed like a blur.

I asked her where she'd been.

"Where everyone was – Auschwitz."

"You must've been young."

"I was. But I lived through it and I went on with my life."

"Thank God for that," I told her.

That number. A blur to me. Certainly not a blur to her.

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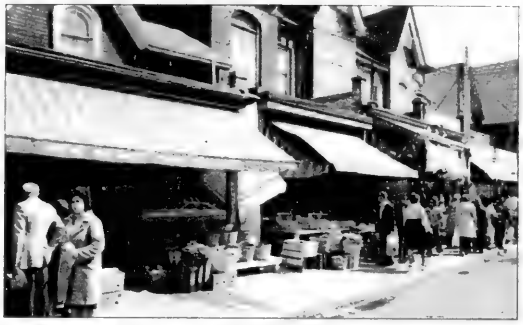
Kensington Market Recollections

By SARAH TEITLEBAUM (ADELMAN)



In 1953, our family was among the last Jews left residing in Kensington Market. All our neighbours had long since moved to the more fashionable North York, and we finally moved as well.

My father had managed the store at 62 Kensington Ave. until it was taken over by A. Leopold in the '50s. It was, in succession, a chicken store, a fish store, then finally a fruit and vegetable store. After we moved up north, my father sold second-hand clothing at 60 Kensington Ave. travelling there each day by bus.

Fleeing Poland with his wife and four children, my bearded, old-country, religious grandfather, Mordechai, without speaking one word of English, acquired an extensive property, which consisted of three stores, at 58, 60 and 62 Kensington Ave., together with the apartments above them. In the rear, were two attached stucco cottages. Horse stables, a chicken coop, a large parking lot for horse wagons and a meat-smoking house made up the rest of the estate.

In the summer, my mother would bathe me, as a baby, in a large iron tub set up on old wooden chairs. When I would refuse to eat as a toddler, my mother would take me to visit the horses in the stables at the rear of our house. Not being a good eater, I got to see the horses quite often.

My grandfather, who lived with us, would feed me a freshly laid egg each morning. I preferred the egg to the oatmeal my mother prepared. He set me up on the store counter-top covered with white papers used for wrapping.

I was an only child.

Next door to us was Daiter's Creamery. As a young child, I played in the lanes between our stores and in the backyards with Barnie, Larry and Ronnie Daiter. I also played with my cousins who lived nearby, Howard and Allan (now Prof. Howard Adelman and Dr. Allan Adelman). I had girlfriends on the block as well, with whom I played paper cutouts and did puzzles.

In the '40s, this was a vibrant, colourful Jewish marketplace with stores of every description. But food stores predominated, including a banana store owned by Mr. Sanci, a gentle, soft-spoken Italian. I remember huge bunches of bananas hanging from the ceiling and displayed in the store window.

What I most recall, however, were the odors emanating from the many stores and outdoor stalls. Passing by Leibowitz's appetizer store at the corner of Kensington and Baldwin, I was drawn to the tempting odours of barrels outside the store, filled with sour pickles and black and green olives. Inside, on the walls, hung the *vurschts* – kosher salamis – and bologna of all sizes. They blended their own particular aroma with the pungency of the smoked carp and whitefish.

On Sunday mornings, my father would bring home from the store schmaltz herring wrapped in newspaper, which I enjoyed with fresh rye bread and butter.

Continued on page B24

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Kensington Market Recollections

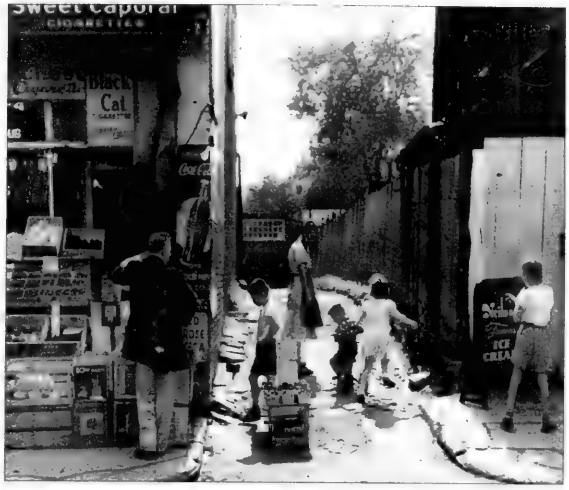
Continued from page B23

The owner of Goodman's Fruit Store directly across the street was our competitor. He was loud and aggressive when hawking his wares, while my father was more timid. So naturally, he got the lion's share of the business. I remember trying to help out by shouting: "Apples, apples, six cents a pound." I was five or six at the time.

On a summer night to escape the heat, we would sit for hours outside with our neighbours on empty wooden crates. But my enjoyment of the cool evening breeze was spoiled by the smell of decaying fruits and vegetables stashed away under the haphazardly built wooden stands. Since refrigerators were not yet available to most, there was no shortage of food gone bad.

I would plead with my mother for 10 cents to buy a piece of feather-soft angel food cake at Lottman's bakery at the corner of Baldwin and Kensington, from which wafted a delicious smell of freshly baked breads and sweet rolls. On Augusta Street nearby, was the Carmel bakery which was closed on the Sabbath.

The overpowering odour of Katz's fish store, was hard to get used to. Not so the butcher shops from which emanated the robust, bloody smell of beef, lamb and veal.



I lived for many years above Albert's Meat Market at 58 Kensington, and became accustomed to its odour. Every morning there was the sound of chopping, as large carcasses of meat were being prepared for sale, and that was the sound I woke up to.

At the age of 14, I worked after school in Kaplan's Creamery down the street, and liked its sweet, acidic smell. An elderly Polish worker, Johnny, performed amazing calculations in his head. As a salesclerk, I would use a wooden spatula to scoop up the butter and cottage cheese from the huge vats, and then weigh them on a paper-lined scale. Old ladies who came to buy would take their time unravelling their money, which was tied up in frayed handkerchiefs.

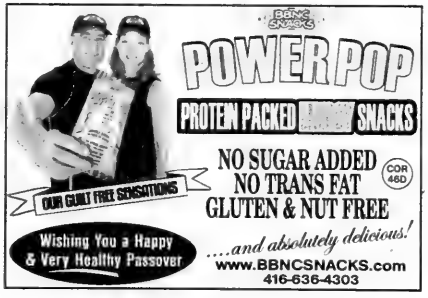
My grandfather, whom I loved to accompany to the Minsker Shul on Shabbat, was a chicken dealer. I remember the chickens squawking noisily in their cages in his store. The customers would bring the chickens to Fitzroy Terrace, where a shochet wearing a blood-stained apron awaited them. Busily working around a long table were women chicken-pluckers covered with gray and white feathers.

Hand in hand, my zaide and I would visit the lumberyard, the tool store and the blacksmith. I was intrigued by his golden watch, kept in his trouser pocket, which he consulted from time to time. He passed away when I was 10 years old

When Kensington Market lost its Jewish identity in the late '50s, I was already married and living in Montreal. Our property was sold in the '60s to a Mr. Rubello, and was transformed into a mammoth Portuguese supermarket and warehouse.

As the market evolved from Portuguese to Chinese, which it still is today, its odour reflected its ethnicity.

Still one of the most important landmarks in a culturally diverse metropolitan Toronto, Kensington Market is also my birthplace and the place of my childhood memories.



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Passover Greetings

Coming Home

By JACQUELINE MARKOWITZ

The route to my mother's house is part of my internal navigation system, right, left, right, left, all on first streets.

Jeffrey lived in the corner house. He could recite the theme song from *Gilligan's Island*. Barb lived a few doors away. She and I would play Secret Agent Man in the open field behind our houses. Our pink and blue plastic "Barbie cases" were transformed into a treasure trove of espionage as we hopped the rickety wire fence in hot pursuit. An older couple lived in the house next door. Mr. Resko planted the new maple tree in our back garden after the old elm was chopped down with disease. That house sits stoically empty now that they are both gone, waiting, just waiting.

They have all moved away. The ones that stayed after the children had left are gone as well, moved to retirement homes or passed on, and a new generation is claiming my neighbourhood. My mother still lives in her house: "Where do I live? Two thirty-nine. I'm still here. How long have I been there? Forty years. Forty years. That's a long time. Yes it is."

I remember the first time we saw the house. It had shiny hardwood floors and beautiful windows at either end of the combined living and dining rooms. My brother and I sat on the floor of this room while Mom and Dad looked around. The memory byte is so vivid I can even feel the sun warming us as we leaned against the wall looking up the stairs, listening to their conversation, and wondering if they would buy the house.

The house is a mausoleum of memories. I can see my life moments played out in the "sets" of the house. The dining room table, with my mother's meticulously hand-embroidered cloth placed just so, over the well polished mahogany. My Dad went out one day and brought home "the dining room set." The breakfront is the resting ground for some of my favourite things. Teacups and saucers neatly arranged in front of the gorgeous English Minton, delicately flowered plates etched with gold, standing splendidly on display. An exquisite blue cut glass vase, Elijah's cup, an assortment of silver wine goblets, a menorah, salt and pepper shakers disguised as a dog and cat from Niagara Falls, and shell covered ones from Miami, a well-travelled glass menagerie, an engraved silver candy dish, my hand-painted egg and my carved soapstone seal, rest among the jewels encased behind the leaded glass cabinetry.

We embraced that table dressed in white on Friday nights. The red cabbage, gefilte fish, chicken, brisket, potatoes, chicken soup, Yorkshire pudding, apple cake, sponge cake and tea were the cornerstones of our family life. We gathered. We laughed. We created. I did my homework on that table and made pictures on the white cardboards that my father would save from his starched white shirts returning from the cleaners.

We cried and sat in disbelief when our father died. I looked out the window of my bedroom. The rabbi urged me to return to the table for prayers.

"Why?"

"It says that God heals the sick."

Every room, each spot of the house holds a piece of my story. The memories are crowded in the stillness that now fills the house; they lurk, tantalize and approach at whim.

My mother told me many years later that she cried the night she came home from my wedding. She was alone. Now, as a woman, a wife, a mother, I can feel the poignancy of that bittersweet realization resting in that spot in my chest that wills back the tears.

Coming home, I head straight for the candy cupboard with visions of delicious little treats, now usually stark empty with the exception of sickly sweet bridge mixture, "on tap" for the bridge girls on Wednesday afternoons. But the candy situation is deteriorating. My sister ordered the goodies to be hidden to save Mom's teeth. All I find is sugarless hard candies. En route back to the living room, I glance from habit at the spot where the mirror hung before the renovation, rectangular, aluminum framed, on the side of the cupboard, the vacant space still wanting to catch my reflection.

The quiet of the house is always astounding, and it makes my body slow, like being under ether. The big and small hands of the porcelain clock tick with a hypnotic gait. The old soft couch beckons, and my eyes barely stay ajar. I resist. Guilt. I came to spend time with her. She resides in her wing chair. I sit on the carpet nuzzled against her legs and rest my head on her lap. A mother's withered hand strokes my head.

She sings her songs. "They're lighting a stairway to heaven, angels will watch over you, sleep my little one, sleep, hmmm, la, la, la, la, la…"

I am in heaven. I travel back to vaguely familiar, safe territories where things are swept under rugs, painstakingly sewn by nearsighted weavers, to a place where we are all gathered around the white table cloth, and mother and daughter have not yet authored our guide to survival.

Card houses, communities erected on the carpet, architecturally surpassed by each generation. The Hungry Hippo, still in its original box, played with by anxious hands. The dress-up drawer, stuffed with relics. My father put a wig on once and played the piano, like a mad musician. I have the piano now. It still holds his melody. Frisky, the fat beagle, could beg and sit. That was her favourite spot, just by the side table with the Lalique Swan Girl.

"Do you want a cup of tea and a biscuit?" Tea and biscuits, bread and butter, jam and cheese, these are a few of my favourite things…

I watch her at the front door. My little Mama. I could cradle her in my arms. She stands at the doorway to "wave me off," as she has done for a lifetime and more.

Our ritual: I wave, blow her kisses. "I love you, Mom." I want those to be the words she carries with her, the lingering piece of memory.

Coming home, right, left, right, left, all on first streets.

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So ya wanna be an artist, eh?

By BENJAMIN T. PELMAN

In the 1930s, I resided in a part of Toronto that was considered somewhat of a ghetto. The streets in that area, from College Street on the south to Bloor Street in the north and from Spadina Avenue in the east to Clinton Street in the west, were inhabited by people whose forefathers came from western Europe.

Most of us who lived in this enclave received our schooling from either Clinton Street Public School or King Edward Public School. I lived on Manning Avenue, at Ulster Street, and attended Clinton, which was nearby.

The school had an addition built onto it many years before I was enrolled there. The older section had creaking stairs that had been hollowed out by many young feet. Wooden boards covered the ground of the schoolyard, and a wobbly back fence marked its perimeter.

On school days, just before 9 a.m. and at the end of recess, a staff member would come into the schoolyard and ring a handbell. This was the signal for the students to line up with their class. Each class had a student-monitor to oversee what I remember was always orderly processions to the classrooms.

Manning Avenue was a unique street that produced many professionals. But I think the one outstanding thing about Manning Avenue was that it had a cheder, located between College and Ulster streets. This Hebrew school was in a converted house. On the ground floor, there were two classrooms. The upper floors were used as the residence for the "rabbi" and his assistant. The students who attended cheder were from the neighbourhood, and their parents paid for tutoring in Hebrew and bar mitzvah preparation.

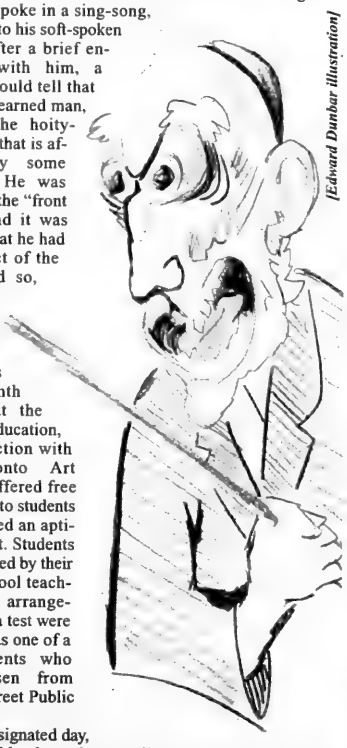
The cheder was known as "Rabbi's Day Cheder." Rabbi Day was not ordained; however, out of respect he was known in the neighbourhood, and to his students, as "Rabbi." His brother-in-law, who taught the students in the front classroom, was referred to as Mr. Robinson.

There were two sessions of classes each day, except on Saturdays – no classes on Shabbat. Each classroom contained a shelf of books, rows of desks with seats and a huge slate blackboard behind a teacher's desk and chair.

A full class was made up of about 20 students. The students would settle in their assigned seats promptly at 4 p.m., at which time the rabbi and Mr. Robinson would enter their respective classrooms. Evening classes for older students who wished to pursue Hebrew education started at 7 p.m.

The rabbi, who was six feet tall had an authoritative air. His hair was cropped close to his head, which was covered by an ever-present yarmulke. His face was oval, with a straight small nose that belied his Semitic heritage. The rabbi's steel grey eyes were set close, and capable of burning into your soul at five paces without provocation. The lips that highlighted his face were sensuous, and he had the knack of disarming anyone with a curl on his lips. He usually didn't raise his voice, but he was capable of thundering away at any wayward victim who crossed his path.

Mr. Robinson could best be described as the antithesis of the rabbi. He was of medium height and his head was topped with a head of wavy brown hair on which sat the yarmulke. His demeanour and movements were of a gentle man. He spoke in a sing-song, with a lilt to his soft-spoken words. After a brief encounter with him, a stranger could tell that he was a learned man, without the hoity-toityiness that is affected by some teachers. He was master of the "front room," and it was obvious that he had the respect of the rabbi, and so, also, the students' respect.


[Edward Dunbar illustration]

It was when I was in eighth grade that the board of education, in conjunction with the Toronto Art Gallery, offered free art classes to students who showed an aptitude for art. Students were selected by their public school teachers, and arrangements for a test were made. I was one of a few students who was chosen from Clinton Street Public School.

On a designated day, we were told to be at the art gallery at about 2 p.m., where the test was to take place. We were assured that the test would take only an hour, so I was in no danger of being late for Hebrew classes.

On entering the impressive building, I went to the fourth floor, where about 30 youngsters and two art instructors were gathered. The large room we were ushered into had paintings on the walls, and there was a large mahogany table. On the table, a velvety green cloth was draped in many folds, with a large pitcher and two bowls of fruit at the cloth's centre.

Continued on page B27

So ya wanna be an artist, eh?

Continued from page B26

The instructors handed each student a clipboard with several sheets of art paper and a soft-leaded pencil. We were told to position ourselves around the table, and sit down if we wished, and draw what we saw. At the end of the allotted time, we put our names on our drawings, plus the name of the school we attended, and handed them to one of the instructors. We would be advised later of the results.

A few weeks later, I received word from my public school teacher that I had been accepted into the art classes and could start the following week. The teacher commended me on my test and opined that this was an opportunity that not many youngsters would get. I told my parents about my art classes, however, they had no inkling what it was all about as long as I went to Hebrew school and came home in time for dinner. "You can make a living from drawing?"

Classes, scheduled for Mondays and Thursdays between 3 and 4 p.m, took place at the art gallery. The few art students from Clinton Public School were allowed to leave classes early.

The following Monday I attended the art gallery for my first lesson. The art class was made up of about 15 students from various public schools. The two instructors taught us the basics of artwork pertaining to drawing still-lifes and how to create perspective, distance and height. I found these lessons very interesting, and being the type who thrived on new subjects, I enjoyed the challenge of drawing. But this was my undoing, as I become too absorbed during the classes. Time passed quickly, and on occasion I was late for Hebrew school.

One fine Monday afternoon I was late for Hebrew class, getting there just after 4 p.m. Rabbi Day stopped me before I could get to my seat. "Come here," he bellowed. "Come here, Pelchovitz" (I, too, have my name changed but that's another story). "You know you are late again. What excuse have you got this time?" (as if I gave him excuses before).

"I was at art school, and I am sorry that I am late," I answered sheepishly.

"Art school?" the rabbi. His voice had now reached the bellowing level. "What's more important than cheder?" – a question that I dared not answer. With a snarl, he threw me a piece of chalk and growled, "Show me what they teach you at art school." He stood back, arms akimbo, glaring at me, daring me to draw some reasonable sketch on the blackboard. All this while he held his willowy pointer. I approached the blackboard nervously and with chalk in my hand I tried (oh, how I tried!) to draw something that might be representative of what we had learned in art class.

The rabbi took two paces back; by this time the damage was done. His face turned red with rage. "For this you come late and disturb the class! So ya wanna be an artist, eh?" – and down whistled the pointer and found its target, the seat of my pants – "whack" and "whack" again. Before I could recover, he told me, in a somewhat milder tone, to take my seat. By this time, the class was in an uproar, not only with my feeble effort on an unforgiving blackboard, but it also gave the other students some sadistic satisfaction to see someone else hurt. Needless to say, my fervour for art classes was considerably lessened by this.

My bar mitzvah, which now became my primary objective, took place without a hitch in a little shul on Brunswick Avenue. My reading of the Torah portion went well, and my father was pleased with my efforts. My grandfather, who rarely shows any emotion at all, actually smiled at me and kissed me as I left the bimah. But best of all was when Rabbi Day put his arms around me and, with pride in his voice, said, "That was a job well done."

But it was on Friday that I remember Rabbi Day's cheder best. This was the time when we celebrated the coming of Shabbat.

At precisely 4:30 p.m., the rebbetzin, as Mrs. Day was fondly called, entered the classroom. This was a signal for the French doors to be opened. She was five-foot-two, plump with an ample bosom. She wore a starched pinafore in honour of Shabbat. On her head she wore the traditional sheitel. Her round face always had a smile on it, as if God had painted it himself. You knew you were looking at a sensitive soul.

The rebbetzin would put a lace cloth over her head, light a match, light the candles and cover her eyes, and with her hands embracing the candle flame, would recite the prayer welcoming Shabbat. The rabbi then cut the challah, and Mrs. Day went up the aisles in both classrooms, inviting the students to take a piece. Led by the rabbi, both classrooms said the blessing over bread. The rabbi then held up a cup of wine, and in unison, we chanted the blessing over the wine. And together we all said "Shabbat Shalom," to which the rabbi added: "Peace be with you. Go in good health and celebrate the Shabbat in your homes." Then the classes were dismissed.

It was inevitable that Hebrew school and the art classes would clash, but I never anticipated such finality, particularly as I was only 12 years young, with no guide or mentor to help me along life's path. Perhaps at another time and under other influencing events, I might have turned out a bit differently.

Benjamin T. Pelman is a chartered accountant.

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2008 Literary Supplement
Passover Greetings

A Canterbury Tale

By MURRAY CITRON

When April with her showers blew
Into Kieltse on the Polish plain,
In the days of the Czar and my Zaide Meyer,
It was time to clean the house again.

My zaide died before I was born,
My father's father, for whom I am named.
He had fifteen children by two wives,
And one of my aunts, let her not be blamed,

Emptied a pail at an upstairs window,
And sullied a passing policeman's blouse.
The policeman, Wladek, rapped at the door,
And said, "Meyer, it's shocking, you endanger your house.

What would the czar say if he knew
That a Jew harmed an officer of the state?
A scholar, a merchant, in a Polish town!
I see you're alarmed, but don't panic, wait,

I have a solution: Sunday is coming,
And I have a family that needs to be fed.
No one will harm a Jew who gives
Two rubles for a family's Sabbath bread.

Only two rubles. For a Jew, what's that?
You don't have to thank me. You are safe and sound,
You and your little ones and all your house.
On Saturday I'll come around."

Meyer said, "You are kind. I would like to comply.
But Saturday is our Sabbath day.
Much as I'd like to, I really cannot.
We handle no money on Saturday."

"Why, Mister Citron, I understand.
I respect your customs. I'll come instead
Friday at noon to protect your house.
Two rubles for Sunday's Sabbath bread."

We all of us melt like candles away,
But memories stay like candlesticks.
We were never in Kieltse, but my cousin told
Me the story in Queens in two thousand and six.

Wladek came and came again
For fifteen years. As it was said:
A Jew gets protection who pays a cop
Two rubles a week for Sabbath bread.

Who knows man's heart? Was it with grief,
Or a touch of relief that Meyer sighed,
When in the course of the sixteenth year,
In the course of nature Wladek died?

A pious Jew does not rejoice
When he hears the news that a man is dead.
Protection matters. But Meyer had
Two rubles for his family's Sabbath bread.

Who knows God's way? Protection stays.
On Friday when the noonday sun
Brightened the door, came a knock on the door.
"Why, look who's here! It's Wladek's son!"

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Always a student in Paris

By MARINA MASHAAL

A steady rain falls over Paris, slanting down the sloping pavements and cloaking the city in a coat of gray. Restaurant windows are lit by candles, lending an air of warmth and intimacy to an otherwise dismal January morning. You wouldn't know that Chanukah lights existed or that a New Year has passed. There are no outside decorations like the ones you find in America.

The tracks make racket and the train starts to brake.

The ride from the Étoile to the Latin Quarter is my favourite. It's the one train that looms out onto the bridge and lets you see the Seine. I care little for which bank is the Left and which is the Right. I just use as my marker that Notre-Dame is on an island off the middle. I get off the at rue du Bac and walk off to the boulevard St. Michel. I know de Beauvoir was born near here.

The stores huddled together, I can feel a sense of the ancient here, the same feeling I get in the Old City Jerusalem market of shops bunkered in concrete hills. I taste a Tunisian seller's rosewater crepes. The sounds blend in with those of the street and from just outside the gate, like the caged warbling of French pigeons and a hen. A middle-aged woman buys a galette du roi along with a pain de mie. Each delicate almond cake hides one porcelain bean. I think about the faces and number of people in her family. Tradition has it that only one slice of the galette will indicate who in the family is to be king for the day.

I travel through the university and the shopkeepers' streets to the Marais. It is the oldest quarter of the city, with a little population of standing steeples. The synagogue doors can't be seen. Their mouths lie buried under the hood of the streets. Above the twisted avenue, a penthouse pulls its shutters to the Jewish cemetery, all too visible from the plush confines of its Gothic high-rise.

The streets and store windows haven't changed since I studied here last, save for the added venues for French kosher pizza. There are no signs of horse butchers around here.

I cross the street to the patio of Goldberg's Café. The terrace has a taste of little Israel – I imagine because of the orange plastic of the picnic-chairs. And yet, a remnant of carved swastika is still in the sidewalk just outside the frame of the awning.

The slender hand of the waiter moves with the precision and grace of a watchmaker. I watch him pour the water into my tall glass of pressed lemon. You can sit here, with a lot to feel and to see but that you aren't allowed to say. The dark blue numbers twitch, they fail to fade, and in his eyes, it is easy to catch the chains of a liquid memory.

Continued on page B30

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Always a student in Paris

Continued from page B29

For awhile, I sift the history of a scarred past on this once-thriving street of des Rosiers with him. My thoughts are carried to the street by the one bakery leavening Friday night challahs and carrying their aroma out the door.

"Survivors will never heal completely," laments a Parisian woman to the owner while reading the latest headline.

"Yes," he says, "Everything appears normal but we react differently."

The café owner smiles and welcomes a Mme Fortier. I overhear that she is a regular, just like I used to be. Her residence is not far from here. Her dog wags its tail under the table with closed eyes as the owner carefully pours.

"A Polish count gave me a year to teach my dog to read," she laughs. "And when I fasted for Yom Kippur, my friends thought me mad for sure. But this would be my Last Holy Day, they joked, for that German Shepherd will live forever, and in a year I will be dead. And now look. I keep walking him because I'm still here."

Her voice expresses the hurt to her pride, and because of this, I feel sad. I watch the dog sleeping faithfully under the mahogany table by the patron's side.

"Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner, n'est-ce-pas?"

In Paris, even conversations of pain can brew secretly sad and deep, and leave the space around curls of cigarette smoke freshly blown out deftly intellectualized. It's as if the will forced to take part in its own destruction survives.

I pay for my order of pressed lemon and leave the café owner, the waiter, the woman and dog my best smile. And I feel pained.

I continue my walk. The January rain comes and goes so often in the month that I have learned, like every Frenchman, not to bother my hand with an umbrella. Even the pigeons are gone from the blue hats of apartment tops that line up to the métro stop all on its own.

The underground is strangely alive. I pass Arabs selling fruit, pistachios and head scarves. I take heed of the street-children running close to my pockets. There is a slight smell of ammonia from urine puddles I have learned to watch out for and the sight of swastikas on the bathroom-like walls. Trinket sounds of woodwind players funnel through the cavernous tunnels with me. A gush of people run out of an intersecting lane to meet my corresponding train. We file together, almost convulsively. The train is rickety on the track and I decide to let the trail of burnt rubber and the people boarding leave without me. It is better to walk.

I escape the wind of the river and arrive at the Louvre. I smile for a minute at the thought of visitors clamouring for a snapshot of the Mona Lisa, knowing already from lessons past that her smile will be deformed because of the reflection created by the photographer's flash.

The Tuileries, once a graveyard of tiles and old bricks, now one of the most cared-for and majestic of city gardens, supports my legs next. Marie Antoinette lost her head here some time after she told the people to eat cake. I remember this thanks to Mrs. Porter and her World History fascination for tidbits. I sat in my green school uniform and listened to her well.

The Arc of the Carousel leads my footsteps back to the place of Elysian Fields. My shoes cover the cobblestone streets of the Champs Élysées, and the low rumble from the car boxes below travels its width with me. I pass Fouget's, The Drugstore, and the inviting lit movie marquees behind it. The avenue bends and glimmers in the rain like a candy-wrappered yellow sheet. In Paris, everything can feel like a parade.

No matter how many times I come back to rekindle my attachment to this city, I am forever the student abroad. Nightfall has the blue haze from the skyline drip down onto the wet pavement, but around me, the January umbrella footage turns to cinescopic sweeps of snow-white and black.

Having seen the reels in history class, thanks to Mrs. Porter again, I easily envision the German cavalcade. Steam flutters out of the underground grills, and in my imagination, I can smell German army boots hitting the avenue triumphantly. The air builds to a catastrophic rush. I imagine Hitler's wave.

The most romanticized street can sometimes have such a wanting feel to it that for all the people on it, it possesses a memory that, still, can also make the landscape feel vastly empty. Where did all those people go?

I wonder what footsteps are now walking the rue des Rosiers.

On this winter's day in Paris, the weather can hardly mask my own veil of tears. The last time I was here on this date 18 years ago, I smiled through the rain because I had finally found myself a small studio and was off to my first French class. It was early morning, and because my insides were busy with all I had to look forward to, I dismissed the fact that the streets around me were still deadly quiet. After all, it was winter. I bought my very first métro pass and gladly dropped a couple of francs into a street-musician's glove. I met up with my friend who lived in the Marais – the first thing we commented on was how French the café lights in the Jewish quarter appeared.

We stepped into Goldberg's. A garçon explained that the restaurant candles of this establishment were lit in memory of those who burned in a Drancy synagogue a few hundred miles away. A bomb had "just" exploded outside the prayer house near the Jewish university, he explained, and the gravestones of a ravaged people were desecrated in the distant cemetery. The garçon pointed his head in the direction of the café owner holding the morning newspaper and passing before us. I saw the clouded stain on his arm.

On our way to class, my friend and I bought a copy of *Le Monde* to try and learn more. The headlines only told us more than we wanted to know about the French economy. The news about the small town of Drancy was sandwiched in three tight lines before we closed the last page.

Some things, no matter how long the passage of time, never change. I pass the newsstand kiosk at George V and browse a bit before fishing out my métro ticket. The newspapers headline something about the French economy. The second headline about people's discomfort with President Sarkozy's challenging French ways of "old" tolerance is not as bold. I turn to walk down the stairs to the underground and then change my mind and decide to climb back up and walk the extra distance instead. You see, in France, the economy is still working hard on not deteriorating, and in the entryway to the métro station the spray-paint on the swastika is wet.

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2008 Literary Supplement
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Denial: Not Just a River in Egypt

By RACHEL BERMAN

Maurice walked through the shopping centre watching the people go about their day, shopping, picking up dry cleaning, and stopping for a millisecond for a bite to eat. He liked people-watching, liked to see so many different people with the same unifying routine. The scene was comforting in an unpredictable world.

Today was different though. There were more people than usual, moving frenetically. It looked like organized chaos – leaning toward chaos – as men, women, and children ran about. Maurice wondered what was going on. Men were buying bottles of wine and grape juice, and boxes – lots of boxes, with the words "FRAGILE" stenciled on them. Women were buying choice cuts of meat, fish, and enough potatoes to feed an army and its enemy.

His stomach clenched, his chest felt tight. The scene was familiar. Upset, Maurice backed away. Turning, he slammed into something both soft and solid, losing his balance. He caught a glimpse of a dignified, older looking man, wearing a white beard and a homburg, as the back of his head connected with the floor.

* * *

Maurice lay there staring blankly ahead, hearing muffled shouts. There was someone leaning over him, but his vision was foggy. He felt a reassuring squeeze on his shoulder. Suddenly exhausted, he closed his eyes for a moment when the shouting grew louder and more insistent.

"Guard! Guard! Are you well? What happened? Were you attacked?"

Maurice opened his eyes, his vision swimming for a moment. It cleared, and what he saw made him straighten up with alacrity, his head spinning.

The man holding him up was shirtless and in obviously good shape. He was wearing some kind of gold necklace. It looked to Maurice like a bib. The man was wearing plenty of gold. And a skirt! He was looking at Maurice with concern. He shouted something, but Maurice was bewildered, too busy taking in his surroundings to listen. Two men dressed similarly to the first man, though not nearly as glitzy, came running, stopping at attention before the man.

The man spoke to him again, "Are you well? You must be new to your post; I have not seen you here before. What is your name?"

* * *

Am I well? I don't think so! I think some dots may have been knocked off my dice. I looked around. The columns and buildings looked like something out of a Charlton Heston epic, and so did these guys. And – oh for the love of – I was in a skirt, too. The man who was obviously in charge was looking at me expectantly. I realized he had asked me a question.

"I'm fine, just hit my head, and, uh, yeah, I'm new."

"And your name, guard?" the man asked politely, though an amused smirk was attempting to break through.

My name? I don't think Maurice Base will fit in too well around here – wherever here is. I racked my brains.

"Mshai," I blurted, remembering it meant traveller in Egyptian. The guy smiled. I thanked God for the History and Discovery channels.

"Mshai, a good name. Are you well named?" the man asked.

"Well named?"

"Yes, does your name suit you? Is it who you are?

"I don't know."

I was uncomfortable with the question on the suitability of names, as well as with the situation, not the least because I was in a skirt!

The guy nodded, smiling wryly. "I, too, am unsure if I am well named. I am Moses. It means, son of the water [in Egyptian]. My mother, the Princess, says my life is intertwined with water, that it was my salvation, though I know not why, and that it will be my undoing. Fortunate, is it not, that I dwell in a desert and live at a distance to the great Nile?"

Moses! Holy Cow! – well, actually, not for a while yet, I thought, straightening up. Moses twitched a smile at the show of respect. He spoke to the guards,

"Show Mshai the palace perimeter, the place of eating, and the barracks."

The guards bowed low as Moses left.

* * *

Tweedle Dee and Tweedle Dum gave Maurice the full-rate tour. At the end, they climbed a dune that gave them a good view of the land. As far as the eye could see, men, women, and children were slaving away. The misery was as palpable and unbearable as the heat beat down on him. The guards smiled proudly at the sight.

"Think you're all that huh? Building on the backs of others," Maurice thought to himself.

The Bible had never really meant much to Maurice. They were stories, legends and great bedtime stories for little boys, full of adventure, adversity, and triumph. It was a really great book.

But however it happened – the result of a doozey of a concussion, no doubt – seeing history come to life couldn't help but change Maurice's perspective.

"Denial isn't just a river in Egypt," he told himself.

He'd never been particularly interested or involved in Judaism. His mother was traditional. His father died before he was born. Maurice didn't know what his beliefs had been. Maurice himself had never thought of himself as Jewish. He was just a man.

Continued on page B32

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Denial: Not Just a River in Egypt

Continued from page B31

He'd left home straight out of high school, changing his name. He called his mother on her birthday and Mother's Day. Every year, she would invite him to spend Passover with her, and every year he would decline. He remembered the upheaval that would occur when she prepared to commemorate the memory of the freedom of the Jews from slavery. If the Jews had been given their freedom, Maurice celebrated by using his freedom to decide what he believed. And he hadn't believed – really.

But this disheartening scene, seeing the undeniable truth in front of him, turned his personal foundations to dust.

The guards intruded on his thoughts. Apparently it was snack time.

"Wonder what they consider snack around here – chocolate covered grasshoppers? Mmmm. Crunchy." Maurice turned away from the sight when a flash of light caught his eye. He looked around, noticing the Egyptian prince standing on another rise, watching the scene below him, the sun glinting off his breastplate.

Expressions of anger, uncertainty, resentment, fear, and determination flickered across the prince's face. Maurice was shaken, seeing his bottled-up emotions reflected in the other man. Maurice left the Prince to his choices while he pondered his own.

That evening, on his perimeter sweep, Maurice heard the overlapping sounds of shouting and yelping. He turned a corner. A guard was beating an old bearded slave. Maurice stood there, frozen, having a moment of deja vu, when the prince appeared at the other end of the alley. Moses saw what was happening and took action, running toward the guard and tackling him. He killed the guard with quick precision and ordered the old slave to leave. He buried the guard in the sand and prepared to leave himself when he spotted Maurice watching him from the shadows.

They stood there watching each other from opposite ends of the alley, at a distance, but close in the knowledge that they both knew something they couldn't explain.

Moses spoke: "Mshai, I could not stand by. I cannot continue to live this way. It is wrong, they are wrong. I must flee this place."

"They won't hear it from me."

Moses nodded in gratitude and disappeared around the corner. Maurice stood there a moment before he, too, ran to the end of the alley, hoping to reach the palace before anyone had noticed he'd left his post, and before an alarm could be raised over the missing guard. He turned the corner, slamming into something. As he fell backward, Maurice glimpsed the old bearded slave.

"This is getting to be a habit," he thought before his mind went blank.

* * *

"Thank you for contacting me, Rabbi Sandmann. I've always worried that something might happen to Moshe and I might never know."

"It was the least I could do, Mrs. Beiss, considering I knocked your son down. It was difficult to find you. Moshe's ID identified him as Maurice Base."

Debbie Beiss sobbed. The rabbi continued gently, "The police were able to help me locate you. The doctor says he has a mild concussion, but will wake up in his own time, when he's ready."

"But it's been two days!" Debbie cried, her voice rising toward hysteria.

"He must have a lot on his mind," Rabbi Sandmann murmured enigmatically.

Debbie nodded tearfully. "Moshe didn't want to have anything to do with Judaism, and by default, with me."

Rabbi Sandmann remained quiet. What could he say? He sat down, opened a book of *Psalms*, and began to pray.

Mrs. Beiss held her son's hand. Time passed – seemingly an eternity, but in reality only an hour. Then Maurice's heart monitor picked up. The slow, regular beeps and squiggles of the monitor picked up pace.

"Moshe? Moshe, wake up. Please!"

He opened his eyes blearily. His mother was gazing at him with tears falling copiously down her face. And there was an old bearded man looking at him from the foot of the bed.

"Oh, you again," Maurice muttered hoarsely.

The rabbi smiled – sphinx-like, inscrutable – and pressed the call button.

Maurice stared at the rabbi and wondered. "Maybe there really is a 'grand scheme of things.'"

The doctor arrived, checked Maurice over, and decided that he would release him to his mother's care after a few days of rest.

Debbie Beiss looked everywhere but at her son. Maurice looked at his mother for a moment, then gave her a crooked, bashful smile and asked, "Could you use some company for Passover?"

Debbie gave her son a full-blown smile, beaming even as she shed happy tears.

Maurice yawned, his headache spiking. He looked at his mother smiling down at him. Closing his eyes, drifting off to sleep, Moshe murmured, "And maybe, next year I'll be in Jerusalem."

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Passover Greetings

The last Passover – 1944

By ARNOLD FRIEDMAN and SHERRY LEVY

If only I had known
This would be the last time
I would see my parents
Two brothers, two sisters,
That this would be
The Last Passover
We'd ever celebrate together
I would remember…

Would I have frozen that picture in my memory
Would I have stayed that moment in time
Would that memory comfort me through my darkest days
Would their words echo through eternity?

A boy, soon after my bar mitzvah, we were
Secure in our farming village of Rakosin
Where racial tolerance ruled through history
Among Jews, Hungarians and Ukranians;
How could we foresee the ill winds
Of Hitler's poisoned Jew hatred closing in on us?

On Passover Eve during synagogue prayers
A hush interrupted the service
As police entered to proclaim
"Henceforth, Jews of all villages are under arrest,
But in a gesture of goodwill and holiday spirit
You are permitted to return to your homes for the night
Until noon next day, when –

All Jews – men, women and children
Young and old, sick and crippled
Must report at Town Hall
With nothing more than the clothes
They wear, and food for the road.

Farmers with horses and wagons
Will take you to settle in the town of Munkacs."

Stunned by fear and shock
Realization of doom set in;
Hitler's German brutality, once a rumour
Had become a horrible reality.
That night, startled awake by
Screams of terror, for the first time
I saw my father cry, as he remembered
Massacres of Jews in Polish forests
Where he served two years earlier
A conscript in a Hungarian battalion
Of Jewish military slave labourers.

Mother wept as Father spoke of
His vision of the fate that awaited us.
Mother said that a neighbour woman
Offered to hide our two little girls,
Barely five and eight years old.
"Don't give our little girls to Christian friends
For I saw in Poland what the Nazis did
When they discovered such children;
They murdered them mercilessly.
Let us all go to our death together as a family."

Mother gathered some food and a few belongings
But rebellious youths, my friend Eli and I
Loaded his horse and wagon with potatoes
And we ran off to Munkacs, where the Jews
Were still living free in their homes.

Hunted down, loaded on a cattle car
Bound for Auschwitz, the killing camp
Where monsters of evil
Slaughtered my entire family,
I endured Mengele's selections
And survived until war ended.
Splintered by sorrow
And consumed with fear
I returned to a changed world
Lost, confused and insecure.

A young man, an orphan, I came to Canada
Thanks to the Jewish tradition
That welcomes and helps the stranger,
A lone outsider in an established society
I struggled with a new life in a free country.
Like all survivors, I settled into the
New reality of citizenship, marriage and family.
We raised a daughter and a son
Who gave us five grandsons.

Each Passover we celebrate
With the greatest joy,
When they ask
"Why is this night different than all other nights?"
I remind them
That once I was a slave
And now I am free.

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Then and Now

By MAUREEN BERGART

I remember my zaide
Davening at the seder table
My father, too

From my bubbie's kitchen
Wafted matzah ball aromas,
Chicken soup, brisket, tzimmis.

We sat around the white linen-bedecked table.
The sounds of davening
The smells of Pesach.

Matzah: the first taste
Each year, the first taste
As if it were the first taste ever.

My bubbie always wore a babushka to cook
A cooking babushka
And a "house dress."

She was in many ways a modern Canadian woman in her time.
Spoke English, having arrived in Toronto as a little girl.
She loved fashion and she loved to shop.

But when Pesach came,
My bubbie became *her* mother.
She tied her babushka, donned her "house dress"
Completed the outfit with an apron.
And her head shook just a little
As she worked in the kitchen.
Just a little
From side to side.

My zaide was almost blind.
Glaucoma.
But he could daven by heart,
From the heart.

The sounds and smells of Pesach.

Today I'm old enough to be a bubbie.
I was old enough ten years ago.
I will be a bubbie next Pesach
For the first time.
The little one is growing inside my daughter.

Our seders are different.

I think they smell the same
But I don't wear a babushka
Or a "house dress."

My husband leads our seders, but differently from my zaide.
More English
More effort to include our family.
He asks questions
Probing questions
About freedom
About slavery
About ideals…

I'm not always certain that all of the family cares.
Some joke
Distract
Leave the table to "rest in front of the television"

But our daughters listen
They contribute

I hope their memories will be
As sweet as mine

I know they will be different.

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A stone on her father's grave

By MARLENE EISNER

Dedicated to the memory of my niece Emily Levine.

Heidi trudged through the snow. It was April 4 and the city had been hit by the biggest April fool's joke: a spring storm that had begun four days earlier on the first of the month. An endless wall of the white cold stuff continued to fall, bringing the city to a standstill. Even the cleaning crews had given up; it had been 24 hours since the roar of the plows had been heard.

It was Sunday morning, and Heidi had been walking for an hour. Although the sun had been up for 20 minutes, it lay hidden beneath dense layers of cloud. The air was illuminated by a strange mixture of a dull, low-hanging ceiling above reflected on a huge expanse of blinding white below. Her footfalls behind her were already beginning to refill with snow, while ahead of her lay a glimmering untouched carpet, deep, wet and cold.

Heidi dug her hands into her pockets and bowed her head into the wind, tiny, icy pellets slapping her face, stinging her cheeks. Each step, or rather each sliding movement of her foot, pushed another wave of snow to the side, challenging her muscles. At the speed she was going, which wasn't much of a pace at all, she estimated she'd be walking for another hour at least. Vaguely, she wondered if she would make it – the burning in her thigh muscles was travelling down to her shins.

Turning back to the warmth of her apartment was not an option. What was the point? It would take her just as long to go back home as it would to continue forward. If she didn't stop, at least she would reach her destination. At least she would have then excised the demons railing in her head. And in her heart.

She came to an intersection. The light turned red, but she barely slowed down. There was no one out. Around her, huge humps of snow lined the roads, vague shapes of long-abandoned cars that had gotten stuck in the rising snow. Would their owners even be able to find them once the snow stopped?

Like her father's grave. Would she even be able to find where he lay, now going on five years, in a place she had not visited since the unveiling?

Another intersection. She was down near Decarie Boulevard. Deserted. Not a body. Nothing moving. Except for her. She guesstimated another 10 blocks or so to Place de la Savanne and the cemetery.

It had started yesterday with a phone call from her mother. Just calling to see how Heidi was weathering the storm. But it had ended badly, and Heidi had slept poorly, hardly at all in fact, until at five that morning, when she had given up, pulled on layers of clothes, found a good hat, ski gloves and warm boots, and started on her journey.

She was thirsty. Tired, too. Thick chunks of snow clung to her eyelashes. She felt the cold through her ski pants and long underwear. But there was no giving up, no turning back. She headed into the wind and walked on, replaying yesterday's phone conversation over in her head.

It had gone okay at the beginning, when the conversation was about surviving the crazy weather. But after a few minutes, it had turned to things usually left unspoken.

"Heidi, did you remember?"

"Remember what, Ma."

"About yahrzeit."

"What?"

"Heidi, tomorrow is yarzheit for daddy. The prayer for the dead. You must remember to say it."

"But Ma, I don't know the prayer."

"That doesn't matter. Remember? I gave you the little booklet. You know. The blue one. It's in there."

Heidi sighed. How many times had she told her mother that to her, the little booklet and its contents were meaningless? How did it make sense to recite a mourner's prayer once a year when the essence of her father had settled like a fine mist upon her skin every day since the moment she had received the call that he had died?

She didn't need to be reminded. She didn't need to pray. She needed to see him one last time and say all that was buried in her chest, everything that had been left unsaid. She never had the chance to say goodbye to a father she had loved so much. Never had the chance to kiss his rough, papery cheek one last time, or hold his hand and apologize for being such a bad daughter all the years he had been sick.

"Okay, okay, I remember now. Yarzheit. I'll do it tomorrow, I promise."

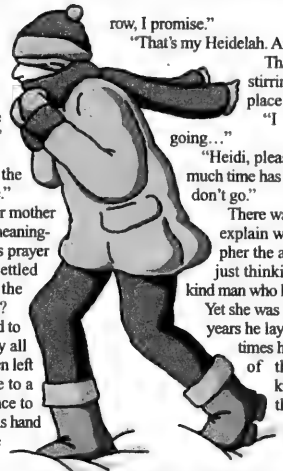
"That's my Heidelah. And then you can go to the cemetery."

That's when her fear began to take hold, stirring up a mix of dread and pain in the place deep inside where they hid.

"I dunno, Ma, I don't know about going…"

"Heidi, please, you must go to the cemetery. So much time has gone by. I don't understand why you don't go."

There was nothing to understand. Nothing to explain when she herself was unable to decipher the absolute, debilitating fear she felt in just thinking about visiting her dad, a sweet, kind man who had lived his whole life for his family. Yet she was frozen, just as she had been all those years he lay wasting in the hospital. How many times had she gone, stood outside the doors of the institution, well-intentioned, knowing so clearly that she should be there holding his hand, but instead turned away, unable to walk through the doors?



[Trevor Miller illustration]

Continued on page B36

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A stone on her father's grave

Continued from page B35

"I know. I'll go with you if you want," she heard her mother continue. "I didn't think of that. You don't have to go alone. Yes, we'll go together as a family. Hannah will come too. We'll pick you up, we'll drive over."

Heidi had reached Decarie and de la Savanne. In the distance, she could see some movement – bodies spewing out of the Namur metro station. The snow couldn't stop the underground trains. And the snow couldn't stop her. She wasn't exactly sure when during the night she had made the decision to start on her pilgrimage, but when five o'clock had rolled around, there seemed nothing else to do but go.

She turned right and headed to the cemetery. The snow appeared to be deeper now, or maybe it was just her mind playing tricks on her, but it seemed harder and harder to move forward. She could see the big, black iron gates of the cemetery.

Heidi stopped when she reached the gates. They yawned open, a huge, mocking mouth, daring her to enter. She looked down the long expanse of unplowed road, unable to discern a pathway. How could she do this? How could she even find her father? All she knew was the section in which he was buried, and all she had to go on was a vague, fading memory of the funeral and the unveiling, of walking down rows of gravestones, like a tenement for the dead, names jumping out at her as she headed toward the group gathered around the covered double headstone where her father lay, waiting for the day her mother would join him.

That had been in the fall, six months after his death, and the ground had been visible, twigs and stones scattered all around, the flowers on the gravesites withering away into a fading autumn.

Heidi felt the cold on her legs, and it shook her out of her memories. There was no time, really, to worry about not finding him. She was here, and she knew what she had to do. She started forward, knee-deep in light, powdered snow, heading slowly down the long road. The section of his tenement was at the end, of that she was sure. It took her another 30 minutes to get there.

She stopped where the road ended and read the sign: Congregation Adath Israel. This was the place, but ahead of her lay a field of white, with most of the headstones buried. Here and there the taller ones stuck out above the rest, taunting her to brave the minefield ahead.

She looked up at the sky. It was as white as the ground, and for a moment, she lost all perspective and became dizzy with vertigo. No contours. No points of reference. She was like a blind woman without walls or a cane to guide her.

And she began to move forward, one step at a time, slowly slipping one foot in front of the other, sometimes hitting air, sometimes hitting granite. On and on she went, her toes bruising from the bumps and hard surfaces. At each headstone, she brushed away the snow, looking at the name, shaking her head, and continuing on. The minutes passed as she forged a crooked path through the snow, deeper and deeper into the lines of buried dead.

Heidi felt the panic rise up from her gut and into her throat. She couldn't find him. She had uncovered dozens of gravestones and had come up empty. Dozens more lay ahead of her, anonymous, hidden bumps in the snow. It seemed an impossible task. She looked around. Across from her, about 50 feet away, was the end of the cemetery, a fence dividing the dead from the living, those who were still upright and breathing and residing in duplexes. She remembered the buildings and knew she was close.

She tried to go back in her memory, rerun the unveiling in her mind, to determine how close those houses on the other side of the fence were to her father's new, eternal residence. She moved forward slowly, past one headstone and then another. She turned to her right and stood facing the fence. In front of her was a wide, double headstone virtually covered in snow, except for a clear, wind-swept area where the name of her father, David Israel Mortimer Kauffman, dearly beloved father, son, husband and grandfather, was showing.

Heidi brushed away the snow, revealing the salmon-coloured granite, built to last forever. Her legs throbbed, her chest hurt and her fingers felt frozen inside her down gloves, but she had found him. She felt her sorrow rise up like a burning rage in her throat and she fell to her knees to dig through the snow to the nameplate installed at the foot of the grave.

"I'm so sorry, Daddy, I'm so sorry," she whispered as she scraped away the snow. "God, it's been so hard, so much has happened. I meant to come see you, so many times…."

And then suddenly she knew it was okay, and she stopped digging. Sitting silent in the snow, she realized he would have understood her behaviour, her pain at seeing him wither away, and knew that he would have comforted her even as she should have been the one comforting him.

Heidi stood up and dug her hand into the pocket of her parka, pulling out the large, ragged, gray and brown rock she had shoved into her coat before leaving the house. Years ago, someone had thrown it through the window of the office where she worked, before they had robbed the place. That act of violence had left her shaken and violated, but for some reason, she had kept the rock. Turning it over in her hand, she was glad that hateful act was now being transformed into one of love.

She carefully placed the rock on her father's gravestone. Taking a deep breath, she ran her hand over the lettering on the shiny granite one last time, turned away, and began the long trip back home.

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Forget the Holocaust

By STAN WEISBERG

Many times
I am
Told by some
Gentile friends
That I should
Forget about
The Holocaust.

They say that they
Are tired
Of discussing it.
And after all,
It happened over
Sixty years
Ago.

As if time should
Erase
My anger
Sorrow and pain.
It is easy for them
To feel
This way.

When they see
Photos
Of caged starved
Jewish
Skeletons in
Striped
Pajamas.

That is what
They see.
Caged and
Starved Jewish
Skeletons
In striped
Pajamas

And when they see
Photos of Jews
Crammed into
Cattle cars
They see Jews
Crammed into
Cattle cars

And when they see
Photos of
Gas chambers
And cremation ovens
They see
Gas chambers and
Cremation ovens.

However,
I see
Much more.
I see among
Those Jews
Crammed into
Cattle cars

My grandparents
And parents
My brothers
My sisters
My aunties
And my
Uncles

And among
Those children
And babies,
I see my
Cousins.
And my nephews
And my nieces

And
Sometimes
Even
My own
Sons and
My own
Daughters.

And I see
Their faces again
In the gas chambers.
Naked, tattooed
And terrified,
Gasping for
Air.

And I see
Their faces again
In the gas chambers,
Chain stoking.
Spitting
Blood and
Dying.

But the blood
That I see
Is not just
Jewish blood
It is
My
Blood.

And the horror
That I see
Is not just
Jewish horror.
It is
My
Horror.

And I see those
Faces again
In the
Caged skeletons.
Begging
At the barbed
Wire fences.

Like some
Strange, caged,
Pajama clad
Animals.
Begging
For scraps of
Stale bread.

And when I
Sleep I
Feel their
Suffering
And I
Feel their
Pain

And I
Hear their
Cries
Of terror
And shame
And my heart
Weeps.

These are not
My friends,
Grandparents
And parents and cousins
And aunts and uncles
And brothers and sisters
And nieces and nephews.

This is not
Their blood
Their pain
Their terror and shame
That they say
I should
Forget about.

It is mine
And I
Cannot
Forget
And I will
Never
Ever

Forgive.

Wishing you Peace & Happiness
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Member of Parliament
Thornhill

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She's Jewish

By DANIEL FINE

She's Jewish whatever she imagines
God may or may not be
The core of fictional narrative
Or observed as paramount
She's Jewish because she questions

Because Jewish is about good deeds,
Family, community, equality, love of learning
And all the rest inside of her
Indifferent to any particular garb or symbol
She feels them, lives them
Because she's Jewish

The rabbi says it's about the religion
That's what's kept us together
Enabled us to survive
She replies that the good of it is
Inside mixed with the recorded past
Hopes dashed and rekindled again
Struggles and sorrows into accomplishment
Israel, her appetite for life

They're right here she says
Rapping her heart in unison with its beat
Like a train tripping tracks
I'm Jewish because of everything inside

The Holocaust survivor says no deity
Would allow such abhorrence
But I'm Jewish because of what's inside
The rabbi says without God there is no Judaism
Be as observant as you want, she adds
I don't care because I'm Jewish

And so it goes
Whatever God may or may not be

The Golem of Bathurst Manor

By KAREN SHENFELD

I saw the golem of Bathurst Manor,

cruising Wilmington Avenue in Rabbi Kelman's
turquoise Chevrolet.

What else, I ask you,
has the golem got to do?

Last time I saw him it was Erev Pesach.
He was prowling the Dominion –
mixing up the boxes of matzah,
the Manischewitz with the Streit's.

I've heard that, lately,
members of the congregation
have been grumbling to The Board:
the tipped-over garbage cans,
bottles of milk stolen from the chutes,
TV antennae twisted into metal pretzels
atop the bungalow roofs.

Golem, shmolem!

The Rabbi stood firm:

"You never know when The Manor
might need a little protection –
the time and place of
our next blood libel or
pogrom."

Chag Sameach

I wish the residents in our community
a very happy Passover

from Josh Matlow,
your school trustee for St. Paul's.

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The Canadian Jewish news

The Torah is a Story

By JOSH SHORE

The settings are the words
the characters are the psukim
the climax is the crown
the introduction is the commentary
the cover is the cloak.

Walking in the Park

By JOSH SHORE

Walking in the park,
My feet felt like stone walking through the park.
It felt like we were walking in the desert
walking through the park.
We were starving, walking through the park.
Hungry as a bear, oh walking through the park.
We had no water or food walking through the park.
After hearing the shofar echo in the air really woke me
up, walking through the park.
Walking through the park.

Josh Shore is a 10-year-old student.

Searching for Hana

By MELANIE KATZ

In World War II
The chamber was opened
And Hana went to heaven
But her brother George
Still has memories stored
For kids to know the story
Forever

In the year 2000
Fumiko was searching
For information about
The Holocaust
When items were found
She had no frown
But she realized
Something had happened

"Hana Brady" she said in her head
"I need to find out about her"
So she searched the globe
Until she was told
Hana was dead
But her brother did not follow

Melanie Katz is a 10-year-old who lives in Thornhill, Ontario.

On the other side of the gate

By SHAVAUN STENDEL

I see them trembling in many places,
With no expressions on their faces,
All I see is skin and bones,
On the other side of the gate.

Black boots marching high,
Blond men think they're greater than the sky.
All I see is joy and laughter,
On this side of the gate.

The piles of dead keep on growing higher,
Men and women perish in fire,
Burying their spirits in the ground,
On the other side of the gate.

As rifles blow,
We have grins on our faces from tormenting them so,
Jews are nothing more than the mud on our soles,
On this side of the gate.

Pain and torture is what I see,
I knew I didn't want that to be me,
Somehow their hearts keep on beating strong,
On the other side of the gate.

Our cruelty and viciousness is the gate that sets us apart,
All I'll have left is the permanent stain on my heart,
Because I know the real place where I belong,
Is on the other side of the gate.

Shavaun Stendel, 14, is a Grade 8 student at The Study in Montreal.

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Zayde Teacup

By CHANNAH MAGORI

Mommy remembers Zayde so hard that it hurts my head.

Everyone runs away. My Daddy. My brother.

Me.

We have no alive plants in the house because she is scared that they will all curl up and die. She has no alive friends come over to the house because the Knock, Knock, Knock of the SS took them all away.

I ask her if SS is like SOS (save our ship), but without the O. Without the *Our*. And she laughs and laughs and laughs. And then she laughs again. O, she thinks this is so funny.

"Yes, yes, my *kleine kinde*,
How just exactly so,
The Nazis made a world –
Without the letter O."
And then she cries.

I dust the plastic daisies. Sometimes I water them so that they will feel Real and Grow-Up!

I dust the stacks and piles of empty tea cups that she saves for company.

Underneath every cup, it says – finebonechina.

Mommy says it means that they mix in ground-up-bones to make it stronger.

I am always very, very, careful, because it might be the bones of someone I know. Mommy says that they burned up all *Our* people including all *Our* family's bones into finedustandashes.

I wonder if there were dump trucks. Like the ones that take away our garbage. Very big dump trucks, for taking away the stacks and piles of finedustandashes to the teacup factory to make finebonechina.

I have a Zayde Teacup.

Mommy says that he was "fired in the oven."

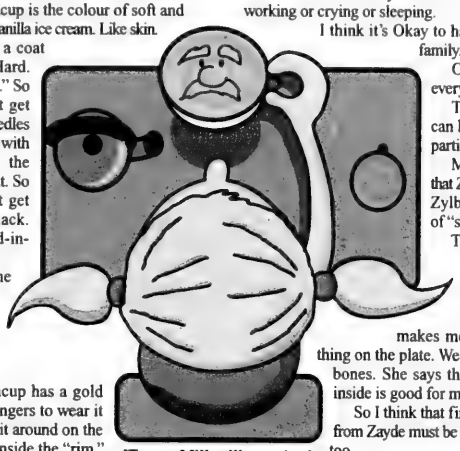
Zayde Teacup is the colour of soft and melted. Like vanilla ice cream. Like skin.

He wears a coat that is veryHard. Called "glaze." So that he won't get stuck with needles that are filled with ink that is the colour of night. So that he won't get burnt and black. And piled-in-stacks.

So that he won't get made into finedustan-dashes.

Again.

Zayde Teacup has a gold ring but no fingers to wear it on. He wears it around on the inside of in. Inside the "rim." So no one can see it and take it away from him.



[Trevor Miller illustration]

Is it Okay to drink tea from a Grandfather Teacup?

Does it burn him, the hot water from the kettle?

Does it hurt him, when I stir the spoon and go *Bang, Bang, Bang* on the sides?

Does he like being empty?

Or maybe, does he like being full?

I don't tell Mommy because she is either working or crying or sleeping.

I think it's Okay to have a teacup family.

One teacup for every missing O.

This way, we can have *Our* tea parties.

Mommy says that Zayde Aharon Zylberberg died of "starvation."

That means not having enough to eat or drink.

So she makes me eat every-thing on the plate. We even eat the bones. She says the "marrow" inside is good for me.

So I think that finebonechina from Zayde must be good for me, too.

If we have tea parties then he can have lots to drink.

I can put some-little-bars-of-Mandelbrot next to him on the plate.

Then he can have lots to eat again, too.

Mommy told me that's how they used to have tea parties in Dzialoszyce. Before the *Cholerene* Nazis came.

So I think it's very Okay to have a Tea Party.

Maybe when he isn't hungry and thirsty anymore, and maybe when he is full – he can listen to me.

I can't sit on his lap because after all, now, he is a teacup and it would break him.

He can't pinch my cheeks, or cuddle me because teacups don't have hands. Only one handle.

He can't take me on long walks over to the merry-go-round because teacups don't have feet. Only saucers.

And he can't tell me stories anymore, because they never give teacups mouths. Everyone thinks that teacups have nothing to say!

I think a Zayde teacup is like an ear to tell secrets to – always open and always listening. Always waiting for me to come closer.

Always wanting and waiting to hear my voice.

I think that at the bottom of the cup, when I lick off the *little-bit-of lefi-over-sugar*, I tickle his ear and make him laugh. And laugh and laugh and laugh.

Again.

And then I laugh and fill up Zayde again and put *some-more-little-bars-of-Mandelbrot* (Right-away!) in the tea so he will never be hungry or thirsty. (Ever again.)

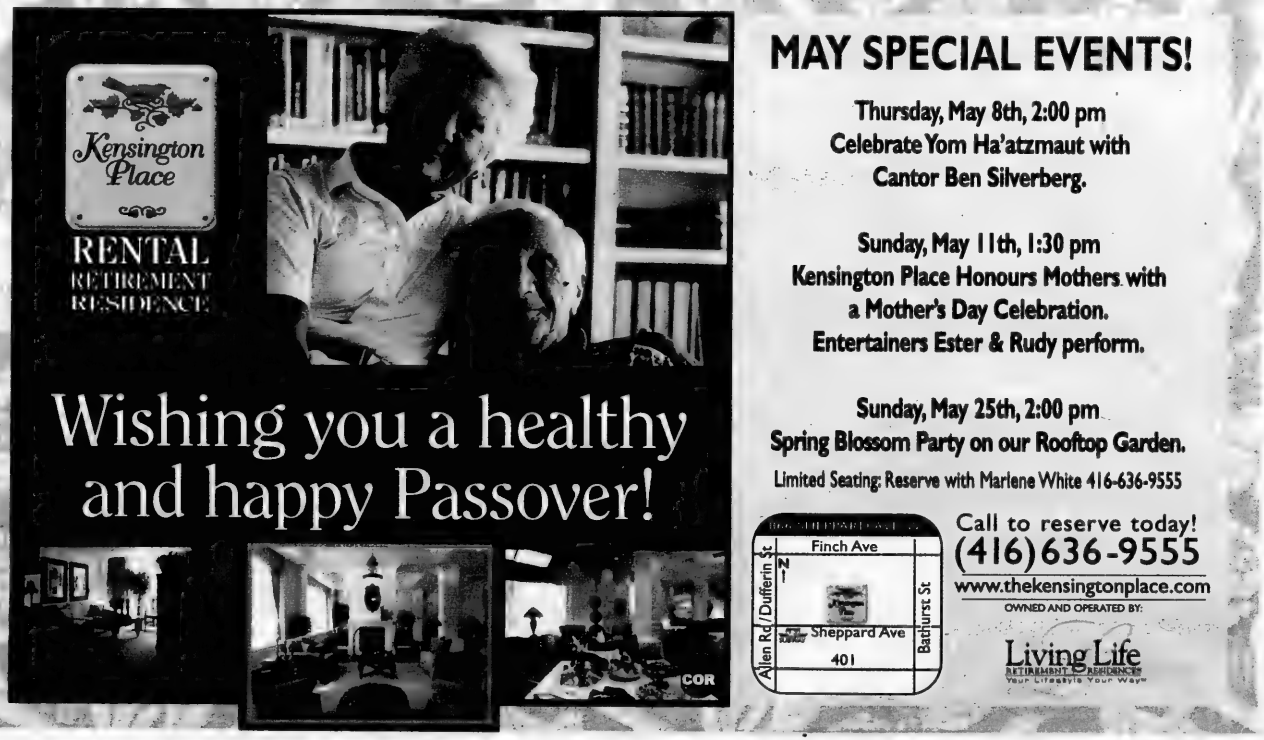
Sometimes, when he is veryEmpty and missing and allGone at the bottom of the cup and wanting-and-waiting for something just a little bit more – then I stretch my tongue and taste his shining hard vanilla-and-glaze ice cream eyes.

I hear them twinkling!

I hear them twinkling and twirling and sighing and saying…

"*Hallel! Hallel!*"

(That's me!)



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This Week

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National

Beth Emeth board takes shul out of USCJ. *Page 3*

Michael Ignatieff says ties to Israel run deep. *Page 12*

Seniors Scene

Exhibit sheds new light on aging. *Page 20*

Arts & Travel

Julia Mirzoev, 11, a violin virtuoso. *Page 44*

Jewish film fest to kick off its 16th year in May. *Page 48*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Seniors Scene 20
Jewish Life 22
Health & Lifestyle 24
On Campus 31
Family Moments 31
What's New 32
Obituaries and Notices 34
According to Reports 37
Israel & the Jewish World 41
Arts & Travel 44
Books & Authors 45
Sports 54

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Iran tries to exclude CIJA from Durban II conference

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The government of Iran is preventing one of Canada's leading Jewish advocacy organizations from being accredited to the Durban Review Conference (Durban II) and its preparatory committees.

The Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) was informed last week by contacts in the Department of Foreign Affairs that Iran recently raised an objection to CIJA's inclusion as a recognized non-governmental organization (NGO) at the Durban conference. That information came a little over a month after the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) first informed CIJA in a letter that "the government of Iran... has decided to object to the accreditation of your organization."

Under procedures established by the Durban II preparatory committee, all applications for accreditation by NGOs that did not attend the first Durban conference in 2001 are reviewed by UN member states, which can submit comments on the application. "The comments of member states shall be communicated to the non-governmental organization concerned, which will be offered the opportunity to respond," the UNHCHR letter said.

Durban II is the followup to the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa. The 2001 conference was used by some countries and NGOs to criticize Israel and the United States.

Hershell Ezrin, chief executive officer of CIJA, said the organization has no idea why Iran is putting up roadblocks to its participation at Durban II, and he doesn't know why the preparatory committee is not following its own rules by allowing CIJA to address a member state's concerns.

Continued on page 42

Hershell Ezrin

Israeli organizes largest ever simultaneous singing of *Hatikvah*

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

A former Israeli talk show host and prominent philanthropist is attempting to set a new Guinness world record for the most people singing an anthem simultaneously in real time.

Haifa-born Galia Albin has spent the last seven months financing and putting together the Hatikvah Project: Live Hatikvah, a non-profit initiative aimed at uniting world Jewry through a global media event on the eve of Yom Ha'atzmaut.

At 10:50 p.m. Israel time (3:50 p.m., eastern time) on May 7, Albin expects to capture, through live satellite video feed, nearly 300,000 participants in Israel and worldwide, while they sing the Israeli national anthem as one.

Galia Albin

The event will be broadcast on national TV in Israel, and Albin said she's engaged the services of Israeli media outlets the *Jerusalem Post* and *Ha'aretz*, as well as national cellphone service providers, to remind Israelis to tune in prior to the event.

She said the first image people will see on the broadcast will be Israeli President Shimon Peres, since he's scheduled to kick off the anthem from Tel Aviv.

Other feeds will broadcast from Jewish communities in the Diaspora, including one from in front of the United Nations in New York.

There is a Canadian connection to the attempt, as youth on the annual March of the Living – taking place this year from April 28 to May 11 – will also participate in the singing during their tour of Israel, the last leg of their trip.

Continued on page 42

הַתִּקְוָה

כָּל עוֹד בַּלֵּבָב פְּנִימָה,
נֶפֶשׁ יְהוּדִי הוֹמִיָּה.
וּלְפַאֲתֵי מִזְרָח קָדִימָה
עַיִן לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפִיָּה.
עוֹד לֹא אָבְדָה תִּקְוָתֵנוּ,
הַתִּקְוָה בַּת שְׁנוֹת אַלְפַּיִם,
לִהְיוֹת עַם חָפְשִׁי בְּאַרְצֵנוּ,
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלָיִם.

***Hatikvah*, Israel's national anthem**

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Israeli FM impressed with Qatar— please see page 11

The News in Brief

CANADA

Winning Debut

OTTAWA — Hillel Academy made a winning debut at the Ottawa Regional Science Fair after a rule change to allow for Shabbat observance. Grade 7 student Jordana Leader won bronze in the junior health sciences section for a project on the "Stroop effect." It states that when words such as blue or green are printed in a colour other than their semantic meaning, people read them more slowly. She also won an award from the local branch of the Scientific Research Society for originality and scientific contribution. Hillel's Jordan Brandt and Shelby Levine also earned honourable mentions in health science.

WORLD

New Anti-Israel Mag

SYDNEY — Australian Jewish leaders condemned a new Islamist magazine that calls Israel "illegal and illegitimate," after it was sold on campuses in Sydney this month. The first edition of *The Idialogue: An Islamic Ideological Viewpoint* reprints a 1935 fatwa against selling land to Zionists in Palestine, and has an article saying "the holiest of Islamic lands is in the hands of the unholiest – the illegal and illegitimate state of Israel," the *Australian* newspaper reported. Members of the Islamist group Hizb-ut Tahrir – which is banned in much of Europe but not Britain or Australia – write and produce the magazine.

Jews Urge Boycott

NEW YORK — The umbrella body for U.S. Jewish public policy groups is calling for a boycott of the opening ceremonies of the Olympics. In a statement aimed at the Bush administration, the Jewish Council for Public Affairs cited China's human rights record and its close relations with the regime in Sudan, where thousands of civilians have been killed by government-allied militias in the Darfur region. By boycotting the opening ceremonies, "President [George W. Bush] would send an unmistakable message that the United States does not and will not countenance genocide," JCPA chair Andrea Weinstein said.

Saskatchewan Chief Seeks Better Relations

SASKATOON — The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) has asked for a meeting with Canadian Jewish Congress in an apparent effort to mend fences.

The meeting, to take place April 29 in Ottawa, comes after the FSIN voted to reinstate the membership of David Ahenakew, a former leader of the FSIN and the national Assembly of First Nations who faces a second hate trial this fall for praising Hitler in remarks he made to a reporter at an FSIN health conference in 2002.

Ahenakew, who had resigned from the FSIN in disgrace, turned down the invitation to rejoin the group after controversy erupted over the vote to reinstate him.

"I'm pretty confident we'll be able to resolve our differences," Congress CEO Bernie Farber told the *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*. "We're engaging in building trusting steps."

The meeting also comes after FSIN leader Chief Joseph Lawrence – who supported Ahenakew's reinstatement and revealed that the disgraced leader had been paid for consulting work since his resignation – took part in a Holocaust memorial service on April 13 at Saskatoon's Jewish Community Centre.

ZOA Praises Hagee

NEW YORK — The Zionist Organization of America praised evangelical Pastor John Hagee's support for Israel. The backing for the founder of Christians United for Israel came after Reform movement president Rabbi Eric Yoffie called on Jewish groups not to be allied with Hagee, saying he opposes territorial concessions. "In the end, when Israel is under enormous pressure with few defenders and supporters, Pastor Hagee's support is critical," said ZOA president Morton Klein.

Shooter's Trial Begins

SEATTLE — Defence lawyers said the man who opened fire at the Seattle Jewish Federation had a "diseased mind." The trial of Naveed Haq, 32, began April 14. In opening remarks, prosecutors said Haq tried to make a political point about Jewish power and the war in Iraq when he killed one woman and injured five at Seattle Jewry's central address in 2006. Haq has pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity to murder and attempted murder. He faces life in jail if convicted.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Beth Emeth leaves Conservative umbrella body

Follows Adath Israel in ending USCJ membership

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The board of governors of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue voted last week to end the shul's affiliation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, effective immediately, saying the movement's umbrella body wasn't serving its local needs.

It's the second Toronto congregation in a month to leave the movement. Adath Israel Congregation's board of governors has terminated the shul's membership in the USCJ retroactive to July 1, 2007, saying it isn't providing enough services for the dues paid to it, and that theological differences between the shul and the Conservative movement are growing as its U.S. arm drifts theologically leftward.

Beit Rayim Synagogue, Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, Beth Tikvah Synagogue and Shaar Shalom Synagogue have also had recent board or membership votes but are not leaving the movement, said Paul Kochberg, president of the USCJ's Canadian region.

Beth Tzedec Congregation, the largest Conservative congregation in North America, with 2,650 member families, is scheduled to vote on its USCJ affiliation on April 24.

Earlier this month, Beth Tikvah's membership voted to stay in the USCJ after its board of governors recommended leaving.

The recent votes follow 15 months of negotiations between Toronto congregational representatives and the New York-based USCJ. The result was an agreement reached in early March and ratified March 16 by the USCJ. Each shul subsequently scheduled their own ratification votes.

Kochberg said he was "surprised, saddened, perplexed and a little angry" over the decisions by Beth Emeth and Adath Israel.

On hearing last week's news, he noted that Beth Emeth leaders, lay and professional, have always been "very active participants in United Synagogue" and that the shul has been "a strong player with USY. It has produced some really strong USY graduates who have gone to rabbinical school."

Paul Kochberg

A longstanding key issue for Toronto congregations has been the cost of membership per shul – which can run to more than $40,000 depending on membership numbers – relative to the value of services received from the USCJ.

Also, the Conservative movement's shift to the left – including the 2006 decision by the movement's Jewish Theological Seminary to accept openly gay rabbinical students – stands in contrast to the attitudes of Toronto's typically more traditional congregations. Of the synagogues mentioned above, for example, only Beit Rayim is fully egalitarian.

Under terms of the deal, United Synagogue would have provided $116,000 in discretionary funding to the region for the 2008-09 fiscal year. An additional $96,000 would be provided the following year, and $76,000 the year after.

In addition, the central body would create a Canadian Public Policy and Social Action Committee in response to complaints that the organization doesn't reflect Canadian priorities.

Continued on page 34

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Vain and harmful

From the editor's desk

The arrogance is breathtaking. The presumption irritating; the vanity overwhelming; but most of all, the false humility is severely grating.

Uninvited, former U.S. president Jimmy Carter visited Israel.

As has been widely reported, Israeli government officials shunned him, ostensibly because he made widely known ahead of time, his intention to visit with Hamas in Gaza and in Syria. There were, of course, other quite valid reasons for the government to ignore him, not least among them was the unforgivable vicious "apartheid" label that he had deliberately affixed to Israel in 2006.

Unfortunately, as he knew full well, as this was the key to his insidious plan, the media did not ignore him. Rather, his every wan, introspective glance to the horizon and tight-lipped expression of caring and concern were photo opportunities to be recorded and stored for future use against the Jewish state in the filing cabinets of the "anti-occupation," anti-apartheid, anti-Israel moralists.

Carter's mission reeked of abject, disingenuous opportunism.

"I'm going to try to make [Khaled Meshal, the leader of Hamas based in Damascus] agree to a peaceful resolution, both with Israel and with Hamas' Palestinian rivals," Carter told reporters last week.

That statement of course is nothing more than rubbish and nonsense.

Meshal has countless times repeated Hamas' single-minded purpose of destroying Israel, killing Israelis and targeting Jews. Moreover, as Carter knows full well, Hamas is the client of Iran and now, too, the attentive student of Al Qaeda.

Meshal and the Hamas governors of Gaza have repeatedly refused to recognize Israel, renounce violence and accept existing Israeli-Palestinian interim peace deals.

In one of its pithier sections, the Hamas charter proclaims: *"There is no solution for the Palestinian question except through Jihad. Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are all a waste of time and vain endeavours."*

Carter knows that this is what the charter says. Yet still, he doffs his metaphorical cap to the proponents of anti-Israel Jihad, conferring upon this group of publicly proud Jew-haters his personal imprimatur of diplomatic worthiness and legitimacy. In doing so, of course, he scoffs at the Israeli government, as well as the leaders of the West, all of whom consider Hamas to be a terrorist organization.

But as upsetting as Carter's obsequious deference was to Meshal and the other Hamas men, the image of the former president laying a wreath at the mausoleum of former Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat was utterly galling.

Even if we grant Carter a sincere wish to pay respect to the Palestinian sense of *uma*, of peoplehood, and of their aspirations for independence, we cannot grant him the abhorrent deference to the memory of the man responsible for the demise of the peace process, who the whole world now knows duplicitously signed the Oslo Accords, who masterminded the suicide terror that was let loose upon Israel – it can be said, upon Palestinians, too – and the man who stole billions of dollars from his own people.

"Everything that was done in the intifadah was done according to Arafat's instructions," Zakariya Zubeidi, the former commander of the Al-Aksa Martyrs' Brigades in Jenin, recently told *Ha'aretz* reporter Avi Issarcharoff.

Carter knew this as well.

Had he been truly devoted to advancing the peace process, he could have honoured the Palestinian cause by meeting with Palestinian Authority leaders Mahmoud Abbas or Salam Fayyad.

But his penchant for embracing dictators, tyrants, fascists and anti-democrats is well-known and the chief way he establishes his credentials in the world that dictators, tyrants, fascists and anti-democrats rule.

When he resigned from the Carter Center in Emory University in 2006, Kenneth Stein, the director of the Middle East research program at the Emory Institute for the Study of Modern Israel and a longtime acquaintance of the former president, wrote that Carter's book, in which he accused Israel of apartheid practices, was "replete with factual errors… glaring omissions and simply invented segments. Aside from the one-sided nature of the book, meant to provoke, there are recollections cited from meetings where I was the third person in the room, and my notes of those meetings show little similarity to points claimed in the book.

"Being a former president does not give one a unique privilege to invent information or to unpack it with cuts, deftly slanted to provide a particular outlook… Falsehoods, if repeated often enough, become meta-truths, and they then can become the erroneous baseline for shaping and reinforcing attitudes and for policy-making. The history and interpretation of the Arab-Israeli conflict is already drowning in half-truths, suppositions and self-serving myths; more are not necessary."

As Stein points out, former president Carter contributes to the falsehoods about Israel's conflict with the Palestinians. He is a vain man who is harming chances for peace in the Middle East.

–MBD

See]N

ISRAEL WELL RECEIVED IN QATAR

Israel's Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni extends her hand to Qatari Prime Minister Hamed Eben Gasam Elthani Doha last week in Qatar. Livni attended the 8th annual Doha Forum on Democracy, Development and Free Trade.

Please see related story on page 41.

[Israel Sun photo]

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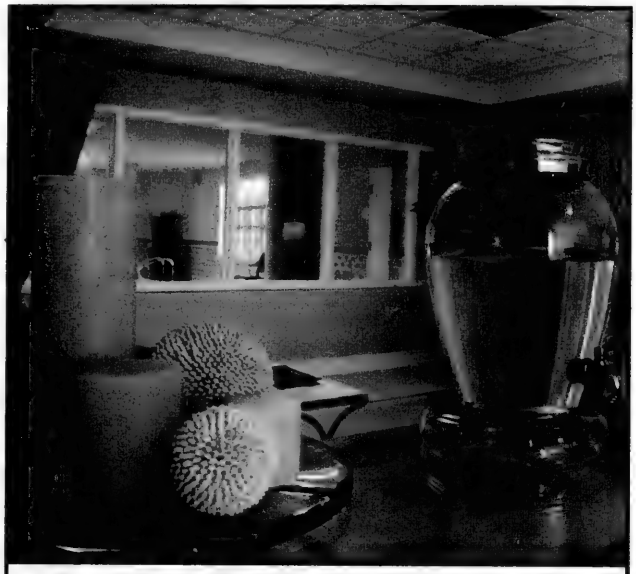

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York students oppose anti-Israel spending, poll finds

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A survey at York University suggests that a "silent backlash" by a large majority of students is underway against the York Federation of Students (YFS) because of what the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC) says is the council's support for anti-Israel initiatives.

The poll, commissioned by the FSWC, found that 85 per cent of York students oppose the YFS using student fees to support anti-Israel campaigns.

The FSWC commissioned COMPAS Research, a public opinion polling firm, to gauge student sentiment about protests on campus against "Israeli Apartheid."

Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of FSWC, said the YFS spends money that it gets from compulsory student fees to fund anti-Israel activities, including the annual "Israeli Apartheid Week."

"Among this majority are students who also believe that describing Israel as 'apartheid' is so extremist that such portrayals should be banned from campus," the FSWC said in a statement.

"[The YFS is] being supportive and directing their energy towards [anti-Israel events] instead of lobbying for better health care, for example," Benlolo said.

"They are, in fact, providing the resources for it."

Attempts to reach YFS president Hamid Osman for comment were unsuccessful.

The survey, for which COMPAS interviewed 500 students on campus last month, follows a similar study done last year at Ryerson University and the University of Toronto that showed a majority of students didn't want their compulsory dues to fund anti-Israel organizations, and rejected calls for a boycott of Israeli academics.

"It is important for us as an organization and for the community to understand what the student body thinks. For us to create policy and know how to act, we need to understand what people really think, rather than just reacting," Benlolo said.

"Now we know that only about 15 per cent of people in the student body actually support this behaviour and about 85 per cent of the student population don't support that kind of behaviour. Students are basically saying, 'It's disgusting, it's disturbing to be part of this scene. We don't want anything to do with it, we don't want our money to go to funding it.'"

Benlolo added that he plans to run a full-page ad before the end of the school year in York's campus paper, the *Excalibur,* to publicize the poll's results to students.

"If we don't publicize this... then they may assume that more people believe that it is OK to promote the idea of 'Israeli apartheid,'" he said.

"The strategy is that the student body will question their student council and say that they don't approve. The ultimate point of working on this is to end the campaign against Israel and to stop 'Israeli Apartheid Week.'"

Daniel Ferman, president-elect of Hillel at York, said he's not surprised that a vast majority of students are against the politicized and polarizing events on campus, but he feels the FSWC is working on the false assumption that the YFS supports and funds anti-Israel events.

"The results do not reflect our experience with this year's YFS, which has been working closely with us, focusing on student concerns, increasing its support for Jewish students on campus, and removing itself from anti-Israel activities."

But earlier this year, the YFS partnered with a campus group called Students Against Israeli Apartheid to encourage students to attend a rally at McMaster University to protest the administration's decision to ban the hanging of a sign that had the term "Israeli Apartheid" on it. The YFS sponsored a bus to transport York students to McMaster for the protest.

Tilly Shames, Hillel of Greater Toronto's associate director, said this was the only example of YFS involvement in an anti-Israel activity.

"Although we strongly disagreed with the YFS decision to co-ordinate a bus to McMaster, this action is not reflective of YFS activities on campus or our positive relationship with YFS. This year's York Federation of Students has made every effort to focus on student issues and remove themselves from anti-Israel activities on campus," Shames said.

She added that the survey should have focused its attention on the role of the York chapter of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group (OPIRG), which routinely supports and promotes anti-Israel activities.

The website of OPIRG, which is a student-funded, student-directed organization, links to several anti-Israel websites, including the Al-Awda Right of Return Committee and the Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid.

Since 1992, each York student has been paying a levy to fund OPIRG, but students can choose to opt out of it.

"OPIRG receives a portion of student fees, usually ranging from $1 to $5 per student depending on the campus and program, at York and U of T. OPIRG directly supports 'Israeli Apartheid Week' and other anti-Israel activities on campus," Shames said.

"Hillel strongly urges students who disagree with OPIRG's stance on Israel to opt out of the automatic levy all students must pay to OPIRG through their student fees."

Efforts to reach OPIRG by *The CJN*'s early holiday deadline were unsuccessful.

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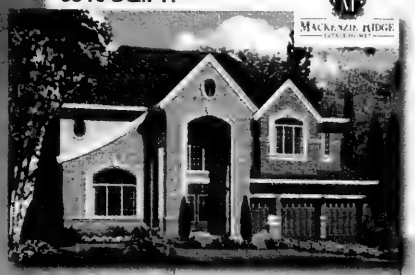

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Betrayal by hate

Last week, on April 16, the government of Israel sent approximately 95 trucks of humanitarian aid and supplies into the Gaza Strip through the border stations at Kerem Shalom and the Sufa Crossing. According to the list provided by Israel's foreign ministry, the supplies included cleaning products, rice, dairy products, fruit, sugar, humus, meat, spices, flour, salt, garlic, fish, starch, hypochlorite, fennel, pea, pasta, hatching eggs and disposable plates. The Egyptian government contributed 11 trucks of supplies as well, with oil, paper, single-use dishes, medical equipment, diapers, preservatives, nylon bags, gloves, drip irrigation system, pipes and pads. Israel also delivered hundreds of thousands of litres of diesel fuel to Gaza's main power plant via the Nahal Oz fuel terminal.

In the past 10 months, it should be noted, Israel has sent 21,328 trucks – or 500,061 tons – of humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people in Gaza. Israel sends an average of 200 trucks of humanitarian supplies into Gaza every week.

On the very same day last week, as the government of Israel sent those 95 trucks of aid to the people in Gaza, the government of Gaza sent its terrorist forces against the people of Israel. Three Israeli soldiers were killed during a routine patrol of the border.

The next day, three terrorists tried to sneak into Israel through the Kerem Shalom crossing, the key arterial lifeline through which thousands of trucks and hundreds of thousands of tons of supplies are distributed to the people of Gaza. Of course, the Israel Defence Forces struck back at the three terrorists, killing two of them.

Even as the terrorists tried to enter Israel via Kerem Shalom, snipers fired at the people manning the fuel terminal at Nahal Oz, where the main supplies of diesel fuel and natural gas are transferred to the people of Gaza, forcing it to close temporarily once again.

To all but the most obtuse or the most malevolently inclined to the Jewish state, the pattern of Hamas behaviour should be obvious. Hamas sends its gunmen to the border with Israel to strike at Israelis trying to facilitate commerce with and by the Palestinians of Gaza, and to disrupt the flow of humanitarian aid there. It sends its terrorists into Israel to wreak their murderous mayhem on civilians and soldiers alike. Hamas also holds back the distribution of supplies to the suffering Palestinians to deepen their deprivation.

Hamas is bringing to ruin the lives of its own people in Gaza. It has effectively deprived Gazans of the ongoing commerce that was once their daily fare; it prevents the free flow of essential supplies; it scapegoats the Israelis; it poisons the minds of the younger generation against Israelis and Jews; and it has destroyed, for now at least, even the possibility of coexistence with the Jewish state.

Once again, the Palestinians have been betrayed by their own leaders. Like Yasser Arafat, Hamas' overarching hatred of the Jews has evicted from its leaders' hearts the fundamental notion of ensuring the well-being and dignity of their own people.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The 1981 census found that more than one-third of Canadian Jews lived in Quebec. Officials in Montreal attributed this to the arrival of French-speaking Jews from North Africa, somewhat offsetting the trend of Montreal Jews moving to Toronto. Other data showed that half the overall Jewish population of 296,000 lived in Ontario. The population had grown by eight per cent over 10 years.

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Conservative movement and USCJ (1)

As chair of Adath Israel's United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism committee and a board member, I attended meetings of the Conservative congregations in Toronto dealing with United Synagogue ("Conservative shuls move to secede from USCJ," *CJN*, April 3). Your article has led people to conclude that theology was instrumental in our leaving USCJ. In fact, ideology was never discussed by us. We voted to leave USCJ, not the Conservative movement, and we remain a Conservative congregation wanting to form a new association to meet our needs.

Many are concerned about the USCJ's increasing dues and control. Their model is based on 55 per cent of each dollar staying with USCJ and 45 per cent with us. After paying rent and salaries, there were no funds for programming. When we asked for help to fund a mikvah, adult education, regional programming, etc., USCJ told us there was no money.

Regional staff are employees of New York, which determines their priorities, and their wishes take precedence. The region has no autonomy and needs approval from New York for decisions. We wanted to run the Melton adult education program from the regional office without regional funding; New York refused.

All the congregations wanted to rework our association and remain part of USCJ, so we developed a plan for the movement to create a Canadian United Synagogue as part of USCJ, like a child who has grown up and moved out, but is still part of the family. We proposed paying fees to New York, which would leave us funds, and having regional staff hired by, and accountable to, the region. USCJ flatly rejected these concepts.

A subcommittee of the Presidents' Council tried to negotiate a deal. USCJ offered temporary funds with the expectation that we would move to "normative" dues, with each congregation paying significantly more than they do now. We came to the realization that the best USCJ had to offer was close to the status quo.

While nobody was happy to withdraw after a 50-year association, we now look with excitement to the Toronto congregations working together to revitalize the Conservative movement.

Randall Starr
Toronto

* * *

Conservative movement and USCJ (2)

As a past president and adviser of United Synagogue Youth (USY) at the Adath Israel Congregation in Toronto, it is with sadness that I note the withdrawal of my former congregation and the potential cessation of affiliation of other Canadian Conservative congregations from United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism ("Beth Emeth leaves Conservative umbrella body – follows Adath Israel in ending USCJ membership," see page 3).

While my personal liberal and egalitarian beliefs have led me to an active role in the Reconstructionist movement and Congregation Darchei Noam, my memories of regional and national conventions, Shabbatot and study sessions that I was privileged to enjoy as a teenager in USY, and, of course, friends I made, will forever be the foundation of my Jewish commitment. Too bad that today's Adath Israel teenagers won't have this opportunity – can their parents really be so short-sighted?

Danny Schild
Toronto

Dry Bones HOT STUFF!

* * *

Volunteers in Israel, 1967

I am compiling memoirs for a book about volunteers to Israel who travelled there in June 1967 to help. Many Canadians – Jews and some gentiles – participated. Time is passing quickly, and the record must be compiled before it is lost. If you are one of those who went to help, or have information about anyone who volunteered in Israel in June 1967, please contact me.

Michael Zimmerman
Chicago
VolunteerIsrael1967@gmail.com

* * *

Expelled from café for wearing a kippah

Regarding the article "American says he was expelled from a Belgian café for wearing a kippah" (*CJN*, Feb. 14), why do I, a 15-year-old girl, who lives miles away, care? I care because discrimination is wrong. This man was expelled from the café only because the waiter saw a kippah on his head. Discrimination is unacceptable in any country, and as a Jewish student studying World War I, I learned that doing nothing, as everyone in the café did, can lead to great problems. Everyone needs to take a stand against racism and discrimination. Everyone should be able to enjoy a simple cup of coffee without worrying about who they are or what they are wearing.

Leedan Cohen
Thornhill, Ont.

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Shimon Peres' official visit to Poland

By LILY GALILI
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

Israel must avenge the horrors of the Holocaust through peace, Israeli President Shimon Peres said in an address last week at a ceremony marking 65 years since the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

"During times of intifadahs and [Iranian] uranium enrichment, it is through peace that the forces of light can avenge the actions of the forces of darkness," he said.

Peres did not grant the Poles penance or absolution. Nevertheless, when he said at the foot of the memorial at the Treblinka death camp that "it is difficult to stand here, not because of you, but because of what was here," Peres was saying out loud, alongside Polish President Lech Kaczynski, what the Polish people had been hoping to hear.

For years, the Poles have been waiting for recognition that even though many of the horrors of the Holocaust took place on their soil, they did not carry them out.

As Peres looked at the Israeli soldiers and youth groups accompanying him, he added: "If we had had these soldiers and young people then, this would not have happened to us, and it will not happen to us in the future. We will not let the beast go crazy again."

Israeli and Polish flags fluttered in the afternoon breeze as Poland's chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich, chanted the *Kaddish*. Then, to the beat of a military drum, Peres, Kaczynski and survivors of the ghetto uprising placed wreaths at the foot of the monument, which was flanked by two large iron menorahs.

Peres praised the young fighters, who, he said, displayed a heroism that "our children will proudly carry with them in their hearts. The majority of the uprising fighters died, murdered in cold blood. They lost the fight, but from the point of view of history, there has never been such a victory," he said. "A victory of men over human bestiality, of pure souls over fallen ones.

"Yes, the Germans won, thanks to thousands of soldiers shooting without thought and gassing bunkers. What did those terrible Nazis leave to the generations that followed? Only shame, a curse and damnation."

The memorial event at Treblinka was the first in Peres' four-day official visit to Poland. Given Israel's complex relations with Poland, the visit also had two layers: the Jewish part, which included marking the 65th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto revolt; and the diplomatic side, in which Peres was to meet with Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk and give a speech in Hebrew in the parliament.

However, in Poland, the two parts of the visit are not truly separate, and are interlinked, as they were at Treblinka.

When Kaczynski spoke of the good relations between the countries, which he wants to improve, he mentioned in the same breath the Polish Righteous Gentiles who risked their lives to save Jews during World War II, and thanked Peres for his support of the nomination of one of them, Irena Sendler, for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Some 880,000 Jews were murdered at Treblinka, most of them from Poland. The road to Treblinka passes through dozens of quiet towns, with statues of Jesus and Mary standing at intersections. However, all this piety is forgotten in the face of the 17,000 crooked granite stones spread out over the grounds of the death camp, giving it the look of a surrealistic graveyard partially hidden in the forest.

Three-quarters of the Polish Jews murdered here were from Warsaw, coming from the ghetto whose bravery was commemorated last week.

Kaczynski, previously the mayor of Warsaw, did not forget to mention that many who were killed in Treblinka came from his city.

Sixty-five years after the uprising in Warsaw, it seems Israel is reaching a certain level of balanced understanding with the Poles.

"Is there a single Jewish heart that does not tremble from the intensity of the pain and the greatness of the achievement?" Peres mused at a meeting with 300 members of the Warsaw Jewish community.

Later in the week, when Peres addressed the Polish parliament in Warsaw, he lamented the fate of Polish Jews during World War II, saying: "I have come to you in the name of the living and the dead and in the name of those who will be born tomorrow.

"The entire rich fabric of life that Polish Jews conducted was completely destroyed during World War II. After the war, the Communist party secretary tragically pressured the 70,000 surviving Jews to leave," he continued.

Peres said this was not his first visit to Poland, but "the appearance here as president of Israel is especially moving for me."

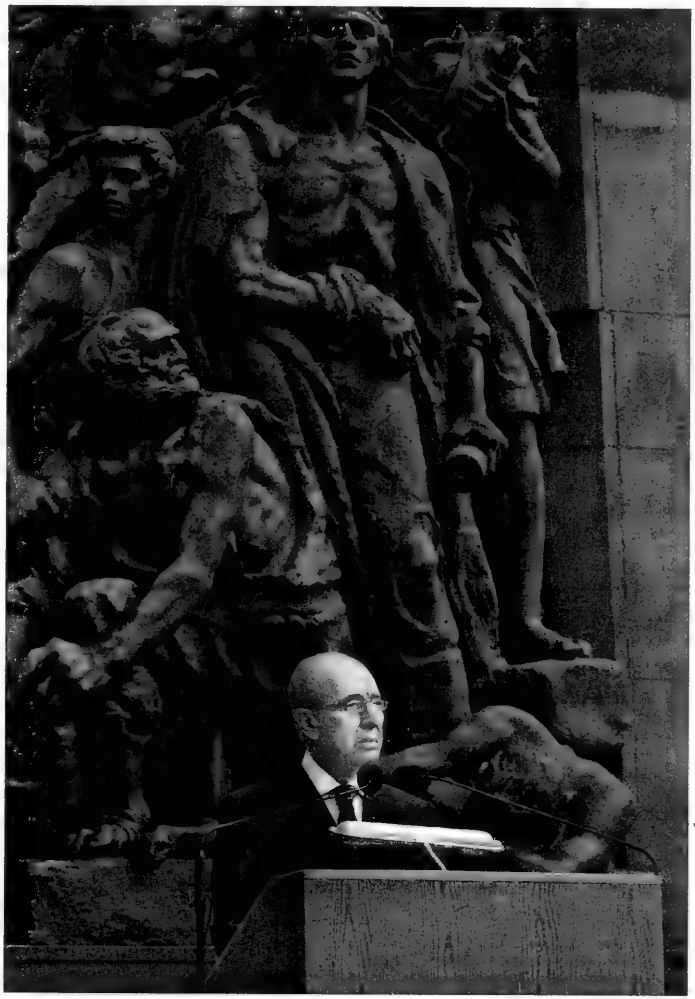
Peres also mentioned the blossoming of Zionism in the European country. He said most Israeli political parties were founded in Poland. "In our first Knesset, 61 out of the 120 members originated from Poland. And in the country's temporary government, led by David Ben-Gurion, six out of 13 ministers were of Polish origin."

Peres wove into his address the shared history of the two nations. "Jews lived and died here. We won't forget that, just as we won't forget the great tragedy that occurred after the Nazis took control of Poland."

Before Peres' speech, the Polish parliament passed a special declaration marking the 60th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising. On that occasion, Peres said, "We are lowering our flags in memory of the uprising, a singular example of the struggle of a few against the well-oiled machine of the devil. The few paid with their lives, but the devil resolved to serve as a mortal danger to all of humanity."

Peres, himself Polish-born, focused his address to parliament on World War II and the Jews' fate in Poland, and mentioned his family members who perished in the Holocaust. He also attacked the anti-Semitism that is running rampant in the world.

At the end of his talk, Peres said that Israel and the "new Poland" can develop good and positive relations. "In light of the good memories and in the shadow of the bad ones, we can strive together toward a future of peace, fraternity and justice," he said. "The new Poland is one of Israel's best friends in the European Union."



Israeli President Shimon Peres stands before the monument to the Warsaw Ghetto uprising sculpted by Nathan Rapoport as he speaks to a gathering there to commemorate 65 years since the uprising against the Nazis. [Israel Sun photo]

Opinions

On defending Israel

I love Israel. I can't imagine living in a world without Israel – not just the idea of Zion, but the reality of the state. My ancestors kept the idea alive until it could be transformed into a political fact. Now that we have it, I don't want to survive without it. Many people don't understand these sentiments. Sometimes I don't either.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

We support Israel with our money, political power and convictions. If I love the state, how come I don't live there? Some proclaim love, but never even visit. How can I be a proud American and Canadian? Israelis don't understand those of us who continue to proclaim our attachment to Israel and yet remain in the Diaspora. We are an enigma, a conflicted but not hypocritical community.

As Jews, we are programmed to love Israel. It's our national homeland. Our security. Ours!

Nonetheless, we aren't naive. We don't support Israel because we think it's perfect. We see the problems, the corruption, the failures. We know this (or that) particular government is not pure or ideally suited for leadership. No government is. But with all its warts, it's our Zion, our love, and we're committed to its survival – even more, to its flourishing.

So sometimes we exaggerate its graces and our commitment. But we have to be prudent. In a world of assassinations and suicide bombers, of murder and kidnaping, we have to be very careful of what we commit to and how we speak. Our exaggerations might be taken literally, and not always by our enemies.

When we say we can't live without Israel or Jerusalem at its centre, I don't think we're advocating mass suicide (or murder), though some might take the words in that direction. So we must be extraordinarily cautious. We are stating how unconditionally committed we are to Israel and Jerusalem. But let's not make political points out of misstatements either. Some criticize needlessly or endlessly.

Let's recognize that we do use hyperbole. We teach it to our children. "If I forget you Jerusalem, let my right hand forget its cunning; may my tongue stick to my palate, if I fail to remember you, if I don't place Jerusalem over my foremost joy." Are we teaching love and commitment in a poetic overstatement, or some abusive form of S and M? Do we want our children to be happy or permanently depressed? Love and exaggeration!

Treading carefully in these critical times is essential. If someone makes a mistake, let them apologize, and then get on with it.

Anything can set the house on fire. We must be careful with what we say to and about each other.

Ve'hamevin yavin: may wisdom and understanding prevail.

Passover tells us that the past is just prologue

"Historical narrative matters" declared *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman (Jan. 21, 2008). He was talking about the economy, but for us, having just celebrated Pesach seders, his words should resonate even more.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

We pride ourselves on being a historical people. Our foundation narrative, what Robert D. Kaplan in *Balkan Ghosts* called our "crowd story," is the Exodus from Egypt. During the seder, we repeatedly affirm that indeed in every generation, the retelling of this story validates our historical beginnings as a nation and our journey towards Sinai, where we complete our covenant as a special people bound by obedience to God and the Torah.

Many attacks have been mounted on the historical truth of events as described in the Bible. Archeologists such as Itzchak Beit Arieh and William Dever claim that since no stones and bones have been found in the Sinai that would confirm the outline of the Exodus story, the story was indeed made up and should be viewed with extreme skepticism – if not outright dismissal. No Egyptian records of such an event and no tracks in the Sinai means no Exodus.

Scholars of the various schools of biblical criticism have linked many of the features of the Exodus story to motifs in Egyptian and Greek mythologies. In fact, one wonders how the story has survived its critics and analyzers, given the microscopic examinations to which it has been subjected.

Yet the Passover seder endures as the single most observed Jewish ceremony, whether you count yourself as traditional or secular, whether or not you observe Judaism's other traditions. It has been the most illustrated, with thousand of versions of the Haggadah, and more added each year. Medieval Haggadot are the most luxuriously hand-illustrated of the story. Modern artists such as Marc Chagall have produced exquisite artistic editions. We can expect that, for years to come, the Haggadah will be the focus of endless discussion and adventurous art.

What is it in this timeless story that appeals? What is it that draws all Jews together on these special nights, wherever they live? Why should our historical narrative matter?

For those of us who live in the Diaspora (and will, in all likelihood, continue to live here), it connects us continuously to a past fraught with drama. It tells us that, even as we sit in comfort and ease, we still live with a past that was filled with danger and incipient destruction. We can scarcely read the story of the Exodus without realizing the tremendous act of faith it depicts, as thousands of slaves pick up and march out of the (then-) greatest civilization of the ancient world.

Then, faced with an army behind them and the sea in front, things just go from bad to worse!

The most incredible stories to emerge from the "Kingdom of Night," as Elie Wiesel called Auschwitz, were attempts of Jews in concentration camps to recite what they could recall from memory of the seder. Knowing that death was before them and behind them every minute, they still strove to recite our story of redemption under the shadow of the sword. Even there, forgotten by the world and acknowledged only by their enemies who could kill them in an instant, they told the story of liberation.

At the end of my seders, we not only proclaim, "Next year in Jerusalem," but we sing, "Ba shanah haba'ah, neshev al hamirpeset" – "Next year we'll sit on our balconies [and enjoy peace]." Together, our family and guests are affirming the continued hope that just around the corner is the final Redemption, the Messianic age that will see all humankind redeemed, an end to war and misery, a time of peace and security for all.

Saadia Gaon admonished his congregation with reasons to accept the truth of the final Redemption, writing, "What has happened to us in the past can be used as a proof and an example that God will assuredly do for us in the future many times above what He has promised us."

So when we celebrate the Passover season, we are actually declaring that we believe in a time when all people everywhere will be liberated from their own slaveries. What is past is indeed prologue.

Nations of immigrants

It was recently announced that the backlog of current applications for immigration to Canada is around 900,000. The federal government has decided to address this backlog by an amendment to the Immigration Act.

The amendment, however, does not really address the backlog but rather, gives the responsible minister greater authority in the application process. The proposed change will permit the minister to fast-track certain new applicants in the skilled worker class.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

It may follow that the projected number of immigrants in some of the various classes of immigrants may be modified, too. It could also mean that the acceptable number of refugee applicants seeking safe haven and asylum in Canada could be reduced. The detailed plan will no doubt surface in the weeks ahead. But the fact remains that with its vast regions from coast to coast and its increasing need for manpower to fuel the economy, Canada is in need of immigrants.

Since the enactment of our first Citizenship Act in 1947, Canada has welcomed more than a million people to our population. This process has required adjustments for both the host nation as well as the immigrants. Unfortunately, there has been some degree of frustration as not all communities have been accepting of these newcomers. Immigration, however, is the lifeblood of a dynamic, fruitful and robust Canada.

Many other nations also depend on immigration for their growth and development. Since its establishment 60 years ago, Israel, more than most nations, has been a national community of newcomers. Indeed there are Israelis who can trace their settlement in the area back some five generations. Others will argue that their ties historically date back to biblical times. Notwithstanding this, Israel is a nation of settlement, integration and of welcome to the many who seek a homeland, refuge or indeed the assurances of living in a Jewish state.

After the Holocaust and the creation of the State of Israel, much migration came from eastern Europe. Since 1948, Israel has experienced several other waves of immigration, some of which attracted international attention. Some one million Jews emigrated to Israel from Russia in the late 1980s and early '90s, after decades of world Jewish efforts to free them from the bondage and the anti-Semitic hardship of the former Soviet Union.

But Israel is not without problems related to immigration. Some of the Russian immigrants who escaped that despotic regime lied about their religion in order to gain immigration status in Israel, only to later seek refugee status elsewhere (including in Canada), complaining of conditions in Israel. This small minority of Russian immigrants essentially betrayed Israeli hospitality.

A similar, though not quite parallel, situation is presently unfolding as Sudanese refugees are seeking asylum in Israel, allegedly escaping the genocidal hardship of Darfur. Although they are not Jewish, they are seeking refuge in Israel through Egyptian ports of entry, appealing to the spirit, history and humanitarian precepts that have historically been part of both the Israeli and Jewish tradition

Some of these people are genuine refugees, attempting to escape the horrors of the conflict in Darfur. However, individuals from other regions of Africa are claiming to escape from Darfur when, in reality, they are simply seeking a better life in Israel. Israel is now struggling to deal with this issue as many of these claimants are arriving without documentation or proof of origin.

The immigration of Ethiopian Jews (beginning with "Operation Moses" in 1984) attracted widespread international attention. The Ethiopian story is one of success as the Ethiopian Jews have not only improved their own lives but have also significantly contributed to Israeli society. Many Ethiopian Jews are now studying at and achieving prominence at Israeli universities.

Immigrants to Israel are more than individuals who have returned under a law of return to their historic homeland. As in Canada, immigrants make major contributions to the arts, sciences and humanities and the national economy.

So as Canada addresses its current backlog problems, let us not forget the contribution of immigrants to our national make-up and the strength of our nation. Both Canada and Israel are communities of immigrants. We should be both welcoming and thankful of their continuing contribution to the greatness of our respective nations.

The Kirshner File

Novelist satisfied with film version of *Fugitive Pieces*

When Anne Michaels, the Toronto-based poet and novelist, wrote her lyrical, spellbinding debut novel, *Fugitive Pieces*, little did she realize that it would be adapted for the screen one day. "It just never occurred to me that it would be turned into a film," she said in a telephone interview shortly after Jeremy Podeswa's eponymous feature-length movie had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival last September. "I just wanted to write the best possible book I could."

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Published in 1996 by McClelland and Stewart, *Fugitive Pieces* turns on Holocaust memory, the legacy of war and the power of love. Spanning decades, it's set in Poland, a Greek island and Canada, revolving around a man whose life is utterly transformed by his childhood experiences during World War II.

A critically acclaimed bestseller that won the Orange Prize for fiction, among other awards, *Fugitive Pieces* has now been published in 35 countries, including Israel.

Not surprisingly, Michaels was virtually besieged by film producers and directors who grasped its cinematic possibilities and wanted to buy the rights.

Anne Michaels

"Dozens asked me over the years," she said. But Michaels resisted, either fearing that they lacked the required sensitivity and tact to transform the novel into a quality film or that they might sensationalize the Holocaust and pay too much attention to its horrors.

Seven years ago, Podeswa appeared on the scene. Impressed by *Fugitive Pieces*, he was certain he could turn it into an incredible film."We had a very long and direct conversation during which he explained why he considered the book important," she recalled.

The son of a survivor, Podeswa had been looking for a project dealing with the Holocaust. "Jeremy's personal relationship with my book meant a lot to me," she said. "I had talked to a lot of people, but Jeremy spoke from a very personal place and had a good feeling for the language. I knew he would not betray me."

And, having seen and liked one of his previous films, *The Five Senses*, she was convinced that he had the right stuff to oversee the project.

No doubt, too, Michaels was heartened by the fact that Robert Lantos would be the producer. A Hungarian Jew whose parents had survived the Holocaust, he had produced *Sunshine*, an epic-length film that unfolded against the backdrop of anti-Semitism and the persecution and murder of Jews in Hungary.

Principal photography of *Fugitive Pieces*, starring Stephen Dillane, Rade Sherbedgia, Robbie Kay and Rosamund Pike, and scheduled to open in Canada on May 2, began on April 24, 2006.

"It was a demanding shoot," said Lantos. "We had to film three time periods in two countries – in Toronto and Hamilton and in Athens and on the islands of Hydra and Lesbos."

From the outset, Michaels played an integral role in the making of the film. "Jeremy wanted me to be a sounding board and I was glad to be asked. He consulted me about actors, sets and locations." As well, she critiqued Podeswa's script, which retains her poetic turns of phrases.

"He was very respectful. We weren't too far off most of the time. It was his job to make the film. There was courtesy and respect between us. I was involved to the extent he wanted me to be involved. We had a very good working relationship."

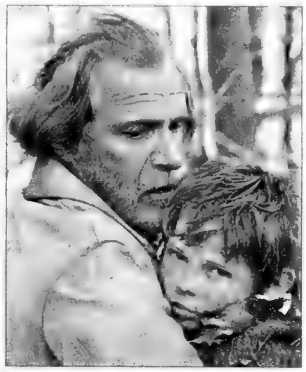
Having attended the first screening of *Fugitive Pieces* last August, Michaels left the theatre in an elated mood.

"It's a beautiful film," she exulted. "Jeremy wasn't afraid to make a very intense, emotional film. It's brave filmmaking. I like his attention to visual detail and to the spirit and soul of the book. That comes through. And the performances, especially of the male characters, are exceptionally good."

Her only regret is that certain characters, plus a number of Toronto scenes, had to be cut out in the final edit. But she fully understands the constraints that thousands of feet of raw footage impose on a director.

"It was inevitable," she said of the paring process. "But in my heart of hearts, I'm glad that *Fugitive Pieces* is a Canadian film. That's important to me. Jeremy brought something quite special to it."

As she tells it, *Fugitive Pieces* had been brewing in her mind for five years before she sat down and wrote it. "The Holocaust is one of the central events of the 20th century," said Michaels, who conducted her research in Greece, but for personal reasons avoided Poland. "It felt to me, after the war, that one could not be a thinking, feeling person without finding a relationship to it."



Rade Sherbedgia and Robbie Kay star in *Fugitive Pieces*

Born in 1958, and raised in Toronto's St. Clair-Oakwood neighbourhood, she "discovered" the Holocaust when she was four or five years old. Her father, Isiah, who immigrated to Canada from Poland in 1931 and who lost family members in the Holocaust, would tell her about his voyage from Europe.

"It was impossible to tell these stories without having some sense of the coming threat," said Michaels, whose mother, Rosalind, is a native Torontonian.

Due to her father's influence, Michaels immersed herself in the literature of the Holocaust, reading mostly of the atrocities perpetrated in eastern Europe.

Only later did she turn her gaze to the Shoah in Greece, where much of the Jewish community was wiped out, but where, on the island of Zakynthos, the inhabitants came to the aid of its Jewish residents.

"The mayor and archbishop refused to hand over lists of Jews to the Nazis, and with the help of the people, the Jews hid in the hills, disappearing in the cracks and crevices of the island."

The youngest of four siblings, three of whom were boys, Michaels grew up in a house in which ideas, books and music were valued. She was a child when she decided she would devote herself to the arts and, in particular, to prose and poetry.

"It was a very clear desire," she said.

Educated at the University of Toronto, where she now teaches creative writing, she established a literary reputation with two volumes of verse, *The Weight of Oranges* (1986), which captured the Commonwealth Prize for the Americas, and *Miner's Pond* (1991), which was shortlisted for the Governor General's Award.

In writing *Fugitive Pieces*, she joined the ranks of such novelists as Margaret Atwood and Michael Ondaatje, who launched their careers as poets.

She had no trouble making the transition from verse to prose. "It was completely natural. I knew that what I had to say couldn't be said in a poem. It became very clear to me how to do it. The challenge was in the material, not in the form. It's so easy to recoil from things unbearable. My task was to bring readers to it. That was the real challenge. I felt an incredible humility."

Her editor, Ellen Seligman, was struck by her manuscript: "I still remember how overwhelmed I was with its gravity, its wisdom, its heart and its deep meaning, both in terms of grappling with the Holocaust and for what it says about all wars and devastation and also the redeeming powers of love."

Michaels was genuinely surprised by its commercial and critical success. "It's a very, very serious book, and I didn't consider the market when I wrote it."

She has just finished her second novel, but beyond saying that it takes place during World War II and partly in the Warsaw ghetto, she is reticent to discuss further details.

"It's not a sequel to *Fugitive Pieces*, and is very different. But it takes a very hard look at certain philosophical and moral questions in terms of history."

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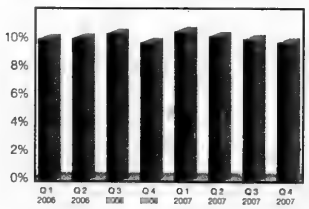

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Deputy Liberal leader reaches out to community

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Deputy Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff said he wanted to "clear up misunderstandings" – particularly his accusation that Israel committed a war crime during its 2006 war with Hezbollah – and in a public forum at Holy Blossom Temple, he presented the case for why his support for the Jewish state remains strong.

Ignatieff said his ties to Israel "run deep," his personal history is tied up with that of the Jewish state, and one of the greatest intellectual influences on his life was liberal Zionist thinker Isaiah Berlin.

Ultimately, he will "be a good friend to a country I respect," he said.

The audience of 350 received his message politely and occasionally applauded his remarks, but based on the often skeptical questions posed to him after his address, some in the community may need more convincing.

Ignatieff was joined in the April 13 public forum by University of Toronto professor Aurel Braun. The event was sponsored by the Canadian Coalition for Democracies and Holy Blossom.

At the heart of Ignatieff's woes was his statement during the war with Hezbollah that Israel committed a "war crime" in the bombing of the south Lebanon village of Qana.

At the time, Israel responded to the firing of 150 rockets from Qana and its environs with three missile attacks. One occurred near midnight, and seven or eight hours later, a building collapsed, killing dozens of civilians. Initial reports indicated that 56 people died, but that number was later reduced to 28.

Ignatieff said he had been asked his view of the Israeli attack, and when he called it a war crime, "all hell broke loose."

He was quickly labelled an anti-Semite and friends deserted him. "It was the most painful experience of my short political life," he said.

Ignatieff said the comment was "an error.

"I meant only that in defending itself, Israel may not have complied with the Geneva Convention." He said he never intended to find an equivalence between Israel's actions and those of its foes.

Michael Ignatieff

Ignatieff, who lost a Liberal Party leadership bid to Stéphane Dion, said the mistake has cast a shadow on his relations "with a community with which I feel deep respect." He has subsequently reached out to community leaders to mend fences, and he took part in a trip to Israel's northern border with Lebanon sponsored by the Canada-Israel Committee, a pro-Israel advocacy group. There he personally witnessed "the Hezbollah threat to Israel's security," he said.

Speaking at Holy Blossom is part of the process of reaching out to the Jewish community to "rebuild trust" and set the record straight, he added.

"It is ridiculous to suggest the Liberal Party is equivocal to Israel."

Ignatieff said Israel and the Palestinians have legitimate rights to statehood, but "Canada can't remain neutral" between Israel and Hamas and Hezbollah, both of which seek the country's destruction. Iran, too, threatens Israel, he said. He described a visit to Tehran, where he saw 70-foot posters attacking the Jewish state.

"I don't need to be told the state of Iran poses a real and present danger to Israel," he said.

Turning to the Liberal Party's record, he said it would never support one-sided resolutions against Israel at the United Nations, noting the party opposed the resolution equating Zionism with racism and another that labelled Israel an apartheid state.

Canada should not participate in the second United Nations conference against racism next year in Durban, he added.

At the same time, as a longstanding friend of Israel, Canada has the right to "straight talk" with Israel, as Israel does with Canada.

He acknowledged political parties are seeking Jewish votes, but the community will likely not act as a bloc. "You'll make up your mind one family, one person, at a time."

He questioned whether most would make their choice based on a single issue. Jews supported the Liberal Party's vision for "a decent Canada" and its policies on health care and aboriginal rights among others, he said.

Ignatieff said Canada should support Israel as a fellow democracy and "we stand with democracies against terrorist groups wherever we find them."

Prior to the evening's public question period, Braun confronted Ignatieff on the issue of using "disproportionate" force against terrorists.

Israel might legitimately resent being lectured that its military responses to terrorism are outside international law when it risks the lives of its 18- and 19-year-old soldiers to avoid civilian casualties, he said.

"It is absurd to hold a country at war to absurdly perfectionist standards," Ignatieff said, adding that "it's very difficult to fight by the rules" when one's opponents don't follow rules.

Ignatieff said he had discussed the issue of proportional response with Israel Defence Forces commanders and agreed that "it's a contextual judgment." Sometimes in responding to terrorist attacks, those targeting return fire get it wrong and civilian deaths can occur.

"The thing Israel cannot do is to descend to the level of its enemies," he said.

Israel, like any state, must try to avoid civilian casualties. He acknowledged that in criticizing Israel in 2006, "I made a judgement without having the facts. I don't do that any more."

MP responds to questions. Please see story at www.cjnews.com.

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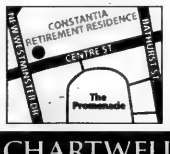

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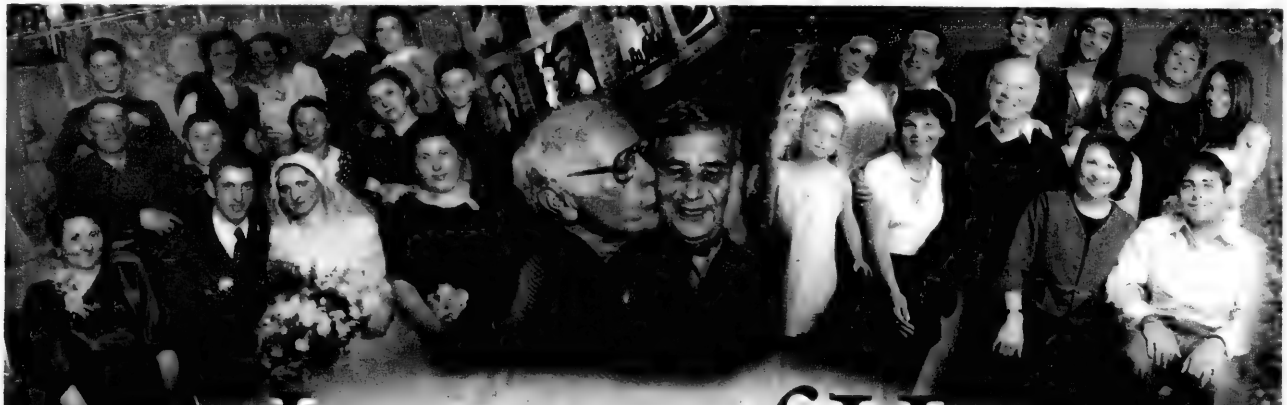

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"It is said that a man is a reflection of his homeland, but sometimes a man has more than one homeland. Both Israel and Canada helped forge my identity... and in recent years I have been able to bring much of what I learned in Canada to Israel...I have been blessed to have had the opportunity to focus on what I love to do in the places that I love most – to build and design in Israel and Canada. This passion for my work and for my homelands is what has led to my success."

David J. Azrieli in his memoir *One Step Ahead.*

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Former U.S. envoy issues urgent warning on Iran

By RON CSILLAG
Special to The CJN

There is a very narrow window of opportunity – probably no more than a year – to convince Iran to abandon its nuclear program, warns a major architect of the Mideast peace process.

By 2009, Iran "could be a nuclear power, if not a nuclear weapon state," Dennis Ross told an audience at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation on April 10.

"We have to create a choice for Iran: you can be a nuclear power or you can have economic well-being – but not both," said Ross, a former U.S. special envoy to the Middle East.

Ross helped the Israelis and Palestinians reach their 1995 Interim Agreement. He facilitated Israel's 1994 peace treaty with Jordan and brokered the Hebron Accord on redeployment in 1997.

In an informal but sobering talk presented by the synagogue's Israel action committee, Ross said a nuclear Iran would present Israel with two possibilities: an "existential" threat, or all-out war.

In addition to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's infamous "wiped off the map" statement in relation to Israel, former Iranian president Mohammed Khatami, a so-called moderate, has mused that it would "take only one bomb" to annihilate Israel, Ross noted.

"Is that their intention? Can you ignore what they say?" he asked.

He said Tehran "is marching ahead" with a nuclear program that is well beyond simply providing the country with civilian energy.

Iran currently has 3,000 centrifuges enriching raw materials, and has planned 6,000 more. "They haven't solved the problem of operating them full time," Ross said, "but they will."

He later told *The CJN* that if Iran had a nuclear program geared toward generating only fuel or electricity, "that would be fine. But if that's the case, you would use light-water reactors [and not] heavy-water reactors. And yet, they're building a heavy-water reactor."

Dennis Ross

If not stopped by next year, Iran will have "crossed the threshold of stockpiling fissionable material. Once they cross that threshold, we're going to be in a different ball game. We have to approach this with a high degree of urgency. We're running out of time."

He said it's possible to deal with the hardline regime, because it is vulnerable. Fully 85 per cent of Iran's export revenue comes from oil, and the mullahs who run the country subsidize major parts of the domestic economy, he noted.

"This is a regime that is not very popular, and they know it. One of the ways they seek to buy social peace is to buy off the public."

Squeezing Iran's oil revenues can work, he claimed, with careful diplomacy involving Europe and oil-starved China. The United States could also leverage influence with Russia, which has expressed displeasure at new U.S. missile bases in eastern Europe.

He said the West must engage Iran in "relentless statecraft."

Turning to Israeli-Palestinians relations, Ross said Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas "actually believe in each other. They're actually mutually committed to reaching an agreement," but are handcuffed by their respective publics.

The 2006 war in Lebanon created "an acute sense of vulnerability" for Israel. And Israelis fear the West Bank, should its troops withdraw, would become another Gaza Strip, where the Islamist group Hamas seized control last year.

Palestinians, meanwhile, can't conceive of a capital in eastern Jerusalem when they can barely get from one West Bank town to another, Ross said.

To ease public perceptions, each side could do things that are politically feasible, yet meaningful, for the other. While the Palestinian leadership has "neither the will nor capability" to dismantle terrorist infrastructure, it can work to act against incitement, Ross said.

And Israel could make it easier for Palestinians to get through checkpoints, he added.

He described the tasks ahead as "daunting but not hopeless. On almost every problem Israel faces, there is something that can be done."

After 60 years of Israel's existence, the lesson learned is "we don't have to give in or give up."

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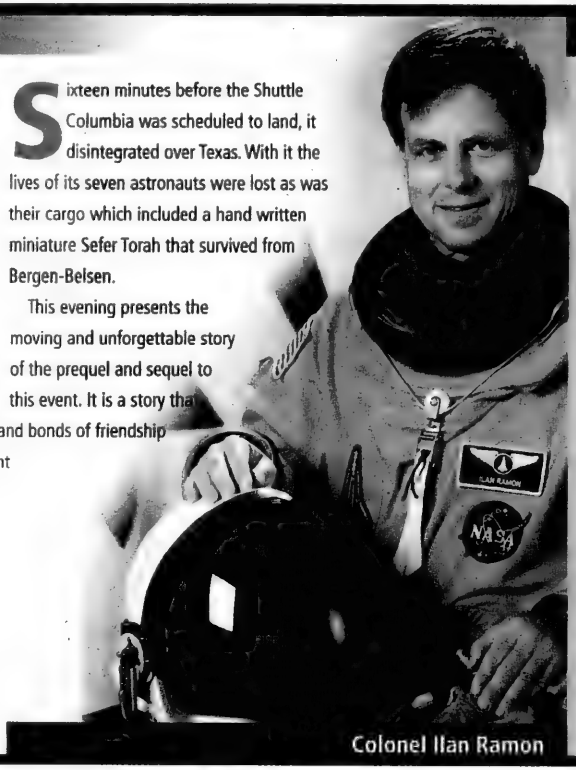

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Tuesday May 20 **Sponsored by**
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Tuesday May 27 **Sponsored by**
Exit Ghost. Marilyn Herbert will review this last of Pulitzer Prize winning author, **Phillip Roth's** nine books about the fictional Nathan Zuckerman. Roth and Zuckerman lived parallel lives – both are from the Jewish community of Newark, New Jersey.

Tuesday June 3 **Sponsored by**
Israeli movie presentation **'Close to Home'** (Hebrew with subtitles). A story of two young female soldiers who come of age on the streets of Jerusalem. **Heather Kassel** will discuss the film following the showing.

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Christians, Jews unite to support Israel

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

"To see the love of Christians is very moving for me," Yona Yahav, the mayor of Haifa, said at a fundraising gala this month in Toronto, where some 300 Christians and Jews gathered to show their support for Israel.

Among the chief sponsors of the evening was the recently formed group Christians United For Israel (CUFI), which aims to support Israel by to lobbying government leaders and by backing the Jewish state at the United Nations.

The April 10 event at the Canada Christian College was organized by Israel's former consul general in Toronto, Ya'acov Brosh, currently executive director of the Haifa Foundation. Proceeds went to Haifa's Crisis Management Control Centre, whose initiatives include financing bomb shelters.

Keynote speakers were Yahav and MK Rabbi Benny Elon of the right-wing National Union party.

Yahav described his city to attendees as multicultural, European-style and strong.

"The strength of the society came up a year-and-a-half ago during the Second Lebanon War. This wasn't the kind of war we were used to. It was the first time the city was under attack."

After the first rockets fell on Haifa, the mayor was told that they, as well as others like it, contained some 40,000 ball bearings, meant to inflict and maximize serious injury, and that the ball bearings could scatter as far as one kilometre, he said.

Haifa Mayor Yona Yahav [D. Gordon photo]

The city declared a state of emergency, and Yahav advised Haifans to stay at home. Outside activity was halted.

"There were no weddings, no funerals, no get-togethers for over a month," he said. "Public shelters were no good. This was a different kind of war. If you ran into a public area, you were dead."

Remarkably, four-fifths of Haifa's residents stayed in the city during the bombardment, he said.

In a single week in July 2006, almost 1,000 Katyusha rockets were fired on Israel, reaching up to 40 kilometres from their launch points – the farthest of any rocket attacks to date, the Israeli military reported. Haifa, Israel's third-largest city, is about 35 kilometres south of the Lebanese border.

Two years earlier, Haifa prepared safety contingencies in the event of a predicted imminent earthquake, Yahav said.

"We were the only city in Israel that was prepared for this war. And we want to prepare ourselves for coming catastrophes," he said. "We have to build more bunkers, from which we can control the city in a catastrophe, be it a flood, earthquake or war."

In his remarks, Rabbi Elon assessed the growing dangers for Israelis.

"These proxies of Iran in the north have been strengthened since the war, and we know it," he said, referring to the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah, which fought the 2006 war with Israel.

Yet he said he is buoyed by Israel's optimism.

"We, the Jews, have genes of survival. When you've lost your country for 2,000 years, and you lost your kingdom, your sovereignty, and you built it again from nothing… as the Israeli anthem says, 'Hatikvah' – we did not lose our hope."

Despite his praise for *Hatikvah*, the MK lamented the absence of overt spiritual references in Israel's national anthem.

"Why do we not have in Israel 'In God we trust' the way America has on its coins? Or do we not have 'God keep our land' the way your Canadian anthem says? Isn't it good to mention the name of God?"

Shira Gilboord, a York University student and program director for Hasbara, a campus pro-Israel activist group, said Christian support for Israel is much needed.

"A Christian Zionist event was an absolute delight to attend. After all, there is strength in numbers, so the more people who are not afraid to stand up for Israel the better," she said.

"Connecting supporters in both the Christian and Jewish community is also an important part of fighting the anti-Israel battle on campus."

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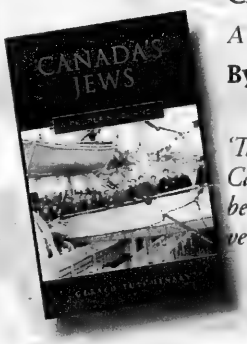

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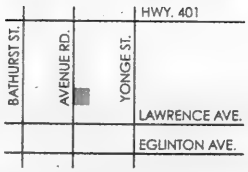

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SK teacher's 'Challah Baby' links school, home

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Jennifer Taylor's senior kindergarten students at Bialik Hebrew Day School look forward to Shabbat, not only for the weekly classroom ritual celebrations and singing, but because every week, one of the children gets to take home "Challah Baby."

Challah Baby is a soft toy stuffed with cotton and braided by Taylor's 93-year-old grandmother, who every year makes one doll each for Taylor's morning and afternoon classes. Taylor adds the eyes and bits of wool for the mouth and hair.

A lesson from the teacher: *"I truly believe that family plays such an integral part in a child's learning, and that it is so important to keep the connection of family and school life together. When you have that connection, everyone benefits. Parents are their children's biggest advocates and cheerleaders."*

Children count down the weeks until it's their turn, said Taylor, who introduced the idea into her classroom about five years ago, after attending a professional development day session on Shabbat programs.

"They are our teachers..."

Every week, Challah Baby goes home with a different student in a Shabbat Box that also contains ceramic candlesticks (made by Taylor), a kiddush cup, a CD of Jewish songs, and a Challah Baby journal that each child contributes to in turn.

The journal is filled with reports and pictures of Challah Baby's activities over the weekend, not just as part of celebrating Shabbat (one entry noted that Challah Baby had met a "real challah"), but taking part in family activities over the weekend.

One entry that particularly moved Taylor was from a parent who wrote, "This was the first time [my child] asked to say the [Shabbat] prayers."

Taylor's experience with the project has reinforced her belief that family and school form a team. "The more you foster it, the better the connection is, and the more pride children have in their learning," she said.

She encourages parents to be active in their children's education, and to know what's going on in their lives.

For her entire 12-year teaching career, Taylor – a 35-year-old mother of two and a graduate of York Mills Collegiate, the University of Western Ontario and York University, where she obtained her bachelor of education degree – has worked at Jewish day schools.

Bialik SK teacher Jennifer Taylor holds Challah Baby, subject of weekend journal entries by her students. **[F. Kraft photo]**

"It's what I grew up with, and what I feel connected to," she said.

The former Associated Hebrew Schools student has been at Bialik for nine years and still regards her Grade 3 teacher at Associated, Sharyn Hurwitz, as her "biggest mentor."

Taylor recalls becoming enamoured of teaching as a student in Hurwitz' class. "Her whole attitude, and building self-esteem and confidence in learners – I love bringing that into my class."

One way Taylor does that is with "special awards," which she gives out when she catches students in the act of doing things such as cleaning up nicely or listening well.

She finds that the awards motivate her students, as does her end-of-class VIP circle, where students express appreciation for virtues of the "very important person" of the day, who also is assigned a particular job to do.

"It builds confidence and self esteem," Taylor said. "You know that you have a group of friendship and *chevrah* in class."

Gaining students' trust and respect, and being approachable, are key to Taylor's classroom philosophy.

Outside of school, on one of her maternity leaves, Taylor co-authored the 2003 book *Nannyhood: A Guide To Activities And Positive Interactions With Babies & Young Children*, with her friend Elisa Garay. They also developed a series of workshops for caregivers of young children, although Taylor is no longer actively involved.

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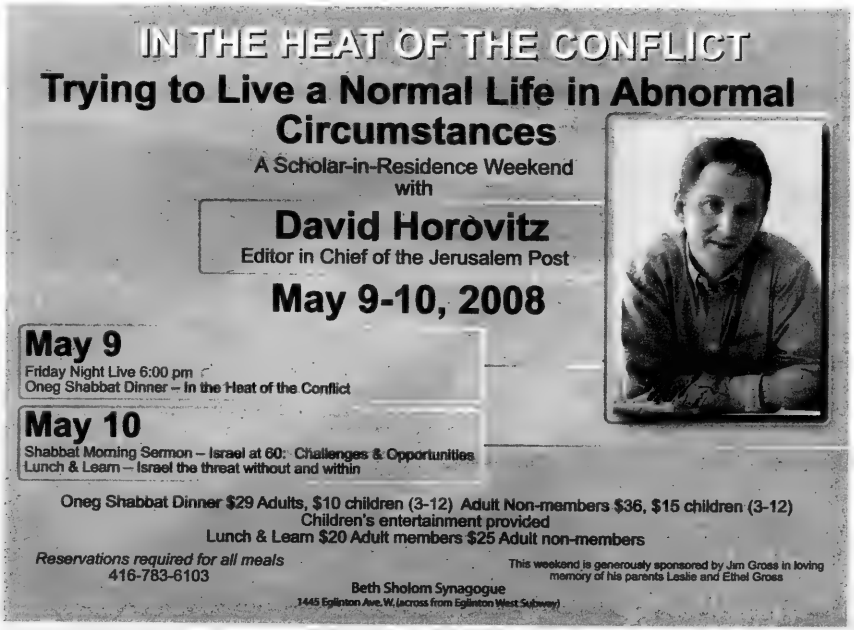
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Seniors exhibit sheds new light on aging

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Aging is Living – A New Perspective is a photography and text exhibit that debunks the notion that long-term care facilities are a place to go to die.

Irene Borins Ash, a Toronto social worker, photographer and speaker, has taken a quantum leap in changing that perception.

She has done this through her photographs and testimonials from 25 seniors of varying ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds who are now often more active than they were before moving into a long-term facility.

Through their own words, the seniors shed new light on the subject of aging. They are optimistic and have healthy attitudes about aging, despite life's challenges.

Borins Ash says that seniors living in long-term care homes are often perceived to be invisible and forgotten members of society.

"Yet the reality is that… many residents continue to pursue personal interests, activities and relationships that continue to give meaning and quality to their lives."

Borins Ash's 2003 book, *Treasured Legacies: Older & Still Great* (Second Story Press), profiles 44 senior men and women who live creative and fulfilling lives.

"When I interviewed Ann Seaton for *Treasured Legacies*, she was the only one [I interviewed who was] living in a long-term-care facility. She told me that these are some of the best years of her life. And even though she was confined to a motorized scooter, every day was an adventure and joy to her," Borins Ash says.

Impressed by the seniors she interviewed, especially Seaton, who lives at Baycrest's Apotex Centre, Borins Ash approached Gilbert Heffern, director of communications and public affairs of the Ontario Long-Term Care Association (OLTCA), who agreed to help her create an exhibit about the positive side of life in a long-term care facility.

"The rest is history. And now, 2½ years later, I am delighted to present this inspirational exhibit," Borins Ash says.

She stresses that a long-term care facility "does not have to be the end" but rather is the beginning of a new phase in one's life.

Social worker and photographer Irene Borins Ash with environmental activist David Suzuki are seen at a preview of Borin Ash's exhibit.

"It is a time when seniors do things that they never had the time to do when they were younger."

Borins Ash is finishing a book on the exhibit, to be published by the Dundurn Group.

"Despite wars, starvation, illness, loss of loved ones, these remarkable men and women I interviewed still continue to be creative, whether it is through painting, wood carving, writing, leading committees, writing their memoirs, gardening, or perhaps through learning to forgive others for things that happened to them in their lifetime," she says.

Zev Selinger, a resident of Lincoln Place Nursing Home since 2002, spoke of the many activities at the home – synagogue services, bingo, tai chi and art therapy, and special events such as talent shows.

"The building is built in such a way that one cannot help but meet other people. This is really good because one does not feel lonely," he adds.

The show, presented in partnership with the OLTCA, is open to the public from May 1 to 15 at the G. Raymond Chang School of Continuing Education, Ryerson University, Heaslip House, 297 Victoria St., Toronto. The exhibit's official opening takes place on April 30, and the public opening is on May 1, 5 to 6:30 p.m. For more information about the exhibit, visit www.ireneborinsash.com.

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Rabbi Kelman provides a new perspective on She'arim

It's time to endorse UJA Federation initiative

By RABBI JOSEPH KELMAN

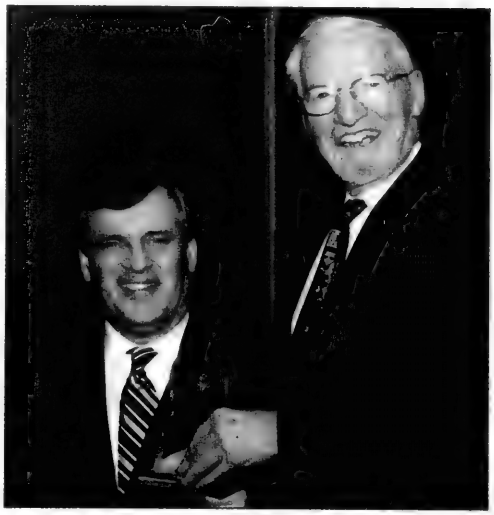
Twenty seven years ago, the late Rabbi Yitzhak Witty z"l and I dreamed of a Jewish day school that would lovingly and expertly educate children with learning disabilities. At that time, there was virtually no place for them to go to receive a quality Jewish education that catered to their unique needs.

Driven by that vision, we and others built what is today the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School Sara and Sam Hennick Education Centre. When She'arim outgrew its cramped quarters at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, it was a gift from the Hennick family that helped the school move to its current Bathurst Jewish Community Centre location.

Over the past 27 years, She'arim Hebrew Day School and our remarkable graduates have proven that She'arim is more than merely a dream. She'arim has produced doctors, lawyers, rabbis, researchers and successful business people. She'arim brought confidence, dignity and self-esteem to more than 1,000 Jewish children who were educationally lost.

Today, She'arim is crippled by financial difficulties and cannot continue operating. To me, this harsh reality has been painfully difficult to absorb. However, it is reality and we must move on for the benefit of She'arim's children.

Initially, I felt that a new school, fulfilling the dream of She'arim was the answer, but after further reflection and careful consideration of UJA Federation's plans for the students of She'arim, I have reconsidered.



Rabbi Kelman with David Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Community Inclusion Awards of Excellence in February, 2008. Photographer: Mircea Niculae Popescu

UJA Federation, through its Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (The Mercaz) has encouraged three Jewish day schools to provide placement, as a group, for all She'arim students from Grades 3-8. At each school, She'arim's children would be taught by special education experts and attend their own classes separate from students without special needs. They would also be provided with other resources and the caring attention they require. The schools involved – TanenbaumCHAT, Associated Hebrew Schools, subject to the signing of a memorandum of understanding, and another educational institution - would form a special education consortium to assist She'arim's students, with significant UJA Federation funding.

I believe this solution not only fulfils the spirit of She'arim, but would not have been possible without the educational inspiration provided by She'arim. It was She'arim that created and then nurtured community consciousness about the challenges facing students with learning disabilities and the means by which they could achieve success just like any other children. Now the entire community is rallying around the cause that She'arim's pioneers, its devoted teachers, its dedicated administrators and its loving parents have championed for nearly three decades.

The initiative now underway to find an appropriate place for the children of She'arim is a good one and I urge all members of the community to endorse it.

Joseph Kelman is Rabbi Emeritus of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Congregation and co-founder of She'arim

Associated steps forward for She'arim children

School endorses special education consortium

Another large Toronto day school has expressed its willingness to help place students currently attending the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School.

Associated Hebrew Schools will be offering placements for approximately 20 She'arim students in Grades 3-6 next year, conditional on another school doing the same for students in Grade 7.

The education for She'arim students in Grades 3-6 at Associated will be based on the concept of a school within a school, with special education classes, taught by teachers providing concentrated, caring and sensitive attention to the unique needs of these students.

Pending the signing of a memorandum of understanding, Associated would be part of a special education consortium working closely together and sharing resources on behalf of She'arim's students. This is the first critical step in a long term solution for the children at She'arim.

"This important initiative is consistent with Associated's mission of communal service and educational excellence," said Associated Executive Director, Dr. Mark Smiley. "We will not only be offering an outstanding learning environment for She'arim students, we will also be creatively cooperating with other schools doing the same thing."

UJA Federation will be providing significant funding specifically for the schools to develop programs on behalf of the students who are making the transition from She'arim.

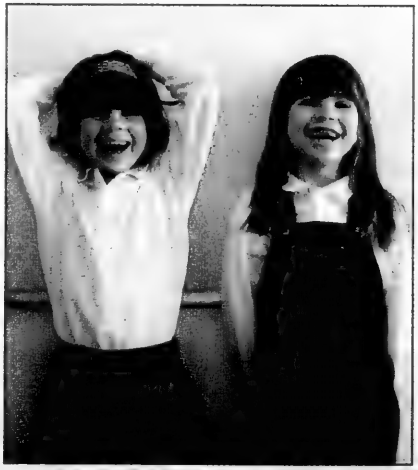
Last week TanenbaumCHAT announced that it will create a special education program next year for She'arim students in Grade 8 at the Wilmington Campus, under the direction of campus principal Helen Fox.

"Our new Grade 8 special education program will be unique for TanenbaumCHAT and for the community," said TanenbaumCHAT Education Director, Paul Shaviv. "Most importantly, we're thinking long-term because our goal is for these new Grade 8 students to move through the TanenbaumCHAT high school system, starting with the Grade 9 special education track."

"Together with The Mercaz, UJA Federation's education pillar, several schools in our community are getting together to set the foundation for special education excellence. That's something about which we should be very proud," noted UJA Federation chair, David Koschitzky. "We applaud the Associated board and administration for its leadership."

A16-member transition team, consisting of representatives from She'arim, other Jewish day schools, UJA Federation and the Mercaz is receiving advice from Dr. Sandra Giddens, a respected special education expert. The team, in consultation with parents, is finding an appropriate school option for every She'arim child. Fifty-two She'arim students require placement next year.

She'arim will be closing because of severe financial problems, after the school's board concluded that a large deficit and declining enrolment prevented the school from operating.



Associated Hebrew Schools has approved, in principle, the placement of Grades 3-6 children from She'arim next year.

Call of the Shofar!

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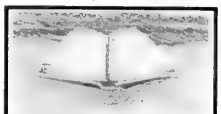
Jewish Life

The hidden spark in every Jew

By RABBI AVRAHAM E. PLOTKIN

On my recent trip to Ukraine to celebrate the birthday of my father, I met Sasha, a fellow emissary of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and a student of my father. Sasha's job is to visit Jews in the most remote corners of Ukraine and reconnect them to their roots. He related to me the following story:



Rabbinic Reflections

"I recently received a strange phone call from a mining company that was digging near Anipoli, a small town in western Ukraine. They claimed to have discovered what appeared to be a mass Jewish grave from the Holocaust. At once, I dropped everything I was doing and contacted the chevra kadisha in Jerusalem, who immediately dispatched a delegation of rabbis to confirm this and help organize a proper burial and monument for these martyrs. A few weeks later, we decided to follow up with a Shabbaton for the relatives, to honour the memory of the martyrs. I brought along with me a group of young yeshiva boys from Kiev, plenty of kosher food and a portable ark with a Torah. It turned out to be a very moving Shabbat indeed, even beyond our wildest dreams."

Sasha explained: "Among the many people who attended this Shabbaton was an elderly gentleman who refused to participate in any of the religious aspects of our program. At the Shabbat afternoon services, I saw him sitting alone with his family, on the other side of the room, without a kippah. I called him up for an aliyah to the Torah, and, as expected, he refused.

"I really don't know what possessed me, but I literally took the man by his the arm and escorted him up to the bimah. I then asked him for his Hebrew name. He said that he couldn't remember, but if it helped, his Ukrainian name was Vasilly. I called him up by that name. He then said the appropriate blessings with some help from me. Just as I started to make the *Mi Sheberach* prayer for him, I noticed that the man was crying uncontrollably. I asked him what was wrong and he responded in a choked voice that after so many years he suddenly remembered his Hebrew name. It was Azriel, the name his grandfather, the rabbi of the town, gave him at his bris.

"'You know" he said, 'my Zaide was the first one to be shot by those murderous Nazis. I remember it like today. They gathered our whole town into the square. I was then only 12 years old, just before my bar mitzvah. I was very lucky. I had just drunk a bottle of water and was granted permission to relieve myself behind some trees. From behind those trees, I watched how they shot everyone. No one was spared. My Zaide was first, because he was the rabbi. The rest of my family followed. After they finished, I was left in this world all alone, wandering through the forests…'

"'After the war I returned to my hometown but unfortunately, with no Jewish community left, I gave up my Jewish heritage, married out of the faith and raised a non–Jewish family. When I heard about the discovery of the grave, which more than likely has my family buried in it, an incredible feeling of longing for my family and my past engulfed me. I needed to make that connection once again. I even agreed to attend your program with my family.

"'A whole Shabbos I was struggling with my Jewish past and my identity. Who am I? Am I the Jew of my past or the Ukrainian of the present? Then when you called me up to the Torah and asked me for my Jewish name, it all came back to me. The floodgates of my past were opened. My Zaide, my Hebrew name Azriel, and the bar mitzvah that I prepared for but never happened, all flashed in front of my face. I knew that I belonged to my people.'"

Sasha concluded: "I then told 'Azriel' that he should treat this aliyah as his bar mitzvah. 'Surely, your zaide is very proud of you today,' I told him. He hugged me as tears were rolling down his face. I think they were tears of immense joy.

"You see," Sasha said, "one should never underestimate the soul of a fellow Jew, even one that has drifted away for many years. We need just to provide the match. The spark is already there!"

"By the way," I asked Sasha as he finished his amazing story. "When did this story happen?"

"Three weeks ago."

"Are you sure?"

"Yes, of course. Why do you ask?"

Now it was my turn to cry: "My first grandson was born exactly three weeks ago and we named him Binyomin Azriel!"

Rabbi Avraham E. Plotkin is spiritual leader of Chabad Lubavitch of Markham.

I've grown, and so has Toronto

IDEAS ON IDENTITY

By Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

Next week, I will receive an honorary doctorate from my seminary, the Hebrew Union College. All graduates are awarded this honour upon completing 25 years in the active rabbinate (or, some say, upon surviving 25 years of the rabbinate). This occasion has given me pause to reflect, not only upon my own growth and change as a rabbi, but upon the tremendous changes I have seen in Toronto over those years.

I arrived here in 1983, straight from my ordination, as the assistant rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple. I was the only female rabbi in the whole country until 1986, when I left briefly for my own pulpit in Boston. I came back in 1991 to establish Kolel, and I've been here ever since. This is a different community than when I first came in 1983, that's for sure.

In 1983, I was definitely an exotic specimen. People would come to Holy Blossom just to "see" a female rabbi. Reform Jews, proud of their liberalism, still politely "requested" that I not officiate at their family events. The Conservative synagogues didn't know what to do with me, since their movement's flagship Jewish Theological Seminary had not yet begun to ordain its own female rabbis. (It actually started to do so later that very same year.) The Orthodox establishments waited quietly for the fad to pass, either for me to leave or for Kolel to fold.

I have some very fond memories of those days, and some very painful ones, too. At the floating singles congregation that I helped form together with a Conservative assistant rabbi, the months it "floated" to a Conservative shul, I was not allowed to ascend to the bimah to lead any part of the service. I was only allowed to read an English poem from the front row.

I think back on that now as I count among my friends and colleagues all the Conservative rabbis of this community, many of whom have invited me at one time or another in the past few years to give a guest sermon from their pulpits.

I think back on that now as I recall the wonderful Orthodox rabbis and teachers who have graced Kolel panels and classes with their learning and menschlichkeit. And I think about the day I was elected the first female president of the interdenominational Toronto Board of Rabbis. What a different welcome than in 1983!

Toronto has mellowed, and matured, and so have I. I still remember the words of my homiletics professor 25 years ago: "Your job as a rabbi is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable." That's not an easy thing to do in a community known for its traditionalism and its old-fashioned sensitivities. Twenty-five years ago, that seemed to be part of my job description. In truth, I feel blessed that Toronto has been so patient with me, and stretched its own envelope so much. This city now has 12 – more than a minyan! – female rabbis whose voices are those of authority in the Toronto community.

If you had told me that back in 1983, I wouldn't have believed it. Twenty-five years later, I share this honour from my seminary with the town I call home.

Jewish Life

Celebrating Israel is money well spent

Money Matters

By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

The *National Post* (April12) reported recently on the "despondency" facing the State of Israel as it gears up to celebrate 60 years of independence. I learned long ago not to take anything I read in a newspaper at face value, and while the messianic utopia hoped for with the establishment of the state is as far away as ever, the accomplishments of Israel and the Jewish people as a whole over the past 60 years are nothing short of miraculous.

Nonetheless, from a monetary point of view, the article raised an interesting question. Should Israel be spending millions of dollars celebrating this milestone when budget cuts have been made to such crucial areas such as education, social services and defence?

This is not a new question, and it's asked in one form or another on a daily basis by those who have the awesome responsibility of allocating public funds. While there may legitimately be different responses, the most dangerous one is *she'eino yodeah lishol*, referring to one who doesn't care to ask the question in the first place. As the issues are extremely complex, it behooves those of us who care deeply about our community to emulate the wise son who asks and continues to ask questions so that he can be properly educated on the important issues of the day.

However, a general approach to spending money to celebrate important milestones can be derived from the talmudic discussion regarding the poor and the seder. The Mishnah (in Pesachim 99b), rules that all must drink no less than four cups of wine – even the poorest of the poor, who don't have enough food for two meals.

This ruling is actually quite astonishing. Jewish law states that one may not spend more than 20 per cent of one's income to perform a biblical command. Thus, one who truly can't afford the expense is under no obligation to purchase, and in fact may be prohibited from buying, tfillin (one can always borrow from a friend), a lulav and etrog or even matzah. Surely for a rabbinic mitzvah, such as drinking the four cups of wine, the poor should be exempt. Is it not a waste of communal funds to provide for such "frivolities" with so many greater communal needs?

Yet Jewish law made an exception in this case. Pesach celebrates the formation of the Jewish nation. While the State of Israel may be approaching 60, the Jewish people is almost 3,400 years old, and our independence is celebrated at the seder.

Building a nation requires that special moments be noted by all. While financially ensuring that everyone has four cups of wine may not be the best use of communal funds, nation building is about a lot more than money.

Our sages declare that the obligation of *pirsumei nissa* (publicizing the miracle) requires us to go to extraordinary measures to fulfil this rabbinic law. The miracle of Jewish survival and prosperity is dependent on ensuring that rich and poor alike can publicly celebrate moments of great historical importance. It's no coincidence that we begin our seder, which is meant to be the most elaborate meal of the year, with an invitation to the poor.

The great genius of the Jewish people is demonstrated in our ability to celebrate, despite the many hardships that remain. Despite the great suffering and persecution throughout our many Diasporas, we continue to celebrate the great accomplishments of the Jewish nation. The State of Israel may have much to be concerned about, but there is much more to celebrate. The cost of such celebrations may not be the best use of funds, but it's an investment that should pay dividends for years to come.

Send comments to rabbbijay@torahinmotion.org.

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Mimouna and the web

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The Jewish Highway

Immediately after the end of Passover, when many Jews are preoccupied with putting away the dishes, Sephardi Jews from Morocco celebrate a much more beautiful tradition. They bid farewell to Passover and usher in Mimouna, a celebration of liberty, community values, friendship and hospitality.

Mimouna has a connection to the final day of Passover, when the Israelites reached the Red Sea. Many of the day's traditions reflect that connection, such as going to the beach and putting (sometimes live) fish on the table in remembrance of the splitting of the Red Sea. It is also a day when expensive clothes are worn and tables are decorated in silver in remembrance of the Egyptian coins that were washed up after their drowning in the sea. **[tinyurl.com/4t5guc]**

The SephardiConnection describes the day this way. In marked contrast with the seder night, when congregants hurried home from the synagogue to begin the Haggadah, congregants on Mimouna's eve take the time to greet each other at the evening service with the consecrated formula: "*tarbah* (success), the special Mimouna blessing – *Alallah Mimouna, ambarka mas'uda,* to drink a little mahya, [a honey-based drink] and stop on their way home." **[tinyurl.com/4ta2c7]**

"Traditional embroidered dress is worn by members of the household. A big banquet and feast are hosted by each household. Some believe that Mimouna represents a symbolic new beginning of freedom from slavery and so sweets are set out on a table with a white tablecloth decorated with flowers and wheat sheaves, which is the centrepiece of the Mimouna Day. In the sense of Mimouna being a new beginning, eating these sweets symbolizes a sweet year." **[tinyurl.com/24r3q]**

If you've never had the pleasure of participating in a Mimouna celebration, then you can do so vicariously as you watch a very lively gathering on YouTube. **[tinyurl.com/4xukvb]**

What about the origin of the name "Mimouna?" There are several theories. It may allude to the word *emunah* (faith). Perhaps the celebration can be traced to the anniversary of the death of Rabbi Maimon, the father of Maimonides. Others say it's derived from the Arabic word for wealth and good fortune (literally "protected by God," *ma'amoun*). **[tinyurl.com/6frhal]**

The holiday has adopted another very contemporary tradition as one site points out. "Mimouna has trickled into Israel's mainstream in past years and politicians, in particular, like to show up at feasts on the eve of outgoing Passover to have their pictures snapped as they break bread with celebrants." **[tinyurl.com/6c8em2]**

The preferable way to spend the day is at family picnics, at which tents are pitched in recognition of the biblical phrase, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob." What to pack for the picnic? If your mother never taught you any Mimouna recipes, the Kfar Olami site has a couple of suggestions. Couscous Hiloo is very sweet. It calls for couscous, sugar, cinnamon, raisins, dates, apricots, almonds and almond milk. For something pungent, try Moroccan Carrot Salad, which has carrots, garlic, paprika, hot pepper, lemon juice and olive oil. **[tinyurl.com/3ku5zk]** And since the holiday is a remembrance of the splitting of the Red Sea, fish is popular, including such dishes as Baked White Fish Moroccan-style. **[tinyurl.com/3jac7d]**

Israeli food and wine writer Daniel Rogov provides a recipe for *mofleta* (or *moufletta*), which is the first leavened bread eaten after the Passover holiday, and for Nougat Ice Cream with Honey and Figs, which calls for honey, sugar, figs and the "heaviest possible sweet cream." **[tinyurl.com/3ljynt]**

I was fascinated to learn that not only Moroccan Jews celebrate the end of Passover. Ashkenazi Jews have *Rumpelnacht* (German, pronounced "*Roompel-Nacht*"). "The meaning of this term is 'Night of transferring,' due to the packing and storing of the special Passover plates and cutlery and introducing back the regular 'chametz' stuff." **[tinyurl.com/6qxpx7]**

I wonder what the German is for my own family's post-Passover ritual – trudging to the bakery at two in the morning and waiting for the first batch of steaming bagels to emerge fresh from the oven.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Parents seek cure for child's rare genetic disorder

By MARCIE SOMERS
Special to The CJN

When Jacob Trossman was born, his parents immediately knew that something was wrong. When he emerged from his mother's womb, he was grey and his chest caved in whenever he breathed.

Jacob's cries didn't sound like a normal baby; instead, they resembled the braying of a donkey. And his eyes twitched uncontrollably.

It became clear within a few days after Jacob's birth that he would not have an ordinary life. "The one thing that stands out clearly in my mind is hearing somebody say, 'I've never seen this before.'" his mother, Marcy White, says.

For the first 10 months of his life, Jacob saw more than 20 specialists, who put him through many tests. He couldn't eat, had poor muscle control and paralyzed vocal chords. Eventually, doctors told White and her husband, Andrew Trossman, that a diagnosis might never be made.

This was unacceptable to White and Trossman, who embarked on a journey that would take them on a similar path of the parents in the Oscar-nominated movie *Lorenzo's Oil* – a film based on the true story of a boy who has a disease that is so rare that no one is working on a cure, so his parents vow to find one themselves.

Marcy White and her son Jacob Trossman

White and Trossman spent hours on the Internet and at the library trying to figure out what Jacob had, and they talked to many experts. White began reading medical textbooks. She jokingly refers to that time as her PhD in Jacob.

After months of research, they finally had a breakthrough. White was going through her family's medical history when she noticed that her mother's brothers died before their second birthdays, and she noticed the similarities between her deceased uncles and her son.

"They had the same symptoms – paralyzed vocal chords, breathing and reflux problems and the inability to keep food down," White says. She also discovered that her mother's cousin in Israel had a son with the same symptoms as Jacob.

At the time she came across those records, White was scheduled to meet with a genetic counsellor and a doctor who specializes in metabolic genetics. Armed with the new information, the doctors took another set of tests, and White and Trossman finally had their answer. Jacob had Pelizaeus-Merzbacher disease (PMD), a rare genetic disorder.

The disease is caused by the lack of myelin – a fatty covering that acts as an insulator on nerve fibres in the brain. PMD is degenerative, and there is no treatment or cure. Typically, people born with the disease have 15 to 20 years to live. Worldwide, it affects one in 500,000, mainly boys. Jacob is one of four known Canadians with PMD. It's fitting that the slogan for PMD is "it's rare, but it's everywhere."

Now that White and Trossman knew what Jacob had, they hit the books to find a cure. They travelled to medical conferences, met with dozens of specialists and even visited Germany in search of answers. Sadly, they were unable to get one.

Refusing to give up, in 2004, White heard about an experimental drug that acts as a myelin sheath replacement that was being tested for patients with spinal injuries but wasn't considered for PMD patients. White and Trossman thought that it might help Jacob and were able to enlist the help of Dr. Jim Garbern from Wayne State University in Detroit. They managed to convince him to test the drug on mice with a genetic disorder similar to PMD.

At first the results looked promising, but once again, they were faced with bad news. "Initially, the results looked great, but in the end they didn't end up being statistically significant," White says. Unfortunately for White and her husband, this meant that without the proper results, it was going to be nearly impossible for them to get doctors in Canada to continue with the research.

"It's incredibly difficult to get doctor support to conduct research… We were hoping if Dr. Garben's research showed positive results, we could get doctors in Canada to further his work. Now with the negative result, it makes it even more challenging to find someone to do PMD research here," she says. "But we haven't given up," she adds.

She continues to search for a cure and is in touch with doctors in the United States and Europe. Although there is some interest by the research community, there is no sense of urgency. "It's not the same as being a parent watching your child slowly decline – Jacob is a ticking time bomb," she says.

As White puts it, "if we don't do it, no one will."

For more information or to contact Marcy White, visit www.curepmd.com.

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פון אַלעק סילווער

די צייטונג וועט אייך דערגרייכן אין חול המועד. מיר האָפֿן, אַז די ערשטע טעג זיינען אַדורך מיט פרייד. די מאַמעס און באָבעס זיינען זיכער צופֿרידן, וואָס זייערע מאכלים האָבן אויסגענומען ביי דער משפּחה.

מיר געדענקען, ווי פאַר פּסח האָט דער טאַטע אַרויסגענומען דעם כּוס, וועלכער איז געווען אויסגע־פּאַקט אין אַ ספּעציעלן כשר לפּסח האַנטוכל. מען האָט דעם כּוס געפּרוּפט ביז מען האָט זיך אין אים נעקענט שפּיגלען. מען האָט אים אָדורעקגעשטעלט אויף אַ ספּע־ציעלע זילבערנע „פּאַדסטאַווקע". מען האָט געמאַסטן, אַז ער זאָל שטיין פֿונקט אין מיטן טיש.

אין אונדזערע יונגטעלעכע געדאַנקען האָבן מיר גע־זען אַ בילד פון אַ היכן ייִד מיט אַ לאַנגער, ווייסער באָרד און אין האַנט אַ לאַנגן שטעקן. מיר האָבן פאַר־שטאַנען, אַז נאָר דורך ניסים, קען אליהו באָוויזן צו קומען אין יעדער ייִדישער שטוב און געבן אַ זופּ פון דעם כּוס אויפֿן טיש. מיר האָבן מיט שרין פאַרשלאָפענע אויגן געהאַלטן אונדזער בליק צו זען אויב ער וועט אויפגעהויבן. אין שטענדיק האָט אויסגעזען, ווי פון אויבן האָבן געפּעלט עטלעכע טראָפּנס ווייַן. אזוי ארום האָבן מיר געווווסט, אַז דער נביא איז געווען אין אונדזער הויז אין פּאַרזוכט אונדזער ווייַן.

צופֿרידענע זיינען מיר געוואָגענען שלאָפן וויסנדיק, אַז אינער אונדזער הויז שוועבט אַ נביא, אַ מלאך, וועלכער וועט נישט דערלאָזן, אַז עס זאָל חלילה, עפּעס שלעכטס דאָ געשען. מיר האָבן געזען אליהון, ווי אַ טייל פון אונדזערע פאַנטאַזיעס. לכבוד דעם יום־טוב פּסח דרוקן מיר אינער אַן אַלטע פאַעמע, וואָס איז תּמיד געווען אין אונדזערע יונגטעלעכע פאַנטאַזיעס.

דער אורח ביים סדר

פון אברהם רייזען

דער שענסטער כּוס פון אַלע איז געווען אליהוס,
דער טאַטע פלעגט דעם כּוס אַליין צום סדר גרייטן.
עס איז נעווען אַ כּוס נעמאַלט אין שיינע קוייטן —
מען האָט אים ניט פאַרביטן, ניט געמאַכט קיין טעות.

דער טאַטע פלעגט אים אַנגיסן הויך צו די ברענז!
אין פאַרזיכטיק און מילד אַזוי פלעגט ער אים גיסן,
דעם פּינעם וויין, פון ראָזשינקעס, דעם זיסן,
פאַר אליהון אַלע, פאַר זיינעם וועגן . . .

די קינדער פלעגן אין געדאַנקען וווייט פאַרזינקען,
די שפּיל איז זיי נעווען אַזוי געפּעלן;
ניט מער — זיי וואָלטן זען בלויז אייגמאַל וועלן,
ווי אליהו קומט פון אַ כּוס אַ ביסל טרינקען . . .

אַן איין מאָל האָט מיטעלבראָט פון שול דער טאַטע
אַן אורח, וואָס מען האָט נעבעטן אים צום סדר,
ער איז נעווען נעקלידט אין אַדערשדיקע קליידער —
די בּאָרד אַ לאַנגע, גראָע אין די אויגן מאַטע.

מען האָט אַ כּוס געשטעלט פאַר אים, ווי ס'פאַסט פאַר ליימן.
ניט וויַיט פון אליהוס כּוס, אין טיש אין מיטן,
מען האָט צו יעדן מאָל נעדאַרפט אים היטן
ער זאָל, חלילה, ניט זיין כּוס פאַרביטן . . .

אין נאָכן סדר איז דער אורח שטיל פאַרשוווּנדן,
באַטראַכט האָט יעדערער די פּוסות אין דעם שיסל —
מען זעט עס פעלט פון אליהוס כּוס אַ ביסל —
אין דעם אורחס אָבער פול אין רויט נעצונדן . . .

דער טאַטע האָט נעשמייכלט מיט הנאה,
די מאַמע איז פאַרחלומט אַרומגענאַנגען,
אין מיר, די קינדער, האָבן ווי נעהערט נעוואָגענען
אין נעזען ווי ס'שוועבט דער אורח־אליהו!

Online journal looks at Jewish women's issues

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Dina Ripsman Eylon, founder and editor of the feminist online journal *Women in Judaism: A Multidisciplinary Journal* calls it her labour of love.

Founded 11 years ago, the journal, at www.womeninjudaism.org, is devoted to scholarly debate on gender-related issues in Judaism.

A Israeli native who has been here 27 years, Eylon is a writer and mother of three adult children who teaches Hebrew at the University of Toronto. She received her PhD at U of T in Near and Middle Eastern civilizations.

The journal, she said, is intended to discuss and bring to the forefront gender inequalities within Jewish religion, culture and society, both ancient and modern.

The seeds of the journal were planted, she said, when she was living in Israel and doing research for an article on women in the military in pre-state Israel.

"It dawned on me that despite the fact that [certain women] were instrumental in military organizations, nothing was mentioned in the history books or textbooks of the period. Growing up in Israel in the '60s and '70s, I was not aware of any women except for Rachel Yanait Ben-Zvi, the wife of the second president of Israel," Eylon said.

"This realization hit me hard. I decided that I needed to take some action to rectify the situation."

When she started the journal, she said, the Internet was just coming into the mainstream. "I was a trendsetter. I didn't have the funds to publish a print journal, which would have a limited audience. By being online – the site is hosted by U of T– millions of people can access it."

As well as featuring works by prominent scholars, Eylon said, she also promotes young and emerging scholars, and she makes it a priority to "give voice to materials that would never by published by 'malestream' Jewish periodicals. We welcome a diversity of points of view, conflicting or harmonizing, in order to develop a genuine dialogue."

Submissions – the journal comes out twice a year – can include book and film reviews, biographical and academic essays, and fiction such as short stories or poetry.

The journal has male readers and non-Jewish readers, and they are welcome to contribute, "as long as their work serves our purpose. By reaching out to Jewish and non-Jewish men and women alike, I know that we are able to bring on a change," she said.

"We have guidelines on our site for those who want to contribute, and every article goes through a blind review process. There are 60 people on the editorial board, and they all work for free."

She feels fulfilled every time a new issue comes out, she said. "I feel that years of contemplation, introspection and ideological formation stand behind every published word."

She puts a lot of time into the journal, she said, "but I love it. It is a service to the community."

When she started it 11 years ago, she had to solicit articles, "but now that the journal has taken off my in box is full of submissions. I have enough to fill at least the next two or three issues."

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Diabetes epidemic spreading, scientist says

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

There is not just an epidemic of diabetes in the western world, but that epidemic is spreading even to non-developed countries, says Michael Walker, a professor in the department of biological chemistry at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot.

One out of 12 people in the western world suffers from Type 2 diabetes, previously called adult onset diabetes, with 150 million worldwide, a number that is expected to double in the next 20 years, Walker said at a program sponsored by Mount Sinai Hospital and Weizmann Women and Science, held at the Oakdale Golf & Country Club.

Scientists believe these statistics are due to the growing incidence of obesity, he said.

However, researchers are puzzled about why there is a correlation between excess body fat and diabetes, he added.

Normally, Walker said, the body successfully and efficiently maintains a stable body chemistry. The pancreas, which is attached to the wall of the small intestine behind the stomach, produces insulin. Cells called beta cells pump the insulin into the blood stream, where it controls the level of glucose and carries it throughout the body. All of the body's cells need glucose to function.

In Type 1 diabetes, which used to be called juvenile onset diabetes, this cell system is destroyed by the immune system, but "we are not sure why this happens," he said.

Michael Walker

In Type 2, on the other hand, the pancreas does produce insulin, but the body is unable to use it.

Walker said, however, that today, adults are developing Type 1 diabetes, and some children are developing Type 2. This appears to be caused by the levels of obesity, he added. The question, though, is why some obese people develop diabetes and some don't.

There is no cure for diabetes, Walker stressed. "We can only treat the symptoms, but we can't reverse the damage that has already been done. We can't make people 'normal.' We can only make their bodies do what they are supposed to do naturally."

There are several treatments currently being used or researched. Pancreatic transplantation would be a cure, but it is major surgery, lasting about eight hours, it is not always successful and as with all organ transplants, there are never enough donors.

Researchers at the University of Alberta are studying transplanting the islets of Langerhans, clusters of cells in the pancreas that include insulin-producing cells, Walker said. It is a much simpler surgery, he said, but again, the effects frequently don't appear to be permanent, and there is a shortage of donors.

In his lab at the Weizmann Institute, Walker is studying the cells that produce and store insulin until it is needed: "What switches cell activity on and off? Can we use embryonic stem cells to manipulate the process?"

Other research is focusing on improved forms of insulin, how the insulin-producing cells are destroyed in Type 1 diabetes, and the use of pig islets for transplantation.

George Fantas, associate dean of research and director of the division of of endocrinology and metabolism at Mount Sinai Hospital, said that in Canada, five to 10 per cent of the population, about three million people, have Type 2 diabetes, largely because they are overweight, sedentary and have a family history.

Other triggers are a high waist circumference, high blood pressure and high levels of triglycerides in the blood.

Complications, including blindness, kidney and nerve damage, heart conditions and amputations, contribute to about 10 per cent of the health-care budget, Fantas said.

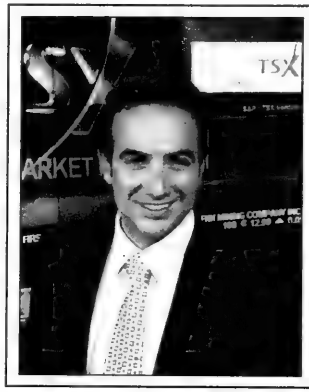
Even in underdeveloped countries, the incidence of diabetes is rising, as people there embrace western lifestyles, including less physical activity, poor nutrition and increased stress.

Jennifer Sampson, clinical dietitian at the Leadership Sinai Centre for Diabetes at Mount Sinai Hospital, stressed the importance of maintaining a healthy diet, even when losing weight.

She warned against diets that promise quick weight loss (a healthy weight loss is two to four pounds a week), limited selection of foods, testimonials from celebrities and cure-alls.

A diet should include all the food groups, including carbohydrates, lots of fish, fruits and vegetables, Sampson said.

She also advised exercise – 60 minutes of light exercise daily, or 150 minutes per week of moderate exercise.



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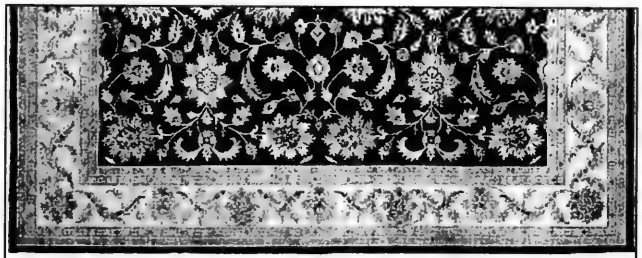

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Amanda's Lemonade Stand hopes to raise $100,000

By RACHEL BARSKY
Special to The CJN

For Amanda Belzowski, having a lemonade stand is more than just a fun way to earn some spending money – it's a way to save lives.

To date, 10-year-old Amanda has raised almost $60,000 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation through her annual lemonade stands. She hopes to raise $100,000 this year, her 10th anniversary event.

Amanda said she was inspired to get involved with the Heart and Stroke Foundation because her grandmother and great-grandfather both received artificial heart valves, and she wants to help others affected by heart disease and stroke.

Her great-grandfather, David (Puppy) Dale, was counting down the days to Amanda's 10th lemonade stand this May, but he died in December. "I want to raise $100,000 for my great-grandfather," Amanda says. "It's a lot, but I'm doing it."

Heart and stroke conditions affect everyone, including kids, with one in 100 kids diagnosed with heart disease, the fifth-grade United Synagogue Day School student says.

This year will be the second that 100 per cent of her lemonade-stand profits will be going directly to pediatric heart and stroke research. Her mom, Lisa, says that much of the research is being done at the Hospital for Sick Children.

Amanda hopes that a group of kids from SickKids with heart problems or stroke will be able to come to her lemonade stand this year. "It's a lot of fun," she says.

The fundraiser will be better than ever, with Lionel's Pony Farm rides; a Dan the Music Man concert; crafts from World Star Entertainment; Richtree Market Restaurant pizza; corn on the cob by cornonthecob.ca; Mini Melt's ice cream; and lots of food (and of course, lemonade) donated by Dominion. Actors from YTV's upcoming movie *King of the Camp* will be on hand to sign autographs and give out free CDs.

Amanda is excited about this year's auction items, including special packages from Donald Trump, whom Amanda met last year; Toronto Argonauts CEO Michael (Pinball) Clemens, who may attend the event; and David Copperfield. The magician has donated tickets to his secret warehouse in Las Vegas, with a backstage tour and meet-and-greet included. Collectables from the Toronto Maple Leafs, the Raptors, and Animation Connection will also be among the auction items.

Amanda expects hundreds of people to come out this year, as they did last time, and says "every cent counts." But $100,000 is a lot of money, and so far, everything Amanda has raised has been without corporate sponsorship.

"I really need corporate sponsors this year," she says. "If they call, I'll set up a business meeting. I really like to do those."

Amanda offers advertising for businesses on her flyers, website and banner. Organizations, or individuals, can donate online at www.lemonade4heart.org and can sponsor Amanda for the June 1 Ride for Heart and Stroke through her website, too. Her e-mail address is amandaslemonade@sympatico.ca. Tax receipts for donations are available.

Amanda's efforts have been met by tremendous support from the community, says her mom, who wanted to teach her children to help when they can. "A part of the Jewish upbringing is to give back."

Amanda's two-year-old brother, Joshua, will be helping out as her apprentice, but she is not too sure how that will work out. "Last year, all he did was eat the profit – he ate all the cookies. This year, he'll probably do the same thing, but I'm urging him not to."

For Amanda, the most important thing is "fixing kids whose hearts are broken one glass of lemonade at a time," she says. "This year, I want to do it one gallon at a time."

Amanda's 10th Anniversary Lemonade Stand takes place May 4, 11 a.m to 2 p.m., at 10 Brian Cliff Dr., in the Lawrence Avenue and Leslie Street area.

Amanda Belzowski, who is organizing her 10th annual Lemonade Stand fundraiser for the Heart and Stroke Foundation, with magician David Copperfield

Coming to Toronto

Caroline Glick
Deputy Managing Editor, Jerusalem Post

Monday, May 5, 8:00 pm
Holy Blossom Temple, 1950 Bathurst St.

Israel & The Global Jihad

Caroline Glick is a passionate and eloquent analyst, with a global following, whose pointed commentaries on Israel's political and security situation are widely read by hundreds of thousands of readers around the world. She is also a frequent radio and TV commentator for notable networks in the US, Britain, Australia and Israel. A core member of Israel's negotiating team with the Palestinians from 1994-1996, Caroline Glick was an embedded journalist with the U.S. army during the Iraq War and one of the first to reach Baghdad.

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AG AL GREEN THEATRE
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COMEDY ON WRY: THE MAVERICKS

OPENING NIGHT FILM SATURDAY MAY 3

9:30 PM BC NOODLE
Attempts of Israeli woman to reunite her Chinese domestic with her young son.

SUNDAY MAY 4

11 AM BC SHARON, LOIS & BRAM: 25 YEARS OF SKINNAMARINK
Tribute to Sharon, Lois & Bram, who will appear live before and after showing of anniversary concert film.

11 AM AG AT HOME IN UTOPIA
In the 1920s, Jewish garment workers built four apartment complexes and a communal life amidst the greenery of the Bronx.

1 PM BC ANNE AND THE REVEREND
Japanese minister built Holocaust museum in Japan in memory of Anne Frank.

1 PM AG MAX MINSKY AND ME
A studious 13-year-old Jewish girl preparing for her Bat Mitzvah calls on 16-year-old Max Minsky to help hone her basketball skills.

1 PM SG GLOOMY SUNDAY
Gloomy Sunday is a haunting song, a moving film and a perennial audience favourite.

3:30 PM BC ORTHODOX STANCE
Young Russian immigrant to the United States pursues a boxing career while remaining true to his Orthodox Judaism.

3:30 PM AG NICHOLS AND MAY: TAKE TWO
Excellent documentary includes complete sketches by the brilliant comedy team of Mike Nichols and Elaine May.

3:30 PM SG MY MEXICAN SHIVA
After Moishe's sudden death, his dysfunctional family and his friends gather to sit shiva. You will laugh through your tears!

6 PM BC PAYING FOR JUSTICE
The heartbreaking story of elderly Holocaust survivors in Israel who live in poverty and squalor.

6 PM AG RALPH BENMERGUI: MY ISRAEL
Radio and television personality, Ralph Benmergui, takes the viewers on a personal journey to Israel.

6 PM SG AVIVA MY LOVE
A talented woman supports her family as a cook but dreams of success as a writer.

8:30 PM BC BEAUFORT
A group of Israeli soldiers under constant rocket and missile attack wait to be evacuated from a mountain fortress.

8:30 PM AG JACKIE MASON: THE ULTIMATE JEW
Filmmaker Barry Avrich's documentary record of controversial comedian Jackie Mason and his "farewell" 2008 New York show.

8:30 PM SG VA, VIS ET DEVIENS
The story of a boy who poses as an Ethiopian Jew in order to be airlifted to Israel from a refugee camp in the Sudan.

MONDAY MAY 5

NOON AG STEAL A PENCIL FOR ME
Jack Polak himself says, "I was in the camps with my wife and my girlfriend; and believe me, it wasn't easy."

1 PM BC TEHILIM
When a father mysteriously disappears the entire family is forced to deal with his absence.

1 PM SG A HEBREW LESSON
A glimpse of the lives of a group of immigrants studying Hebrew in Israel.

2 PM AG ERNST LUBITSCH IN BERLIN
This portrait of the legendary Hollywood director, who started his career as a comedian, includes archival footage of the Jewish character Lubitsch created.

3:30 PM BC A SLIM PEACE
When a group of Israelis, Palestinians, Bedouin Arabs and American settlers are brought together to lose weight, they find they have much in common.

3:30 PM SG AT HOME IN UTOPIA
(See 11 AM AG Sunday May 4)

5 PM AG IT'S NOT IN HEAVEN: THE COMEDY OF YISRAEL CAMPBELL aka CIRCUMCISE ME
Christopher Campbell, American Catholic, became Yisrael Campbell, Orthodox Jew, and one of the most popular stand-up comics in Jerusalem.

6 PM SG PRAYING WITH LIOR
This tender documentary follows a young boy with Down Syndrome on his journey towards his Bar Mitzvah.

6:15 PM BC MR. WARMTH: THE DON RICKLES PROJECT
A star-studded homage to the comedian/actor whose particular brand of insult humour magically attracts reverence.

7 PM AG A TOUCH AWAY – Part 1
A popular Israeli TV miniseries about a Russian immigrant who falls in love with the daughter of his religious neighbour. Presented in two parts.

8:30 PM BC BAD FAITH
Can a Jewish woman and an Arab man fall in love and live happily ever after?

8:30 PM SG NOODLE
(See 9:30 PM BC Saturday May 3)

10:30 PM AG JERUSALEM IS PROUD TO PRESENT
World Pride celebrations in Jerusalem during the summer of 2006 were disrupted by threats from religious authorities.

TUESDAY MAY 6

NOON AG BETWEEN TWO NOTES
Shows how Jewish and Arab music influence each other and asks whether Mizrahi music can be a bridge between the two cultures.

1 PM BC A NEW LEAF ●
A gem of a romantic comedy about a high-living playboy, who sees his ticket back to wealth in the guise of a socially awkward botanist.

1 PM SG STEAL A PENCIL FOR ME
(See NOON AG Monday May 5)

2:30 PM AG SHIELD OF SOLOMON
The story of four refugees from Darfur who have found sanctuary in the most unlikely place in the world – Israel.

3:30 PM BC OPERATION MURAL CASABLANCA 1961
Mossad operation to rescue Jewish children from Morocco in 1961 and bring them to safety in Israel. A hero for our times!

3:30 PM SG ORTHODOX STANCE
(See 3:30 PM BC Sunday May 4)

5 PM AG SKATE TO SURVIVE
Canadian figure skating coach and choreographer Ellen Burka is spotlighted in this story of survival and the rebuilding of a life.

6 PM BC ARTHUR SZYK ILLUMINATOR
One of the greatest miniaturists of the 20th Century, Arthur Szyk began drawing at age 4 and during World War II became famous for his anti-Nazi caricatures.

6 PM SG MAX MINSKY AND ME
(See 1 PM AG Sunday May 4)

7:30 PM AG MY OPPOSITION: THE DIARIES OF FRIEDRICH KELLNER
Young man uncovers his grandfather's attempts to oppose totalitarian policies of Nazis.

8:30 PM SG NO EXIT
Go behind the scenes of an Israeli television reality series that requires new and ever more outrageous gimmicks to continue drawing viewers.

8:45 PM BC THE SECRETS
Two brilliant young women enter a religious seminary and encounter the modern world and some of its temptations as their faith is tested.

10 PM AG MORT SAHL: THE LOYAL OPPOSITION ●
Follows the career of the comedian who pioneered a form of critical satire that inspired Lenny Bruce, Nichols and May, Woody Allen and many others.

WEDNESDAY MAY 7

NOON AG FATHERLAND
How a German-born father deals with racism when his son asks questions about the Holocaust and his own background.

1 PM BC MAHARAL
Three children are on a treasure hunt that leads them to the mysterious places of old Prague.

1 PM SG ANNE AND THE REVEREND
(See 1 PM BC Sunday May 4)

2:30 PM AG CHILDREN OF TEHERAN
Rescue of 700 Jewish children by emissaries of the Jewish Agency during the depths of World War II.

3:30 PM BC STEALING KLIMT
Struggle by Maria Altmann to recover five paintings by Gustav Klimt owned by her family in Vienna and stolen by the Nazis.

3:30 PM SG BAD FAITH
(See 8:30 PM BC Monday May 4)

5 PM AG THE WORLD WAS OURS
This film focuses on the pre-World War II life in Jewish Vilna, which was often called "The Jerusalem of Lithuania."

6 PM BC SIXTY-SIX
If Bernie's Bar Mitzvah and the World Cup of soccer coincide, will anyone attend Bernie's affair?

6 PM SG TEHELIM
(See 1 PM BC Monday May 5)

7:30 PM AG ARAB LABOR ●
This hilarious, hit television sitcom, centres on the life of an Arab journalist who works for a Hebrew newspaper in Jerusalem.

8:30 PM BC TO SEE IF I'M SMILING
Four female Israeli soldiers serving in the West Bank tell their stories of psychological stress and its after-effects.

8:30 PM SG JERUSALEM IS PROUD TO PRESENT
(See 10:30 PM AG Monday May 5)

10 PM AG STALAGS: HOLOCAUST AND PORNOGRAPHY IN ISRAEL
Stalags were pocketbooks written in the 1960s that told stories about lusty female SS officers sexually abusing camp prisoners. *Warning: Some graphic content.*

THURSDAY MAY 8

NOON AG THE HOUSE ON AUGUST STREET
In 1922, in Berlin, Beate Berger created a home for Jewish children in need, and had the foresight to save her children from the Nazis.

1 PM BC MAKING TROUBLE ●
A profile of six remarkable Jewish women in comedy who were role models in a male dominated industry – Molly Picon, Fanny Brice, Sophie Tucker, Gilda Radner, Joan Rivers and Wendy Wasserstein.

1 PM SG ARTHUR SZYK ILLUMINATOR
(See 6 PM BC Tuesday May 6)

2:30 PM AG QUEST FOR THE MISSING PIECE
To circumcise or not to circumcise? That is the question.

3:30 PM BC RABIN-PERES: EVERYTHING IS PERSONAL
Titanic struggle between Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres to attain the top position in the Israeli political system.

3:30 PM SG SHIELD OF SOLOMON
(See 2:30 PM AG Tuesday May 6)

4:30 PM AG MATZO & MISTLETOE
Struggle many American Jews encounter with their Jewish identity.

6 PM BC MY FATHER MY LORD
This film explores the conflict between the demands of a man's religion versus his obligations to his family.

6 PM SG MAHARAL
(See 1 PM BC Wednesday May 7)

7 PM AG A TOUCH AWAY – Part 2
(See 7 PM AG Monday May 5)

8 PM BC JELLYFISH
Woven together from perfectly framed vignettes, Jellyfish is a poignant cinematic meditation on the absurdities of life.

8:30 PM SG THE SECRETS
(See 8:45 PM BC Tuesday May 6)

10 PM BC WILL EISNER: PORTRAIT OF A SEQUENTIAL ARTIST ●
A wonderful documentary profile of the creator of the graphic novel and the most influential comic artist of all time.

10:30 PM AG FROZEN DAYS
Woman takes over the identity of a man injured in a terrorist attack. *Warning: sexual content.*

FRIDAY MAY 9

NOON AG THE GOLDBERGS ●
From her Bronx tenement flat, the beloved Molly dispenses wisdom and advice while nurturing her Jewish family. Episodes of the original TV series, starring Gertrude Berg.

1 PM BC ARRANGED
A sweet comedy about two young women who are going through the process of having marriages arranged by their families.

1 PM SG SIXTY-SIX
(See 6 PM BC Wednesday May 7)

2:30 PM AG DANNY KAYE: A LEGACY OF LAUGHTER ●
Danny Kaye's unique style, playfulness and proficiency in every area of entertainment – song, dance, film acting, and television variety, have endeared him to generations.

3:30 PM BC DANS LA VIE
French comedy about an Arab woman who is hired to care for an elderly Jewish woman and the friendship they form.

3:30 PM SG MY FATHER MY LORD
(See 6 PM BC Thursday May 8)

5 PM AG TO BE OR NOT TO BE ●
A comedy classic starring Jack Benny and Carole Lombard as the leaders of a theatre troupe who get mixed up in intrigue and espionage in Nazi occupied Poland.

SATURDAY MAY 10

9:15 PM BC UN SECRET
French film about guilt and the failure of the French to protect their Jewish citizens during World War II.

9:15 PM AG LENNY ●
A rarely-shown 1974 biopic about the legendary Lenny Bruce featuring Dustin Hoffman in the title role. *Warning: sexual content and coarse language.*

11:30 PM BC WRISTCUTTERS: A LOVE STORY ●
An offbeat, dark comedy set in an afterlife reserved for people who committed suicide.

SUNDAY MAY 11

11 AM BC THE LIGHT AHEAD
This classic American Yiddish film is both a fierce attack on shtetl life and a deeply romantic tale set in a small-town.

11 AM AG THE CHAMPAGNE SPY
Story of one of Israel's greatest spies who thwarted Egyptian efforts to develop a missile threat against Israel.

1 PM BC HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN ●
Danny Kaye stars as the Danish storyteller whose beloved tales have charmed children for generations

1 PM SG DANS LA VIE
(See 3:30 PM BC Friday May 9)

2 PM AG THE FIRST BASKET
A documentary about the early days of basketball and how it grew from a Jewish game to one that is enjoyed around the world.

3:30 PM BC THE POWDER AND THE GLORY
Story of the founding of the cosmetics industry by rivals Helena Rubinstein and Elizabeth Arden.

3:30 PM SG A TOUCH AWAY – Part 1
(See 7 PM AG Monday May 5)

5 PM AG CAESAR'S WRITERS ●
Mel Brooks, Carl Reiner, Neil Simon, and the master, Sid Caesar himself, let viewers in on the hilarious, behind-the-scenes comedy brilliance of "Your Show of Shows."

6 PM BC BLESSED IS THE MATCH: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF HANNAH SENESH
The true story of Hannah Senesh, who parachuted into occupied Europe in an attempt to help the beleaguered Jewish community of Hungary.

6 PM SG A TOUCH AWAY – Part 2
(See 7 PM AG Monday May 5)

CLOSING NIGHT FILM SUNDAY MAY11

8:30 PM BC PETE SEEGER: THE POWER OF SONG
The story of music innovator and social activist Pete Seeger.

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Israel at 60: A Celebration
8:30 Shacharit followed by a catered breakfast
Sunday, May 4, 2008
DVD presentation of
Eagles Over Auschwitz
the compelling story of
the historic flyover of Auschwitz-Birkenau by three
Israeli F-15's
Alex Sereta will speak about Israel: Yesterday to Today
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Beth Sholom Synagogue
1445 Eglinton Ave. W. (across from Eglinton West Subway)

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Unicorn Dream Dinner
Tuesday, May 6th, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.
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KEY EVENT — Fine Jewellery by Colette; Karats Fine Jewellery; Mark Lash
MOUNT SINAI HOSPITAL
Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Health Complex

On Campus

Birthright Israel gets $17.5 million gift

JTA

The Jim Joseph Foundation is giving $17.5 million to the Birthright Israel Foundation.

Much of the gift, $12.5 million, will be used for programming for alumni, Birthright announced last week.

Alumni programming to benefit greatly

The remaining $5 million will go to support the free 10-day trips to Israel for 18- to 25-year-old Jews.

It was the largest gift by the San Francisco-based Joseph foundation since it started making grants last year.

Birthright has sent some 160,000 Jews to Israel since the program started in 2000, but considerable debate has focused on how effective the trips are in terms of building Jewish identity because there is little follow-up programming for participants.

In a news release, the Birthright foundation said the $12.5 million matching grant will be used to create peer communities for Birthright alumni through "Birthright Israel NEXT," which will train young adults to help create 15 communities in areas with high concentrations of Birthright alumni.

The program, which will cost $25 million, also will offer programming and opportunities for Jewish involvement.

"Rather than feeling lost in a large Jewish community made up of organizations that are not typically tailored to their needs, Taglit-Birthright Israel alumni will now be empowered by small peer-based communities that fit with their lifestyles," said Susie Gelman, chair of the Birthright Israel Foundation.

"In these communities, the strong connections to Israel that are sparked on the 10-day trip can be sustained and amplified."

Birthright estimates that 110,000 of its alumni are from North America.

Brandeis accepts 3 Toronto-based students for leadership program

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Three Toronto-based students are well on their way to being part of the next generation of Jewish leaders.

Since August, Aliza Goodman, Joshua Sternburg and Shira Zeliger have been in the process of obtaining their degrees in the dual master's program offered by the Hornstein Jewish Professional Leadership Program at Brandeis University, located in Waltham, Mass., near Boston.

Sternburg, 27 – who is originally from Pennsylvania, but was living in Toronto for five years working at the Union for Reform Judaism's Camp George – explained that there are two separate tracks Hornstein students can take.

"The track I am in is a MA/MBA program. I will graduate with an MA in Jewish professional leadership and an MBA in non-profit management. There is also a dual MA track in which students graduate with an MA in Jewish professional leadership and an MA in near eastern and Judaic studies," he said, adding that in the fall, Hornstein will offer a third track that will give students the opportunity to graduate with a master's in Jewish professional leadership combined with a master's in public policy.

Sternburg said that once he graduates in May 2009 from the five-semester, two-year program, he hopes to pursue a career as a Jewish camp director with two other students who are also currently in the Hornstein program.

"The program has done a great job supporting the three of us by allowing us to attend camping conferences, helping us secure meaningful summer internships, and Hornstein is in the process of developing a camping course with a curriculum specifically for us," he said.

Sternburg said he also enjoys the programs that are required in addition to regular course work.

Continued on page 31

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On Campus

Scholarships help cover annual tuition

Continued from page 30

"We have a number of leadership forums each semester in which we have the opportunity to meet local Jewish leaders and discuss current issues. This past February, we travelled to New York City for three days to meet with executives at the headquarters of several national Jewish organizations."

Aliza Goodman

Josh Sternburg

Shira Zeliger

Goodman, who grew up in Toronto, obtained her psychology degree from the University of Western Ontario. After graduating, she worked as a Steinhardt Jewish Campus Services Corps fellow at Illinois University and was actively involved with Hillel and Birthright Israel.

Goodman, 25, is currently enrolled in the same track as Sternburg – the MA/MBA track.

"I hope to be able to take both the Jewish training and business training that I receive at Brandeis and put it to good use within the Jewish professional world," she said.

"I am still figuring out exactly where I see myself in the future, as I have interests in a number of different areas, including Jewish camping, Israel education in North America, and fostering connections between American and Israeli Jewry."

Zeliger, 24, who is on the dual master's track, has a degree in education and Jewish studies from York University, and has held leadership positions with Hillel, as well as Kehilat Or Hadash, a Toronto-based, traditional minyan, and KOACH, a program that helps students develop connections to Conservative Judaism.

Although she is unsure about whether she'll return to Toronto, she plans to be part of a thriving Jewish community.

"I definitely see myself in a major Jewish city, either in North America, or potentially working in some Jewish organization for Jewish education in Israel, but definitely in the field of Jewish education."

The three students agreed that the program – directed by Prof. Jonathan Sarna, a renowned American Jewish historian – boasts an impressive faculty and curriculum.

"One of the elements that truly sets the program apart from others is the faculty. We have access to some of the brightest minds and leading researchers in the American Jewish community," Sternburg said.

"There are not many programs in the U.S. that offer both a master's with a focus on Jewish communal service and an MBA. The trend in the Jewish community is toward a business model, so this program provides us with the training we need to enter the Jewish non-profit world," Goodman said.

"Brandeis is a well-recognized university for Jewish studies, and they have world-class faculty and courses, which was a pull for me to go there," Zeliger said.

Another important aspect of the program is that scholarships covering all or part of the annual $36,000 tuition are available to each of the accepted students.

Zeliger, who was awarded a full two-year scholarship, said she wouldn't have been able to go to Brandeis without the funding.

"That is something that I'm very grateful for. It is remarkable that they have that kind of support within the Jewish philanthropic world to do that."

She added that the Hornstein program is very small, and this year, there are only about 20 students.

"It is a very intimate program. Everyone knows each other. The professors know the students very well, and there are social programs and retreats throughout the year that really help build relationships."

Zeliger said she is inspired by her peers who are "not just studying Jewish studies, but actually transforming Jewish life today."

Shaarei Shomayim Brotherhood Presents

CELEBRATING ISRAEL'S 60th ANNIVERSARY

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FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

As featured on onlysimchas!
Celebrating Jewish Life
www.onlysimchas.com

Mazel tov to Jeff (Yehuda) Dawson & Nicola Braham on your recent wedding.

Mazel tov on the recent marriage of Peter Miller & Valentina Di Veroli.

Mazel tov on the recent engagement of Michal Kalinsky & Yoni Frankel.

Mazel tov to Yonah (Matthew) Simon & Leah (Lila) Grafstein your recent engagement.

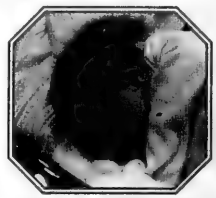
Mazel Tov

TO RYAN KIRSHENBLATT & JACQUELYN ABRAMOVITCH

on their recent engagement.

Overjoyed parents are Leslie & Marvin Kirshenblatt and Ellen & Sheldon Abramovitch of Montreal. Proud grandparents are Estelle Kirshenblatt, Louella Molot and Edie & Gerry Abramovitch. Remembered lovingly and sadly missed are Harry Kirshenblatt, Sol Molot & Evelyn & Myer Shrier. A fall wedding is planned.

Mazel tov to David Knoll & Rebecca (Kentor) Knoll on the birth of their son.



Mazel tov to Yaakov Yossie & Chaya Esther (Steger) Schachner on the birth of a baby girl.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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WHAT'S NEW DEADLINES: Monday, April 28 is the deadline for the May 8 issue and Monday, May 5 is the deadline for the May 15 issue issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, April 24

PASSOVER CONCERT

Holy Blossom Temple presents a Passover program, *Uprising* by Ballet Espressivo and **Srul Glick's** *Haggadah* performed by members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra Festival Quartet and the Holy Blossom Temple Singers under the direction of **Cantor Benjamin Maissner**. 8 p.m. Tickets $25, youth under 25 $15. For information call **Mari Lynn Rusak** at 416-789-3291, ext. 224 or visit www.holyblossom.org.

Friday, April 25

TOT SHABBAT

Temple Har Zion invites parents, and grandparents to bring children ages 2-4 and siblings for a Shabbat celebration. 6 p.m.

Sunday, April 27

OPEN HOUSE

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism hosts "Introduction to Humanistic Judaism: What We Believe and How We Celebrate" with **Karen Levy** and **Lisa Wright**, and at a children's school open house, an opportunity to meet staff and find out all about the curriculum and b'nai mitzvah program. 10:15 a.m. at St. Andrew's Jr. High School, 131 Fenn Ave. RSVP, 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

JEWS IN POST WWII EUROPE

York University professor **Kalman Weiser** will discuss "Jews in Post WWII Europe" 11 a.m. Temple Har Zion. $5 for non-members. 905-889-2252

BENMERGUI: MY ISRAEL

Ralph Benmergui will present and discuss video clips from his five-part documentary series *Ralph Benmergui: My Israel*, stories of his experiences in Israel. 7 p.m. at Temple Sinai Congregation. 416-487-3281

Wednesday, April 30

GENEALOGICAL MEETING

Herbert Huebscher will speak on "DNA and Classic Genealogy Join to Solve Genealogical Puzzle" at the Jewish Genealogical Society meeting. Huebscher will discuss his experience and expertise as group administrator and co-ordinator of the DNA based "WIRTH" genealogy research project which linked a number of seemingly disparate families to a common ancestor. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Non-members $5. www.jgstoronto.ca

Other News

OTTAWA CEREMONY

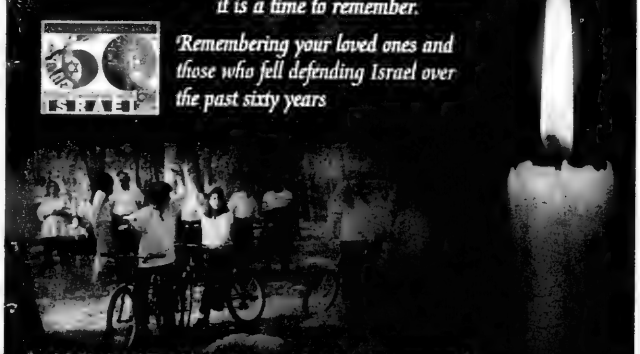
The Canadian Community Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony will take place Thursday, May 1 in Ottawa on the steps of Parliament Hill. Join the prime minister, members of parliament, Israel's ambassador to Canada and ambassadors from countries around the world. 3 p.m. Info, 613-798-4696, ext. 255.

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Join Mekorot for "Ethics of the Fathers/*Pirkei Avot*: The Spirit Within the Letter of Law," a six-week examination of Pirkei Avot with the aid of classical and contemporary commentaries with **Rabbi Joseph Kanofsky.** Thursdays, May 1-June 5, 10-11:15 a.m. at Ulpanat Orot, 45 Canyon Ave. And "*Iggeret Ha'Ramban*: The Letter of a Sage to Our Hearts," one of the oldest mussar/ethical texts, the letter of Nachmanides to his son with **Rabbi Michael Skobac**. Tuesdays, May 6-May 27, 10-11:15 a.m. at Sephardic Kehila Centre. Register, www.mekorot.ca or 416-877-2050.

Continued on page 33

On the occasion of
Yiskor
it is tradition to make a charitable donation in memory of a loved one or friend.
As Yiskor is observed during Passover, it is a time to remember.
Remembering your loved ones and those who fell defending Israel over the past sixty years



Jewish National Fund is on the ground with action, not words.
The proceeds from this year's Yiskor Campaign will be allocated to assist the children of the besieged city of Sderot in Israel to find a period of relaxation at JNF summer and winter camps in Israel.
Please complete and return the Yiskor form enclosed in this issue
JNF

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What's New

Continued from page 32

BIBLE SCHOLAR

Beth Tzedec Congregation hosts "Reading and Understanding the Hebrew Bible," a scholar Shabbat with **Prof. Marc Brettler**, chair of the department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies, Brandeis University, Saturday, May 3. Pulpit lecture, "How to Understand the Hebrew Bible"; following service, "How to Read the Hebrew Bible"; lecture at seudah shlishit, "Text Workshop." 416-781-3511

JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL

The Toronto Jewish Film Festival runs May 3-11 and showcases feature drama and comedy, documentaries and shorts from Canada and all around the globe. For information, schedule and tickets, www.tjff.com or 416 324-9121

MEMORIAL AND FILM

Beit Rayim Synagogue holds a Yom Hashoah Memorial and Film Screening. of *Purity Beats Everything: Nothing Ever Ends* by **Jon Bang Carlsen**. Set in South Africa, around the testimonials of two Holocaust survivors, the film delves deep into the layers underlying Nazism's purity ideals, traces of which, the filmmaker contends, still exist today. A question-and-answer session will follow with Holocaust survivor, **Pinchas Gutter**. Sunday, May 4, 7:30 p.m. 927 Clark Ave. W. Free.

FILM: ILAN RAMON STORY

Beth Tikvah Congregation presents the film *The First Israeli in Space: The Story of Ilan Ramon* with guest speaker **Amir Gissin**, Israeli consul general and close friend of the Ramon family. Sunday, May 4, 7:30 p.m. Reserved seating $35, general seating $18, students free. Tickets, info@bethtikvah.on.ca or 416-221-3433, ext 0.

KAFKA AND FRIENDS

Rabbi Michael Stroh leads a four-week series on "Kafka, Kierkegaard and Friends" Tuesdays, May 6-27, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Har Zion. $5/session for non-members. 905-889-2252

TALKS FOR PARENTS

Kehillat Shaarei Torah Synagogue presents a series of talks for parents. First program features **Dr. Alan Berzen** and **Dr. Jeff Wisebrot** on "Teething Causes Fevers, and other Stories Your Grandmother Told You." and **Dr Larry Danilewitz** on "Managing Anxiety in Children." Tuesday, May 6, 7:30 p.m. Entrance by donation to fund that benefits children in Sderot. Info, 416-229-2600, ext. 5 or education@shaarei torah.com.

SENIORS OSTEO EDUCATION

Baycrest Centre offers an osteoporosis education and exercise program for seniors. The program runs for 7 weeks beginning Monday, May 5. Cost $70, includes exercise, information manual and educational video. Information, 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

CELEBRATES ISRAEL@60

Join the community and celebrate Israel's 60th on May 8 for an evening of music, dance and entertainment highlighting six decades of Israel's achievements including Hadag Nachash, **Nina Gershman** and **Alexander Utkin**, dancers from the National Ballet of Israel, IDF Vocal and Instrumental Ensemble, Renanim Youth Singers and 200-member student choir from local Jewish schools. 4:30 p.m. pre-event festival, 7:30 p.m. main event. Tickets, $10-$75, 416-870-8000 or www.ticketmaster.ca. Tickets to the evening event include admission to festival.

YOM HA'ATZMAUT

Join Temple Har Zion for a Yom Ha'Atzmaut weekend beginning with a Kabbalat Shabbat Service Friday, May 9, 6:30 p.m. with guest speaker **Amir Gissin**, Israeli consul general, and dinner at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 10, 9 a.m. Torah study, service 10:30 a.m. Potluck lunch 12:30 p.m. Sunday, May 10, 10 a.m. interactive concert and sing-along with **Mickey Lewin**. Friday dinner $18, RSVP by May 2, 905-889-2252, ext. 7.

CAMP KVUTZA REUNION

Hold Sunday, Sept. 21 for a reunion of staff and campers of Camp Kvutza. Send your e-mail address with your name (as you would have been known at camp) to campkvutza@gmail.com.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias toronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafes: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Both Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group. For more information call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

JF&C GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com.

For information on the following programs call ext. 246.

Teen Talk. An 8-week program for teens 12-14 to talk about issues of importance to them and to meet new friends. Wednesdays, April 30-June 18, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Parenting Children with ADHD; A 6-week program for parents of children who have been diagnosed with ADHD. Wednesdays, April 30-June 4, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Parenting the Child with Challenging Behaviour: This group is for parents who are frequently challenged by the behaviour of their children aged 6-12. Tuesdays, May 6-June 17, 6:30-8 p.m.at the Lipa Green Building.

PALS. A 6-session activity based social skills program for children 9-11 years with a separate parent component. Tuesdays, May 6-June 17, 5:30 - 7 p.m. at Ventura Park Elementary school, 121 Worth Blvd.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC. Market Gallery, tour of exhibit, Spadina and Garment Industry: 100-year history, Wednesday, April 30, 1:30 p.m. For info call 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, April 30. Sunday dance, May 4. Those interested in Hebrew conversation class, call for information. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Spring Fling Lunch and Concert, Wed. April 30, 12-2:30 p.m. Members $13, non members $16.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Learn to play the recorder, Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m. starts May 7. Info call Janet, ext. 259.

Koffler Centre of the Arts presents Stars of the 21st Century, Sunday, May 4. This international ballet gala is a showcase of extraordinary talents of the foremost dancers in the world. Tickets, www.kofflerarts.org.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Intermediate Hebrew, improve comprehension and verbal skills, expand your vocabulary. Thursdays, April 24-May 29, 5:15-7:15 p.m.

Hebrew Conversation, Thursdays, April 24-May 29, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

Learn to Read Hebrew: Intensive Two-Day Workshop, Tuesdays, April 29 and May 6, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m. Learn the Aleph Bet, and how to read with and without vowels in two sessions.

"Savvy Singles: Cooking with Itka," is cooking the way to a person's heart? Meet, cook and enjoy. Wednesday, May 7, 7:30 p.m. $18.

Register, randis@mnjcc.org or ext. 154.

Volunteers needed

ISRAEL DAY FESTIVAL

Volunteers needed to help with the Israel Day Festival and Israel @ 60 Celebration, Sunday, June 1, Mel Lastman Square. Contact naamat@bellnet.ca or 416-636-5425.

LICHTBLAU DEDICATION: TanenbaumCHAT recently honoured the memory of Hartley Lichtblau at the dedication of the Hartley Lichtblau z"l Guidance Centre at the Kimel Family Education Centre. From left are Rena, Jacob, Anita, Fela and Mark Lichtblau, TanenbaumCHAT president Lori Disenhouse and director of education Paul Shaviv.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 35

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Bocknek, Marvin Stanley	April 3/08	7905 Bayview Ave
Gelade, Lili	April 4/08	3560 Bathurst St
Kogan, Yaacov	April 4/08	Private
Livshits, Yakov	April 6/08	1121 Steeles Ave. W.
Mandel, Esther	April 6/08	
Khmelevsky, Manya	April 7/08	522 Elgin Mills Rd
Davidson, Charles	April 7/08	80 Brookview Dr
Naft, Trudy(Gertrude)	April 7/08	
Ergas, Errikos	April 8/08	632 St. Germain Ave
Eckhaus, Rudi	April 8/08	Private
Graham, Bernard	April 8/08	70 Ruddington Dr
Fischman, Tony	April 9/08	4455 Bathurst St
Sulla-Lakirovich, Ester	April 9/08	79 Chagall Dr
Constam, Ruthe	April 9/08	541 Finch Ave. W
Vaisman, Yakov	April 9/08	39 Okanagan Dr

HEBREW BASIC

Izidor Shapira	Apr 6/08	5935 Bathurst St

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Bev Cohen	Apr 4/08	23 Bittany Rise
Rose Goldstein Gold	Apr 6/08	400 Walmer Rd
Harvey Routbard	Apr 7/08	74 Confederation Way
Dr. Michael Braudo	Apr 7/08	44 Charles St W
May Ross	Apr 7/08	6 Leadenhall Rd
Goldie Wiesman	Apr 7/08	33 Wilmington Ave
Ruth Figa	Apr 8/08	333 Clark Ave W
Stefania Piotrowska	Apr 8/08	102 Barberry Cres
Ann Ross	Apr 8/08	3900 Yonge St
Jules Gotlieb	Apr 8/08	28675 Franklin Rd
Stephen Asch	Apr 8/08	6 Toronto St
David Cooper	Apr 9/08	3560 Bathurst St
Jack Doweck	Apr 9/08	1785 Walnut Lane
Pearle Duckman-Fogel	Apr 9/08	265 Ridley Blvd
Joseph Gorenkoff	Apr 10/08	568 Lawrence Ave W
Regina Kozlowski	Apr 10/08	15 Robingrove Rd
Morris Bernard	Apr 10/08	90 Fisherville Rd
Gertie Bokofsky	Apr 11/08	866 Sheppard Ave W
Jeannette Conway	Apr 11/08	18 Summer Heights Dr
Wolf Basman	Apr 12/08	7 Townsgate Dr
Libby Ravka	Apr 12/08	866 Sheppard Ave W

The Family of

Charles Sos ז"ל

We wish to express heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to our family and friends, for your support and sympathy, many acts of kindness, and for the generous charitable donations made in his memory.

Thank you for your support and kindness during this very difficult time.

Eva, Judy and family, Alex and family

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Coast to Coast

'We think this is right for us,' says shul president

Continued from page 3

Rabbi Howard Morrison, Beth Emeth's spiritual leader, told *The CJN* in an e-mail that he did not "register a position" on the final decision, but he shared his views on the implications of various decisions. He said he was planning to address the subject in a sermon this coming Shabbat.

Rabbi Howard Morrison

Beth Emeth, a 1,300-family congregation that opened in 1959, describes itself as "traditional conservative," but president Sheldon Serota told *The CJN* that its decision to leave had nothing to do with ideology. "This was about serving the needs of a local community."

However, he added that the synagogue "wants to use this opportunity to establish traditional Conservative Judaism in the Toronto community and get our message out that we offer a traditional halachic and joyous approach to the exercise and practise of Judaism."

Serota said the vote was "not an indictment of United Synagogue," nor was it his board's intent to preach to other congregations. "We think this is right for us."

He declined to discuss specifics of the shul's finances, but he said that, for synagogues in general, "resources are strained. We have to safeguard our funds and use them in the most effective way.

"We want to use [membership dues] to benefit our local community, which is not to say that we don't have a global view [regarding] ahavat Yisrael and concern for our fellow Jews."

Serota stressed that Beth Emeth still sees itself as part of the Conservative movement. "Our rabbi is still a member of the Rabbinical Assembly. We have not installed a mechitzah in out congregation. We're still the same congregation we were [before the vote]. We espouse the same values."

An information session for shul members will be held in a few weeks, he said. No date had been set when *The CJN* went to press.

Also, he added, Beth Emeth plans to work with Adath Israel, Beth Sholom Synagogue, and "hopefully" Beth Tzedec "to provide quality, innovative youth programming."

Beth Sholom, like Beth Emeth, describes itself as "traditional Conservative," but it isn't affiliated with the USCJ.

Serota said he "would expect" that Beth Emeth's United Synagogue Youth (USY) members would still be allowed to go to the organization's spring conclave on Mother's Day weekend if they have already sent deposits.

"If not, we'll seek alternative arrangements," he said.

Kochberg, however, said that he will assume responsibility for having the USYers take part in the convention. In addition to his role as president of USCJ's Canadian region, he also chair's its international youth commission.

Once Beth Tzedec votes on April 24, Kochberg said, the synagogues that remain in the USCJ will meet to analyze the situation and restructure its organizational leadership.

With files from JTA

Coast to Coast

Israel shouldn't be forced to give up land, Huckabee says

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Mike Huckabee, the former candidate for the Republican U.S. presidential nomination, warned against pressuring Israel into conceding any more territory in the hope of gaining peace.

"We should not force Israel to give up land in order to appease the Palestinians," Huckabee said April 13 to applause before an overflow audience at Congregation Zichron Kedoshim.

"It is foolish to ask Israel, with its tiny piece of real estate, to give it up to those who are avowed to destroying the nation of Israel. It makes no sense at all."

He suggested that Arab states find a home for the Palestinians on the vast territory they control, rather than have Israel hand over land it needs for its security.

Huckabee, who dropped out of his party's race for president in March after realizing he could not overtake John McCain for his party's nomination, thinks the Palestinians may not be ready for statehood. "With their history of terrorism and violence, they have not shown a level of responsibility to be entrusted with property and sovereignty."

Mike Huckabee

The United States would be breaking faith with "the only true democracy and its only constant and loyal ally in the Middle East" if it pressured the Jewish state into trading land for peace.

Huckabee was the guest speaker of the third annual Evelyn and Samuel Margolick Memorial Lecture, sponsored by their son, businessman and native Montrealer Lionel Margolick of Detroit.

Huckabee filled the synagogue's small sanctuary and basement, where the overflow could watch on closed-circuit TV.

Huckabee said former U.S president Jimmy Carter was "dead wrong" in characterizing Israel as practising apartheid, and in seeking to meet with Hamas. "I do not share his view that you can make any progress sitting down with a terrorist organization."

An ordained Southern Baptist minister, Huckabee noted that he has visited Israel nine times, and each time he has visited Yad Vashem. He has also taken his three children there.

Asked if he is interested in being McCain's running mate, Huckabee, a two-term governor of Arkansas, replied: "The vice-presidency is a job no one says they want, but no one turns down… If John McCain calls, I'll be quite surprised, but I'll deal with that at the time."

In the meantime, he joked, he is not sitting by the phone or telling his wife to leave the line free.

Commenting on the Democratic presidential primaries, Huckabee believes Barack Obama has sewn up the nomination. "Americans want change, but I don't think they have given it a lot of thought. They just want something different," he said.

"McCain's challenge is not to just go on as before, but not to overly distance himself from Bush, which would alienate the party. It's tough."

Huckabee likened a McCain-Obama match-up to going to a car dealership.

"We see a new car in the showroom and love it. Then we realize we can't make the payments. If Americans make their choice for president on the showroom floor, Obama will be the next president. If they make it in the sales manager's office, McCain will be the next president."

Huckabee believes Obama handled questions about his pastor, Jeremiah Wright, as well as he could, distancing himself from Wright's most objectionable opinions, but not coming off as "a fair-weather friend."

Huckabee said the black church leader has made "inflammatory and indefensible" comments about the United States, but they have to be understood in the context of growing up in the Deep South when racism was virulent.

"As horrible as some of the things are that he has said, I'm not sure that if I had black skin I would not have a bigger chip on my shoulder than he [Wright] does. Let's debate him, not completely dismiss him."

On Iraq, Huckabee contended the United States is "naïve" to think democracy could take root there.

"The problem in Iraq is that kids are raised to think it is OK to kill somebody to advance your goals. Democracy will never function in that environment… There are embedded cultural differences that can't be overcome simply by saying, 'Let's have an election.'

"Dictatorship, hopefully a benevolent one, is perhaps the only way for Iraq."

Huckabee said the decision to invade Iraq was "not based on a lie, but a mistake. There was no intention to deceive people."

The fear that deposed Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction was rational.

"If we hadn't gone in, and he used them on Israel, Iran or the Kurds, people would say, 'Why didn't we do something?'"

He faulted Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for "financially, diplomatically and militarily doing nothing to bring stability to the region. The Saudis have free rein to use oil dollars from to build madrassas, where they are taught to come and kill us."

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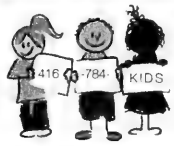

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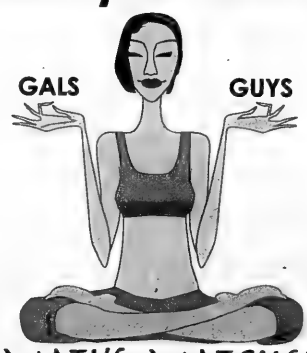

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Supreme Court *get* ruling is key, panelist says

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The implications of a landmark Supreme Court decision in December upholding the awarding of damages to a woman whose husband withheld a *get* from her for 15 years, despite an agreement between them, are profound and will be felt for years to come, a panel of lawyers and religious authorities agreed at a recent panel discussion at Shaare Zion Congregation.

Moderator Ian Solloway, a family lawyer for more than 30 years, characterized the judgment as "one of the most controversial in recent memory" for its blurring of the boundary between the civil and religious domains.

The lawyers involved in the case of Bruker vs. Marcovitz disagreed on what the fallout will be, and what the decision means for Jewish couples getting married or divorced.

Alan Stein, lead counsel for Stephanie Bruker, said the judgment underlines the wisdom of including a promise to obtain a *get* upon a civil divorce in pre-nuptial or separation agreements.

But Jason Marcovitz's lawyer, Anne-France Goldwater, believes the decision will scare men away from signing anything, and that even lawyers will shy away from them for fear of being sued.

She also thinks divorcing couples will have to be careful about other "chicken soup" clauses they put in divorce agreements, such as sending the children to Jewish schools.

Solloway commented afterward that "it is clear this decision will remain a contentious issue for a long, long time, until it is sorted out by the courts… We do not know how this is going to play out in the courts."

What was not questioned is that the high court has established that a promise of a religious nature is a civil contract, with all the liability that includes.

Solloway said that before including a *get* clause in marriage contracts, as Bruker and Marcovitz did, the parties should be "very careful, because they are going to be held to account."

At least one court case has already cited the Supreme Court decision, which was written by Justice Rosalie Abella, Solloway said. In March, Quebec Superior Court Judge Anne-Marie Trahan referred extensively to the judgment in dismissing the arguments of a man who refused to give his wife a *get* because he wanted to keep intact the family, which includes seven children.

Implications expected to be felt for years to come

What the Supreme Court decision means where no written agreement to give a *get* exists is not so obvious, but both Stein and Goldwater think it's possible that the recalcitrant spouse can be taken to court.

"We just don't know how far the courts are going to to," said Solloway, the incoming chair of the English-speaking section of the Montreal Bar Association.

All agreed that the courts will be handling more cases of a religious nature in the future, but they disagreed on whether that is a good thing or not.

The panel discussion, held in co-operation with the Lord Reading Law Society, also included Concordia University religion professor Norma Joseph, founder of the Coalition of Jewish Women for the *Get* and wife of a modern Orthodox rabbi; McGill University religion professor Daniel Cere; and Rabbi Joseph Prouser of Little Neck, N.Y., a Jewish divorce adjudicator in the Conservative movement.

Both Bruker and Marcovitz were in the audience, as were three Superior Court judges.

Rabbi Prouser feels that the Supreme Court's sanctioning of Marcovitz did not tread on his religious freedom or Jewish authority.

While the Mishnah says non-Jews cannot coerce a Jewish man to give a *get*, coercion by Jews, or by non-Jews if they are carrying out the wishes of Jewish authorities, is alright under certain circumstances, and may even be a mitzvah, he said.

"The man may be coerced until he states that he is giving the *get* of his own free will," he said. In this case, the Supreme Court did not order the defendant to give a *get*, but simply upheld an agreement the two parties had voluntarily entered into, he added.

Stein said the effect of the decision is to "level the playing field" for Jewish women in civil divorce settlements. He added that he doesn't believe the decision opens the door for the courts to interfere in religious disputes. "The courts will intervene on a case-by-case basis, and only then in a manner that is consistent with our laws, public policy and democratic values."

Goldwater contended that the agunot problem in Canada is exaggerated, and that in about one-third of cases, it is ex-wives who are refusing to accept the *get*.

"It's appalling that the Jewish community is so happy with this decision. It should be offensive to Jews because it pillories Judaism, portraying it as a religion that is hostile to women, and propagates the terrible lie that there is inequality in the *get* process."

She thinks the courts will be called on to wade ever more deeply and inappropriately into religious waters. "People can go to court now to contest why there are only men on the beth dins, or separate seating in synagogues, or why a woman can't marry a woman or a Jew a goy."

Cere is also troubled by the decision. He sees it as making gender equality superior to religious freedom and as breaking with "the respectful distance between religion and the state" that has been a long-held pillar of liberalism.

It also implies that the Jewish religion is in need of correction by civil courts, he said.

Joseph finds no infringement on religious freedom in the decision, and, in fact, the contrary.

"The source of the agunot problem is Jewish law, and its solution can be found only in Jewish law," she said.

In the meantime, she believes the Supreme Court was right in doing what it can to protect citizens' rights.

Joseph contended Bruker's freedom of religion – her right to marriage in her religion – was as much at stake as Marcovitz's.

Jewish divorce is not egalitarian, she stated. Only the man can initiate the *get*, and what little remedy exists for agunot, such as coercion, is rarely used. As well, there are "loopholes" that benefit the husband if the woman refuses to accept the *get*.

The Supreme Court has decided that the courts can intervene when appropriate in cases of "misuse of religion," she said, and that's a good thing.

Rabbi Prouser agreed that "it is the function of civil society to prevent us from bludgeoning each other with religion."

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Is Israel's glass half empty or half full?

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

As Israel's 60th anniversary approaches, the media have begun filing in-depth reports and analyses on the state of the nation, both internally and regionally.

There is a well-known propensity for journalism to focus more on the negative than on the positive. As Evan Thomas argued in the "Myth of Objectivity" (*Newsweek*, March 10), "The mainstream media… are prejudiced, but not ideologically. The press's real bias is for conflict."

That negativity is certainly the case in the April 8 *New York Times* feature "60 Years After Israel's Founding, Many Are Not in the Mood for a Party," by Isabel Kershner (reprinted in the April 12 *National Post* as "Israel: despondent at 60").

Kershner wrote: "Many acknowledge the nation's outstanding achievements, pointing to the absorption of immigrants, the high-tech boom and its survival against unfavourable odds.

"But the decade seems to be closing in an uncharacteristically somber mood, with more and more Israelis evincing deep-seated disillusionment with their leaders and how the country is run."

Negative factors cited include Israel's perceived failure in the 2006 Lebanon war and its inability to stop the rocket fire from Gaza.

Then there is the *Economist*'s April 3 edition, which featured a 16-page special report on Israel.

Its editorial, "Israel at 60: The dysfunctional Jewish State," argued that Israel, though a "pure representative democracy," is strapped with "unstable multi-party coalitions" resulting in political deadlock.

The *Economist* acknowledged that "for all their distrust [of the Palestinians], most Israelis still think a Palestinian state is their own best chance for a peaceful life." But the magazine substantially blames Israel's political deadlock for failing to move the peace process forward.

The *Economist* also wrote, however, that Hamas rejects "full peace" with Israel. Yet the record is perfectly clear: Hamas rejects any peace with Israel.

And while it's true that Israel's coalition government is fragile, it is not – as the *Economist* claims – "just as dysfunctional" as the Palestinian government. Palestinian politics is rife with internal violence and corruption. And, of course, even much of the "moderate" Fatah and PLO factions, in addition to Hamas, remain hostile to Israel's existence as a Jewish state 60 years after its founding by the United Nations.

Surprisingly, the *Economist*'s special report drew attention to this crucial distinction: "It is ironic that the fundamental disagreement between Jews and Palestinians today is not about whether there should be a Palestinian state; most Israeli Jews accepted that long ago. It is whether there should be a Jewish one."

This is the core issue: the refusal, not only of many Palestinians but also large numbers of Arabs and Muslims worldwide, to accept the legitimacy of Jewish sovereignty in the Middle East.

This refusal and the implications for Israel are examined in Jeffrey Goldberg's sensational-sounding titled cover story "Is Israel Finished?" in the May issue of the *Atlantic*.

Goldberg wrote that Israel "is, by almost any measure, an astonishing success. It has a large, sophisticated, and growing economy… the finest universities and medical centres in the Middle East… has absorbed and franchised millions of previously impoverished and dispossessed Jews. Zionism may actually be the most successful national liberation movement of the 20th century.

"Yet 60 years of independence have not provided Israel with legitimacy in its own region. Two of its neighbours, Egypt and Jordan, have signed peace treaties with Israel, but it is still a small Jewish island in a great sea of Islam, a religion that seems today more allergic than ever to the idea of Jewish independence."

Actually, the title on Goldberg's piece derives from a remark made not long ago by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert himself, that, given Palestinian demographics in the West Bank, if Israel cannot extricate itself there in order to create a Palestinian state, Israel may be "finished" as both a Jewish and democratic country. It was a dire warning, and remains a key part of the national debate.

While it's important to acknowledge Israel's shortcomings over the years so they can be remedied, it is no less important to honestly give credit to the genuine successes it has had.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

History of western Canadian Jews explored

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada is going ahead with two new projects this year – an endowment fund to encourage research into Western Canadian Jewish history, and a book on Manitoba Jewish history to be launched this fall.

The first is the Switzer-Cooperstock Lecture Prize in Western Canadian Jewish History, established by brothers Paul (Pinny) and Fred Switzer and their children, Gail and Ken, in memory of their parents and grandparents, Louis and Rose (Cooperstock) Switzer.

Starting in 2010, $5,000 will be given biennially for research into one of several topics: secular Jewish schools in Western Canada, Jewish settlers and traders in rural areas, the Jewish immigration experience in Western Canada, or other related topics.

The winner, to be chosen by a Jewish Heritage Centre panel, will present a public lecture that will be published by the centre.

Pinny Switzer, a professor of statistics at Stanford University in San Francisco, says the Cooperstock side of the family came to Manitoba in 1912 and settled on a farm near Winnipeg. His mother, Rose, grew up on the farm. Louis Switzer arrived in Winnipeg in 1929 and worked for an electric company. Rose Switzer died in 1992 at the age of 86. Louis lived until 2002 and was 93 when he died.

The second major project is Allan Levine's new history of the Jews of Manitoba, which was commissioned by the Jewish Heritage Centre. It will encompass both the urban and the rural Jewish experience in the province. The only other such history was written in 1961 by Rabbi Arthur Chiel, an American-born rabbi who served as the rabbi of Rosh Pina Congregation in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Levine, a high school history teacher, has written several history books, as well as historical fiction. Three mystery novels are set in Winnipeg's Jewish community in the early 1900s, and he is about to release a new mystery set in New York City. History books he has published include *The Jews of the Forest*, an account of the Jewish partisans in World War II. For his history of the Jews of Manitoba, he took a year off teaching to do the research and writing. He previewed the work in an April 1 presentation at the Asper Jewish Community Campus, at a joint gathering of the Manitoba Historical Society and the Jewish Heritage Centre.

Levine noted that the book begins with a description of the official opening of the Asper Jewish Community Campus in September 1997.

Allan Levine

"After a decade of consultation and bickering," he said, "the $28-million campus became a reality. It was the largest undertaking in Winnipeg Jewish history."

He quoted the late Israel Asper who, at the opening, reflected on how awed our grandparents and great-grandparents would have been by the campus. The campus, Levine noted, is a testament to how far Winnipeg's Jewish community has come in just two or three generations.

And the grumbling about the South End campus from Jews in the North End is nothing new, he added. He quoted an angry editorial from the *Israelite Press* newspaper in 1912 critical of South End Jews – very few Winnipeg Jews lived or were allowed to live in southern parts of the city then – who, the writer claimed, were trying to assume leadership of the community. The writer vowed to fight any attempt to move the *Israelite Press* to south Winnipeg.

The first group of Jewish arrivals in 1882 and beyond were traditionally observant Jews. After the failed Russian revolution of 1905, an influx of bundists immigrated to this city and province. Levine noted that Winnipeg developed a diverse Jewish and Yiddish culture incorporating all the divergent movements and subdivisions within the Jewish world at the time. Rabbi Chiel, he noted, was amazed that a community that never numbered more than about 20,000 could provide the same level of Jewish social services and options as much larger communities.

Winnipeg also served as the fulcrum for the small-town Jewish merchants and some Jewish farmers who could be found throughout the province in the early part of the 20th century.

Levine also spoke about the anti-Semitism and resulting restrictions that Manitoba's Jewish population faced in the first half of the century. There were areas and clubs that refused membership to Jews, places such as Eatons that wouldn't hire Jews, and the infamous quota system for Jewish and other east European students applying to enrol in medical school, although there were no quotas in other university disciplines.

It was a major breakthrough in 1953 when Samuel Freedman was the first Jewish lawyer appointed to the bench. He was subsequently appointed to the highest court in the province, and in 1971, he became chief justice of Manitoba.

"So successful were our parents and grandparents in steering their children into the professions and the middle class that they ended up diminishing the community that they had established," Levine said. "There were some who saw the opening of the campus as the final nail in the coffin of the old North End Yiddish world."

Advertising Feature

Sobie's Barbecues gets your summer off to a sizzling start

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Febian Frempong (L) and Mark Herberman with one of the most popular Napoleon BBQs

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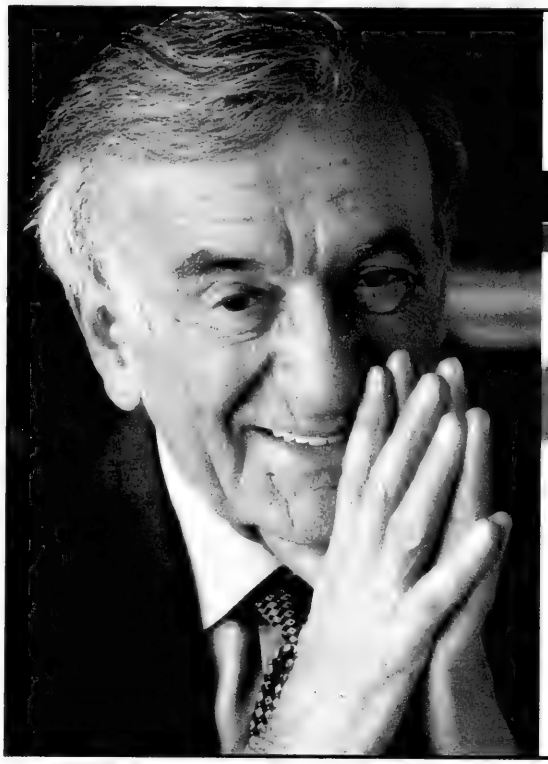
Between them, Frempong and Herberman count over 40 years' experience in the BBQ business, all of them at Sobie's. They put every one of those years to use in serving you, and look forward to making your grilling experience a happy and healthy one.



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Carter's Hamas meetings will hurt chances for peace

By MICHAEL KRAFT
JTA

Jimmy Carter's meetings with Hamas officials this week do not technically violate U.S. policy against negotiating with terrorists, but they do counter the principle and may well undermine the former president's professed desire to support Middle East peace efforts.

It is long-standing U.S policy not to negotiate with terrorists. There are nuances to the policy; it does not preclude contacts and talks. But the bottom line has been that terrorists should not be rewarded for their criminal actions, such as taking hostages.

Carter, of course, is no longer in a position to negotiate officially for the U.S. government. Nor he is carrying water for the Bush administration. Indeed, the State Department advised him publicly against meeting with Hamas officials.

But in the end he reportedly met Tuesday with a Hamas leader, Nasser Shaer, in Ramallah, and soon is expected to meet in Damascus with Hamas' leader in exile, Khaled Meshal.

In an interview on April 13 with ABC News, Carter insisted that his goal was to "support fully the peace efforts in the Middle East." The problem is that his well-publicized meetings essentially undermine chances for peace by rewarding terrorists prior to any negotiations or meaningful changes in behaviour.

The controversy over meeting Meshal reminds me of my time at the State Department counterterrorism office in the 1980s during the Lebanon hostage crisis. Carter's actions are reminiscent of the Rev. Jesse Jackson's high-profile efforts to "help" obtain the release of American hostages in Lebanon.

Whenever the Hezbollah terrorists and their Iranian backers decided to release a hostage, Jackson was given media attention for being chosen to receive them. The terrorists would then seize some other poor American to replenish their terrorist "hostage bank."

Opinion

Carter's actions are also reminiscent of the European Union's actions in pumping hundreds of millions of dollars, if not billions, into former Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat's Palestine Liberation Organization "to help the poor Palestinians" without insisting on strict accountability to minimize the PLO and Fatah's notorious corruption.

The widespread corruption in Fatah, fed in part by the EU money, was a major reason that Hamas won the Palestinian parliamentary elections in January 2005. Thus, well meaning but foolishly indulgent attitudes helped lead to the situation that Gaza is in today.

Hamas unquestionably is a terrorist organization – it conducts premeditated, politically motivated violence deliberately targeted against noncombatants. That's the definition used by the State Department, which officially has designated Hamas as a foreign terrorist organization under a 1996 law.

Furthermore, despite repeated public and behind-the scenes efforts to persuade the group to change its stance, Hamas refuses to renounce terrorism and its policy calls for the destruction of the State of Israel. Its media continues their incitement against Israel and Jews, describing them as "pigs and monkeys."

Hamas has engaged in an extensive military campaign of firing rockets and mortars from the Gaza Strip at civilian targets in Israel even though Israel has withdrawn from Gaza. It continues to smuggle long-range Iranian missiles through tunnels originating in Egypt in order to supplement the relatively crude homemade rockets. There is every reason to believe that Hamas would use a ceasefire to continue increasing its arsenal in an effort to provoke an even bloodier conflict.

In a recent CNN interview, Carter claimed that Hamas has adhered to a ceasefire since August 2004, which "indicates what they might do so in the future." He said Hamas is "highly disciplined" and capable of keeping any promise of nonviolence it might make.

This remark illustrates Carter's ignorance of the realities. Hamas has not adhered to a ceasefire since 2004, having launched hundreds of rockets in the past year, and continues to glorify violence.

For a high-profile person such as Carter to put the gloss on Hamas and publicly meet with its leaders at this stage only encourages the terrorist group to believe that if it remains steadfast in its "resistance" and rejectionist rhetoric, the West will try to make deals or concessions without it having to end terrorism and drop its opposition to Israel's existence.

Of course, why should Hamas expect anything but "understanding" from a man whose book so blatantly and erroneously pins the "apartheid" label on Israel?

Carter tried to justify his plans by saying that he has met with Hamas before. But relatively low-profile meetings before Hamas staged its coup against the Palestinian Authority and launched the recent large-scale rocket attacks against Israel are in a separate category.

The former president notes that some western pundits and even some Israelis believe that eventually they will have to talk to Hamas. This is irrelevant to Carter's meeting. Cautious, private, low-key talks through intermediaries are not the same as a high-profile visit by a Nobel laureate and former U.S. president that will provide a propaganda platform for the leader of the major Palestinian terrorist movement.

Despite Carter's pious statements, his high-profile meeting with Hamas officials will likely prolong and exacerbate the Israeli-Palestinian conflict rather than help the peace process.

Michael Kraft is a former senior adviser in the State Department's counterterrorism office.

Qatar's opulence makes impression on Livni

By BARAK RAVID
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

DOHA, Qatar — Some 20 minutes before her motorcade departed for Doha's international airport, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni was taking a timeout at her hotel's private beach.

After her tight set of meetings, she spread out on one of the deck chairs and looked into the distance at the Persian Gulf. For a few minutes, she felt just like any other tourist.

"I'd come here for a week to rest," she had said a day earlier, just before meeting with the emir of Qatar, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani.

The night before, Livni wanted to go out and see Doha's large market. Her security guards, however, convinced her to stay in the hotel instead. Had she have gone out, Livni would have seen Qatar's exotic and relaxed nightlife, which is very different from that in the rest of the Arab world.

Livni was in Qatar to speak at the eighth annual Doha Conference on Democracy, Development and Free Trade. While there, she met the emir and foreign minister. It was the first high-level visit by an Israeli official since Shimon Peres visited as deputy prime minister in January 2007. Qatar doesn't have official ties with Israel, but hosts a small Israeli trade office.

The Gulf State has two main hotspots that draw both locals and foreigners.

The first is the Western Gulf, where all the luxury hotels are located.

Each hotel is equipped with a bar or club that would not look out of place in any European capital. Those seeking a drink would find whatever their heart desires at the Sheraton's Irish bar or the Sky Bar on the top of the Le Cigale Hotel, which has a panoramic view of the city that's reminiscent of similar views from hotels in Hong Kong or New York.

The second, more authentic attraction is the Waqf Market adjacent to Doha's ancient mosque. Here, the sweet smell of tobacco permeates the air from the hundreds of hookahs in the cafes and restaurants.

Restaurants dishing out Lebanese, Moroccan, Syrian and Iraqi cuisine line the streets, but not one establishment dedicated to the Qatari kitchen exists – perhaps because locals prefer eating over cooking.

An Israeli visitor to Doha will sense the live-and-let-live atmosphere that allows representatives of the Israeli Foreign Ministry to visit the same city that also serves as a second home to Hamas leader Khaled Meshal.

Souvenir shop owner Yasser Khatani did not get overexcited by the first-ever visit by Israelis to his establishment.

"Any Israeli will be welcome," he said.

The music store owner nearby reacts similarly.

"Israelis? Salaam Aleikum!" the vendor shouts.

"Do people play the oud in Israel?" he asks curiously, referring to the Middle Eastern stringed-instrument.

To an Israeli visitor, Qatar seems like a place that mixes *A Thousand and One Nights* with New York, Islam and iPod culture.

"I'm used to reading about these things in secret memos, and suddenly I had the chance to see it with my own eyes," Livni remarked.

Qatar's affluence is unbelievable. The small state is filled with SUVs and shiny sport cars. Its men wear expensive wristwatches and cuffs to compensate for the uniformity of their traditional Arab white garb.

"I don't want to gossip, but it was astonishing," Livni said, after being invited to lunch with the emir, his wife and other leaders.

The foreign minister can definitely consider the trip to Qatar a success, even if it only changed Arab policies by a small measure.

"Real progress has been made," Livni said.

But meanwhile, unless they are on a diplomatic mission, Qatar will remain off limits to most Israelis.

ON CHEMO?
www.lifemel.ca

More than 1,000 Canadians to participate

Continued from page 1

Eli Rubenstein, Canadian national director for the March, said his organization will have more than 1,000 Canadian students, chaperones and survivors assemble at the Mini Israel theme park in the Ayalon valley near Jerusalem to sing in Live Hatikvah.

They will be joined by March groups from Panama and Australia.

"It's a wonderful opportunity for our students to take part in a historic moment, as well as to identify with the unity of the Jewish people around the world," he said. "And, after spending a week in Poland, much of it involving the intense studying of the Shoah, this will indeed be a joyful moment of hope for the students."

Rubinstein added he was told the Canadians will be shown singing on Israel's Channel 2, on the national broadcast.

Albin noted that the broadcast will only be able to offer each participating community "a fraction of satellite time [during the actual singing], because *Hatikvah* is only about two minutes long."

The full Live Hatikvah broadcast will last 90 minutes and cut to different communities, cities and personalities in Israel and abroad in the run-up to the record attempt, Albin said.

In a phone interview with *The CJN* from Israel, Albin likened the upcoming event to Live Aid – the 1985 multi-venue, concert fundraiser in relief of famine in Ethiopia that launched an era of benefit concerts – and echoed her website's phrasing that the "global singing of *Hatikvah* will… create a collage of Jews around world" to promote unity with the state of Israel.

Albin said she started the project last year as a result of rumblings she'd heard about in the Knesset where Arab MKs and others have pressed to update some of *Hatikvah's* lyrics to reflect the changing multicultural landscape in the country.

"They want to change the words "*nefesh Yehudi homiyah*" (a Jewish soul yearns) to "*nefesh Yisraeli homiyah*" (an Israeli soul yearns)," she said. "There is a trend now in discussion in Israel – that maybe it's about time after 60 years, that this country will be the country of all its citizens.

"Being a mother of four, I asked my kids if they knew about *Hatikvah*. And I was shocked that even my own kids, who did get education in Israel, don't really know what it means to be *am chofshi*, to be free. 'Aren't we free?' they ask. No, we're not. Because we still live under the law of war. I believe that if we don't preserve the Jewish state, it will not exist. [Jews] born and raised in Israel do not understand the miracle of having a Jewish state."

Hatikvah was not formally adopted as the official anthem of Israel until 2004 when a Knesset vote finally gave it that designation.

One of the reasons for this 56-year delay were concerns voiced by Israel's Arab communities, who refused to accept the anthem because its core wording refers exclusively to the "*Nefesh Yehudi*," and is considered exclusionary by some of the country's non-Jewish citizenry.

Albin said she hopes to turn Live Hatikvah into a yearly tradition in Israel, and encourages people wishing to add their own *Hatikvah* information or participate in the record attempt to visit the website (livehatikvah.org).

The website includes a section where readers can post varying *Hatikvah* versions in video format. Some of the eclectic ones already posted include renditions by Barbra Streisand, an instrumental attempt by thrash metal guitarist Marty Friedman of Megadeath, and a hip-hop version by French group Francky Perez & Broadway.

Beyond that, the website also outlines the detailed Guinness world record rules on how groups who wish to be part of the *Hatikvah* attempt can officially register and record the singing.

According to Kaoru Ishikawa, records manager at the Guinness World Records' London headquarters, the category of "Most People Singing a National Anthem Simultaneously" is currently open. However, the Guinness World Record organization has set a minimum bar of 200 people to count toward any new record.

For more information, visit www.livehatikvah.org

UN ignores own accreditation rules

Continued from page 1

In a letter to the UNHCHR last week, Ezrin requested that it "share with us any comments made by Iran, their grounds for objection and when and how we will be given an opportunity to respond."

Ezrin said the UN had failed to comply with its own rules regarding accreditation. Furthermore, the Durban II preparatory committee was to hold its next meeting on Monday, the second day of Passover, when Jewish participants would have been unlikely to attend. "Because the Canadian government is not part of the process [it has announced it will not attend Durban II], Canada won't be at the meeting when it will be discussed," he said.

"The question then becomes, how does the issue get responded to at the meeting which is taking place on the second day of Pesach?"

Ezrin said CIJA is "talking with other organizations who might be there."

In Geneva, UN Watch issued a news release stating, "Iran's attempt to bar Jewish organizations from a UN gathering – one that is supposedly designed to combat racism – only underscores the fears of many that we are in for a replay of the raw anti-Semitism that turned the 2001 Durban conference into a fiasco."

UN Watch executive director Hillel Neuer said Iran was repeating a pattern that preceded the Durban I meeting: "No one forgets how, in February 2001, Iran excluded Jewish groups from the Tehran preparatory meeting, an occasion they then used to insert anti-Semitic incitement of the worst kind into the draft Durban declaration."

Neuer suggested Iran might also be responding to Canada's lead role in a UN General Assembly resolution "that spoke out for victims of Iranian human rights violations." The resolution censured Iran for violating the rights of Arabs, Azeris, Baluchis, Kurds, Christians, Jews, Sufis, Sunni Muslims and Baha'is.

"The question is whether Canada's allies will speak out on Monday. That could lead to a vote and the question will be who will win the day, the democracies or Iran and its allies."

The Iranian Embassy in Ottawa did not respond to a request for a comment.

Senate committee passes suicide bombing bill

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A bill that would amend the Criminal Code to specifically designate suicide bombing a terrorist act passed committee stage in the Senate last week and will advance to third reading.

The bill, introduced by Senator Jerry Grafstein, received the unanimous support of senators in the standing committee on legal and constitutional affairs, said Reuben Bromstein, president of Canadians Against Suicide Bombing, an advocacy group that supports Grafstein's bill.

Bromstein, who testified as a witness before the committee, said adoption of the bill will "help build and strengthen consensus in Canadian society on this issue, serve as a clear deterrent for those among us who might not be committed to this consensus and it offers an opportunity for Canada to take the lead in furthering international commitment to outlaw suicide bombing."

Canada would be the first country to include a specific reference to suicide bombing in its criminal law, he said.

The bill also received support from Ed Morgan, a University of Toronto specialist in international law and former president of Canadian Jewish Congress; Patrick Monahan, dean of Osgoode Hall Law School; Leo Adler, a member of the International Association of Defence Attorneys and director of national affairs for the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, and Mark Sandler, a criminal law expert.

Bromstein said presentations by RCMP assistant commissioner Mike McDonell and William Trudell, chair of the Canadian Council of Criminal defence Lawyers, were factors in swaying senators who had not supported the bill in the past.

The Justice Department and some Conservative senators have opposed the bill, arguing suicide bombings are implicitly covered by the Criminal Code's anti-terrorism section.

Third reading is expected to begin in the week of April 29.

The Staff of
The Canadian Jewish News
extend sincerest condolences to
our colleague and friend
Doris Perez
and her family
on the loss of their beloved
mother, grandmother, great-grandmother
Simeona Leuterio

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Israel Briefs

Peres berates Carter

On his first day of a four-day visit in the Jewish state, former U.S. president Jimmy Carter met with President Shimon Peres, who told him that he has damaged Israel and the peace process. Carter has been sharply critical of Israel on its Middle East stance, notably in his recent book *"Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid."* During the meeting, Peres also criticized Carter's decision to meet later in the week with the exiled leader of Hamas. During a visit to Sderot, Carter called Palestinian rocket attacks on civilians a "despicable crime." "I think it's a despicable crime for any deliberate effort to be made to kill innocent civilians, and my hope is there will be a ceasefire soon," Carter told reporters. Carter was in Israel as part of a Middle East tour. Leaders in Washington and Jerusalem reacted with outrage to reports that Carter planned to meet with Khaled Meshal, who lives in Damascus. Carter has defended the decision to meet Meshal while in Syria. "It's very important that at least someone meet with the Hamas leaders to express their views, to ascertain what flexibility they have, to try to induce them to stop all attacks against innocent civilians in Israel and to co-operate with the Fatah as a group that unites the Palestinians."

Israeli air strike in Syria

Ehud Olmert hinted strongly that the target of last year's Israeli air strike in Syria was a nuclear installation. "There are things that I'm not prepared to talk about," the Israeli prime minister told *Yediot Achronot* in an interview after being asked to provide details on what was bombed in northern Syria on Sept. 6. But, he continued, "I'll say only this: to the best of my knowledge, the residents of Israel are not threatened by Syrian nuclear weapons." Independent experts believe the mysterious bombing run targeted a fledgling nuclear reactor built with North Korean help. The Olmert government has refused to confirm or deny that, as pundits believe, to spare Syrian President Bashar Assad public humiliation and allow for the possibility of peace talks. Olmert told *Yediot* that Jerusalem and Damascus have exchanged messages to clarify what both sides would expect from a resumption of negotiations that stalled in 2000. He did not elaborate.

Art contest

An Israeli Arab teenager won a national contest for her illustrations of the Passover Haggadah. Malek Sharkiyeh, a Muslim ninth-grader from Acco, took the $300 prize this week in a competition by Israel's ORT school system for Haggadah illustrations. "The subject of the Haggadah exhilarated me," Sharkiyeh told *Ma'ariv*. "I like to draw, and that's why it was natural for me to take part in a drawing contest." Mohammed Hajuj, the principal at Sharkiyeh's school, noted that the Exodus story appears in the Qur'an – albeit with some differences.

Shalit release unlikely

A senior Hamas official on Friday said abducted Israel Defence Forces soldier Gilad Shalit "will not see the light" until Palestinian prisoners are released in a prisoner exchange. "Gilad [Shalit] will not see the light, will not see his mother, will not see his father, God willing, as long as our heroic prisoners do not see their families, in their houses," Mushir al-Masri said in a speech Friday. Shalit was kidnapped during a raid on an IDF army post near Gaza in the summer of 2006 and is being held in the coastal strip.

Pollard update

State Comptroller Micha Lindenstraus is considering issuing a summons for Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to give evidence in the Jonathan Pollard affair, Channel 2 reported. Pollard, a civilian intelligence analyst for the U.S. Navy, was convicted of selling military secrets to Israel while working at the Pentagon. He was arrested in 1985 and pleaded guilty at his trial. He is serving a life sentence in a U.S. federal prison. Lindenstrauss recently started compiling a report on whether Israel has been doing everything within its capacity to ensure the release of the jailed spy.

– *JTA and Ha'aretz*

U.K. academics to reconsider Israel boycott

JTA

LONDON — Britain's University and College Union will reconsider supporting an academic boycott of Israel.

Organizations opposing a boycott of Israeli academic institutions and individual researchers in the United Kingdom said they will consult their legal advisers following last week's decision to reconsider the boycott resolution.

The motion, which will be discussed and voted on at the union's annual conference next month, will be presented for the first time by the National Executive Committee – the union's top executive body.

Last year the union adopted a pro-boycott motion proposed by several members of the executive committee, but withdrew the resolution after its legal advisers noted the illegality of a nationality-based boycott.

Speaking for the Stop the Boycott campaign, Jeremy Newmark, head of the Jewish Leadership Council, said the anti-boycott groups are now seeking legal advice in order to "empower regular UCU members in their attempt to force the union to abandon this destructive course of action."

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Remembering the Past, Shaping the Future

Award-winning 11-year-old violinist is 'driven'

By LAURE BAUDOT
Special to The CJN

Eleven-year-old violinist Julia Mirzoev is at once a child and an adult. Asked whether she sometimes tires of practising, she says "of course" in a tone tinged with pre-adolescent exasperation, then she adds, "But I always end up practising, no matter what."

Perched on the edge of her living room couch in her parents' Thornhill home, Julia, wearing a salmon dress and matching headband, talked about her upcoming performance at the Young Stars of the Young Century concert. The concert, taking place April 26 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, features young musicians from the former Soviet Union and Canada.

Julia will be playing *Praeludium und Allegro* by Gaëtano Kreisler. It's a piece that requires technical skill and "a lot of guts," she says. Her brother, Alex, her favourite accompanist, joins her on piano.

Julia's family set the stage for her musical career. Her mother, Alina, is a pianist, and Mikhail, her father, is a violinist. In 1991, wishing to give their children a Jewish education, they moved from Moscow to Thornhill, Ont., where Julia was born. When she was two years old, her father began teaching her violin.

They then found a second teacher – the renowned violinist Jacob Lakirovich. Worried that Julia was too young to play, Lakirovich agreed to take her as a student only after her mother repeatedly telephoned him.

Lakirovich remembers his first meeting with Julia. "Tiny, little she was," he recalls. She was so small that her left fingers could not wrap around a violin's neck to reach the strings. For the first year, she played "open strings," moving the bow across the strings without using her left hand. When she was three years old, Julia started playing using both hands.

Julia has a deep understanding of music. Speaking about what she learns from her favourite composers, she says that Mozart teaches her precision: "[Mozart] has a very gentle way of writing his music. Every single note has to be perfect."

Julia plans to become a professional violinist, and she hopes to play in top orchestras such as the Toronto and Vienna symphony orchestras.

If awards are a compass for future success, then Julia is well on her way. In 2007, she won the award for the most promising performer in the Golden Menorah's Fifth International Music Competition, in Berlin. That same year, the Kiwanis Festival awarded her the Sid Oue Memorial Award for the most promising student in strings.

Julia Mirzoev

Lakirovich says Julia has a good chance of building a career as a soloist. "She has talent, she's driven. I could see a very bright future."

When you hear her play, you can't help agreeing with Lakirovich. On this mid-April day, she stands, violin in hand. Her petite silhouette is striking against her brother's grand piano. Her eyelids, touched with purple eye shadow, mimic purples in Lena Karpinsky's abstract painting of violins, hanging to Julia's right.

Julia plays Study 14 by Federigo Fiorillo, a technically challenging exercise. When she plays, her entire being seems focused on the place where bow meets string, where music emerges. She doesn't yet have an adult's capacity for rendering a loud sound. But her playing's pure full-throated tone – which Lakirovich considers unique – moves everyone who listens.

For tickets to Young Stars of the Young Century ($30-$50), contact Ticketmaster at 416-872-5555 or visit www.ticketmaster.ca. The performers travel to Ottawa's Dominion-Chalmers United Church on April 27, for a 3 p.m. concert. For more information, visit www.ShowOneProductions.ca.

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Father, daughter's collaboration produces masterful autobiography

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

They Called Me Mayer July by Mayer Kirshenblatt and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (University of California Press/ Judah L. Magnes Museum) is a remarkable and necessary book on a number of fronts. Its subtitle, "Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood Before the Holocaust," reflects only one key aspect of the volume. The painter is Mayer Kirshenblatt, whose visual memory of his childhood in the central Polish city of Apt is incomparable.

Norman Ravvin

Kirshenblatt came to think of himself as a painter late in life, once he'd retired from his paint and wallpaper store in Toronto. But *They Called Me Mayer July* also includes the substantial, detailed texts that resulted from interviews Kirshenblatt gave to his daughter, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, who is an ethnographer and Jewish social historian of the first rank.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett explains in her "Daughter's Afterword" how this collaboration developed. The interviews were first undertaken in the 1960s, as part of her broader work on Jewish storytelling among Jews in Toronto. They continued into the 1990s, when she urged her father to complement his oral record of a childhood in Apt with painted versions.

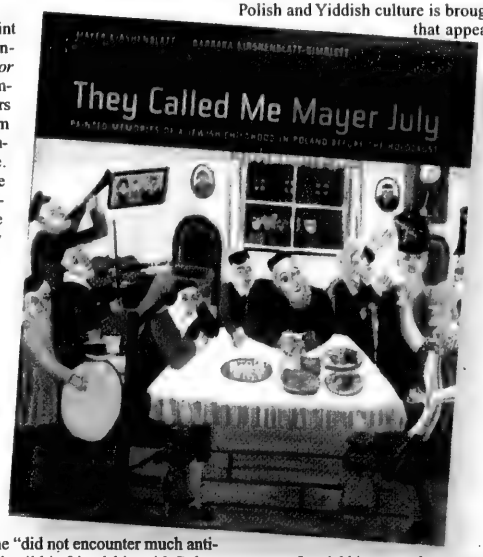
The paintings, she says, added a dimension to the memory-record that spoken words could not: "It was not until he began painting that the 'where' emerged in all its dimensionality. The stories now occupied space… What had been locations indexed in a kind of shorthand – the cemetery, the military latrine, the *khayder*, the market, the inn – were now spaces, and they were filled with objects and people and activities and information, much of which had never made it into the spoken stories."

The cover illustration accompanying this review reflects the hallmarks of Kirshenblatt's paintings: they are intensely focused on the built environment of Apt, on the daily activities of its inhabitants – both Jewish and not – on the objects used in work, in cooking, in music making, travel and devotional life. One aspect of the paintings that disappears in a newsprint reproduction is colour, and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett points out that our sense of prewar Poland is necessarily in black and white, since documentary materials of that time and place are drained of their actual colour. Kirshenblatt's Apt is largely remembered in spring and summer greens; the ancient Jewish cemetery on the outskirts of the city is lushly overgrown; substantial buildings in the city's central markets are washed in the customary pinks, ochres and burnt umbers of old Polish masonry structures. He remembers, too, the blues of his mother's kitchen walls and the blood red mess made at the improvised shchitah yard where housewives brought their chickens to slaughter.

Since many of Kirshenblatt's paintings portray early morning or late evening, he is a careful student of the Polish sky, its layers of ripe reds and violets at change of day, along with the full moon and stars over a Rosh Chodesh celebration outside the main Apt synagogue.

Kirshenblatt's memories are marked by the particularity of his own childhood experience. His father left for Canada in 1928, and he and the rest of his immediate family followed in 1934, "not with sadness but with great anticipation of our new life to come." In this way, Kirshenblatt remembers Poland through the lens of a rooted, rich childhood surrounded by a host of family and townspeople whose character and quirks he cherishes: "What I'm trying to say," he writes in conclusion, is there "was a big world out there before the Holocaust. There was a rich cultural life in Poland as I knew it at the time."

Ironically, to recover a point of view similar to Kirshenblatt's, one must go to the *yizkor bicher*, or memory books, compiled after the war by survivors and established *landsleit* from hundreds of destroyed communities in eastern Europe. Though these books were made in response to the destruction of the Holocaust, the bulk of their documentary materials were aimed at recollecting what prewar Jewish life had been like. Like Kirshenblatt's book, they included maps, an attentiveness to local characters, to the specific roles of tradespeople, merchants, market women, klezmurim and agriculturalists. One dimension that Kirshenblatt adds to this is a real appreciation of the relationships shared by Jews and non-Jews. He remarks on the antipathy between them, but says that he "did not encounter much anti-Semitism." He describes in detail his friendship with Poles, the impact made on him by the Polish woman who worked for his family and the lengths to which his mother went when the woman died to arrange the kind of church funeral she desired.



Kirshenblatt's terminology is insistently bilingual. The vernacular of Apt, whether to describe food, tools or locales is conveyed in Polish and Yiddish. This relationship between Polish and Yiddish culture is brought home in the painting that appears on the book's cover, titled *Purim Play: The Krakow Wedding*. As part of the repertoire of Purim shpiels, *The Krakow Wedding* made use of traditional costumes from the Krakow region, including "shako hats, which were inspired by the hats that soldiers wore during the Napoleonic wars to make them look taller and more intimidating." The players performed "command performances" at the homes of Apt's foremost Jewish families. Kirshenblatt paints himself and his friends looking in at the window from outside.

They Called Me Mayer July is a rich source of social history and a masterful autobiographical document. It reflects an uncommon collaboration and the good fortune of having an ethnographer in the family.

Norman Ravvin is involved in a number of projects related to contemporary Poland and Jewish-Polish literature and history. He is chair of the Concordia University Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.

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Filmmaker and Isabella Rossellini make films that buzz

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

When actress Isabella Rossellini called Jody Shapiro to see if he'd be interested in making films about the saucy sex lives of insects, he was "intrigued and inspired. I wanted to be a part of it," the Toronto-born director/producer said on the phone from his office at Everyday Pictures.

Green Porno, a series of eight provocative 1 – 2 minute educational science films, written by Rossellini for mobile phones, computers and Ipods, makes its Canadian premiere at the Hot Docs Film Fest with six shown between April 17-27.

Isabella Rossellini as a male spider in one of the *Green Porno* shorts.

Dressed as a male insect, Rossellini begins each short with a child-like tone. "If I were a ...spider, firefly, inchworm," and then demonstrates with her female "counterpart" – a puppet or sculpture - their curious mating practices.

"It was a great experience co-directing with Isabella," said Shapiro enthusiastically. "Once we got on the set, everyone knew this was something important, it was being done for Sundance Channel. Of course we had fun too – she is hilarious – seeing her in those crazy outfits doing crazy things, and getting to direct puppets was an experience."

Shapiro met Rossellini while working at Rhombus Media when he produced *The Saddest Music in the World* (2003) directed by Guy Madden. After Rossellini accepted the role on the film, Shapiro went to Winnipeg for the shoot.

"Isabella enjoyed the experience because Madden's sets are loose and fun. Everyone has a camera that moves things at a very fast pace," explained Shapiro. "She really liked the way Guy dealt with the language of cinema."

Months later Rossellini, daughter of Ingrid Bergman, approached the duo to see if they'd help her make a film about her late father, well respected filmmaker Roberto Rossellini.

"With her father's centennial year coming up and retrospectives of his films being announced, she thought what better tribute," Shapiro said. "That cemented the relationship right there. We immediately jumped up and made a 20-minute film, *My Dad is 100 Years Old* (2005) with photos, and later a book."

These days, Shapiro is travelling with Madden promoting their latest collaboration *My Winnipeg* which won best Canadian feature film at the Toronto International Film Festival in 2007.

Jody Shapiro

Madden, a native Winnipegger, was approached by producer Michael Burns, of the Documentary Channel, to make a feature length film on Winnipeg, a city that meant something special to him.

Shapiro, producer and cinematographer on that doc, packed his bags and moved to Winnipeg for two months.

"Most of those nights, Guy and I would pick up a camera, just the two of us, and get in the car and look for sleepwalkers, frost building up on windows and dogs frozen in the snow." he laughs.

They spent 10 days shooting the avant-garde film and after a year of editing created a "docu-fantasia" as Madden calls it, a personal blend of fact and fiction. *My Winnipeg* narrated live by Madden will screen at New York's Tribeca Film Fest (April 21- May 4).

This summer Shapiro is co-directing and producing *How to Start Your Own Country*, a documentary about individuals who declare themselves queen or king and build their own territories, make their own passports and have their own currency.

"There are people who scan satellite images of the Pacific Ocean looking for volcanic islands that have erupted and claim them. It's a doc exploring this micro-nation world - that's what they call themselves, and what defines a country. That'll take me about a year. Rossellini is also talking about making more *Green Pornos* and I'm gearing up for the theatrical release of *My Winnipeg* in North America in June, and then London and Australia. Winnipeg is going to be taken to the world!"

For more info visit sundancechannel.com /greenporno

Hollywood romantic comedy has a Jewish sensibility

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

In the film *Then She Found Me*, the phrase "damaged goods" refers not to a pair of worn-out shoes but to a pair of broken lives.

In this romantic comedy, which opens in theatres in Toronto on April 25, Helen Hunt plays a Jewish elementary schoolteacher who must adapt to heart-wrenching change, and Colin Firth portrays a single father who has lost faith in himself.

Hunt's 39-year-old character, April Epner, seems to be in a perpetual crisis mode. In a befuddled moment, Ben (Matthew Broderick), her husband, leaves April, saying he made a mistake marrying her in the first place. "I don't want this life," he whines.

Shortly after April's adoptive mother dies, her birth mother, Bernice (Bette Midler), an assertive TV talk-show hostess, suddenly turns up.

At first, April doesn't know what to make of this intrusive but generous stranger. Bernice claims that April's father is the screen heart-throb Steve McQueen, but April is skeptical. To be charitable, Bernice stretches the truth.

Hopelessly adrift, April meets Frank (Firth), who could use some tender, loving care and whose self-confidence needs a little bolstering.

April, whose biological clock is ticking, is all too willing to embrace Frank, a touchy Brit who has been left with the arduous task of bringing up two young children.

But then, much to her confusion, April learns that she is pregnant with Ben's baby. April is thus torn between going back to Ben and continuing to pursue Frank.

Helen Hunt and Colin Firth star in *Then She Found Me*.

Adapted from a novel by Elinor Lipman and directed by Hunt in a self-assured directorial debut, *Then She Found Me* is basically about the fragility of relationships and the trials, tribulations and joys of love.

The movie, which is skin deep but engaging, is suffused with a Jewish sensibility, from the introductory klezmer musical notes to April's reliance on Jewish prayer for solace. In several scenes, she recites the Sabbath candlelighting prayer, and not badly either.

The cast acquits itself honourably.

In a strong performance, Hunt is the personification of grit in the face of adversity. Midler, a cherubic presence, brings a light touch to delicate situations. Firth, depending on his mood, is remote and passionate. Broderick has little to do, aside from rejecting or pining for April, but he is convincing.

The British novelist Salman Rushdie (*The Satanic Verses*) has a cameo role as a brisk obstetrician, and he brings it off with aplomb.

Then She Found Me is standard Hollywood fare, mildly entertaining with just enough punch and panache to make it interesting for almost two hours.

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Arts & Travel

Over the Top music festival grows

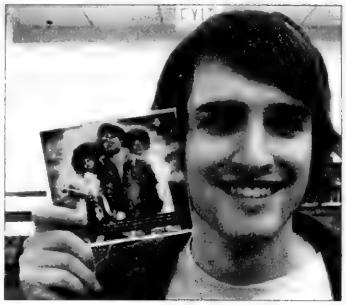
By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

At only 24, Eric Warner has risen fast in the music business since he first put out a fanzine and started booking bands when he was 15.

He's done marketing and publicity for top acts such as White Stripes and Moby, started a successful record label with international distribution and is in charge of music initiatives for MySpace Canada.

But his favourite achievement is founding Over the Top, a multi-faceted all-ages music festival that this year takes over downtown Toronto from April 30 to May 4.

"The main focus is my festival," Warner says. "I really enjoy building something from nothing and seeing my ideas grow to fruition."



Eric Warner

Over the Top was conceived in 2002 with the goal of showcasing up-and-coming local and international acts. "Bands that deserve the opportunity to play to a diverse audience," he says.

Key to Warner's and the festival's ideology is that all music events are open to all ages.

"I remember how frustrating it was for me not to be able to see bands I like due to age restrictions," Warner says. "People have been very receptive to this concept, and each year it's continued to grow." The festival has grown from an attendance of 500 in its first year to 3,400 last year.

The festival has also grown in its diversity. "I want to keep the festival as multi-faceted as possible," Warner says.

It now includes theatre and film. This year, it is partnering with the Toronto Jewish Film Festival to co-present the film *The Clown and the Fuhrer*. The festival is also presenting the Canadian première of *It is Fine: Everything is Fine*, a film by Crispin Glovin.

Among the music highlights this year are a rare solo performance by Kevin Barnes, of the group Of Montreal; classical guitarist Pete Walker; and The Beginners.

The festival takes place at various venues around downtown Toronto. For more information, visit www.overthetopfest.com

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

ORPHEUS CHOIR PRESENTS *JOSHUA* ORATORIO FOR THOSE WHO CAN "HANDEL" IT

The Orpheus Choir of Toronto presents Handel's rarely performed oratorio *Joshua*, which apparently has not been performed in this city since the **Toronto Jewish Folk Choir** performed an abridged version more than half a century ago.

Written in 1747 in celebration of the overthrow of the Jacobite Rebellion, Handel's *Joshua* provides dollops of Biblical drama as the walls of Jericho collapse, a great city is ravaged by fire and Joshua successfully implores God to stop the sun and moon in their tracks.

All this unfolds as a series of glorious choruses resound with trumpets, horns and drums, martial music and beloved arias. No wonder the piece is commonly described as a masterpiece. $30, $25, $15. Eglinton St. George's United Church, 35 Lytton Blvd. Sunday May 11, 3 p.m. 416-530-4428. www.orpheuschoir toronto.com

* * *

Encore Entertainment Presents: *Beau Jest*, the romantic comedy by **James Sherman**, tells the story of **Sarah Goldman**, a Jewish career woman struggling to find happiness and independence, while trying to please her parents. Trouble isn't far away after Sarah introduces them to David, purportedly a Jewish doctor and her new boyfriend, but actually none of these things. The comedy of errors is at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, Studio Theatre, 5040 Yonge St., April 24 to May 4. $27.50, $26. 416-733-0558.

* * *

Historic Photographs: Hungarian-born photojournalist **Paul Goldman** clicked his shutter on many scenes of historic significance in British-mandate Palestine and the early years of the State of Israel. Having first appeared in a Tel Aviv exhibition in 2004, more than 100 of his newly restored images are soon going on view in Toronto.

The Forgotten Photographs: The Work of Paul Goldman, 1943-1961 opens May 5 at the Beth Tzedec Synagogue, Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum. Opening reception is Monday May 5, 7 to 9 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 232 or 416-932-2260. The show is co-sponsored by the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation in honour of Israel @ 60 and runs until June 30.

* * *

Names in the News

• Toronto author **Anna Porter** was named the winner of the $15,000 Nereus Writers Trust Non-Fiction Prize this month for her 2007 book *Kasztner's Train: The True Story of Rezso Kasztner, Unknown Hero of the Holocaust*. Other Canadian authors honoured by the Writers Trust include **Lawrence Hill** (who won the $15,000 fiction prize for his novel *The Book of Negroes*) and **Craig Boyko**, **Martha Brooks**, **Michael Crummey**, **Graeme Gibson**, **David Helwig** and **Diane Schoemperlen**.

• Thirty-year-old French-Israeli singer-songwriter **Yael Naim** has rocketed to celebrity with *New Soul*, a tremendously catchy tune featured in a MacBook Air laptop TV commercial and circulated to millions on YouTube. Featured in many top American magazines, newspapers and television talk shows, Naim recently concluded her first US tour with a sold-out show at the Bowery Ballroom in New York City.

• The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has approved a bid by **Moses Znaimer** to acquire radio station AM740.

Arts in Brief

• *Emotional Arithmetic*, a feature film by **Paolo Barzman** based on the novel by the late Toronto author **Matt Cohen**, opened in theatres across Canada in this week. It stars **Susan Sarandon**, **Christopher Plummer** and **Max von Sydow**.

• Kolel @ the J features "Kafka, Kierkegaard and Friends", a course with **Rabbi Michael Stroh**. Six Wednesdays from April 23 to May 28, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. For details please phone 416-924-6211.

• "Jerusalem Defined", a group art exhibition hosted by the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada, presents works by artists **Gina Godfrey**, **Beverley Abramson**, **Ian Leventhal** and **Rochelle Rubinstein**. Proceeds go to the Jerusalem International YMCA Peace Preschool, whose social goal is to facilitate co-existence among Arab, Christian and Jewish Israelis. Reception and silent auction, Monday April 28, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Couvert $60. System 4 Gallery, 70 Wingold Ave. 416 741 5542, info@system4.ca

• **Harold Troper** and **Judy Feld Carr** speak on the Rescue of Syrian Jews. Miles Nadall JCC, Tuesday April 29, 7:30 p.m. For details please contact Randi Sokolsky, 416-924-6211, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org

• 55+ Forward . . .For Seniors presents a guided tour of the exhibit, "Common Thread, A 100 Year History of the Spadina Avenue Garment Industry". This curator-guided tour highlights the Jewish community's contribution to the industry's development. Market Gallery, 95 Front St. E. Wednesday, April 30, 1:30 p.m. For details, please contact Phyllis Fien, 416-924-6211 ext. 155, phyllisf@mnjcc.org

• Founded by **Robin Perlmutter** and **Gail Hakala** three years ago, the Toronto Youth Music Theatre Company presents *Bye Bye Birdie*, directed by Gemini award winner **David Gale**. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC, April 30 to May 2. For tickets, please visit the website www.torontomusictheatre.com or phone 416-986-0281.

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16th TJFF features comedy series and lots more

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

It begins with a special Jewish-Chinese night and ends with a documentary on Pete Seeger. And for a week in between you'll get powerful feature films, documentaries, shorts, panel discussions and – of course – free noshes.

It can only mean one thing. The Toronto Jewish Film Festival is back, kicking off its 16th year with the Canadian première of *Noodle*, an upbeat Israeli film about an El Al flight attendant whose existence is turned upside down by a Chinese boy when his mother is deported from Israel.

Expect some tasty noodles at the screening. "We'll have some Israeli-Chinese snacks for sure," says the festival's executive director Helen Zukerman.

As usual, the TJFF is packed with a wide assortment of top feature and documentary films, but one of the highlights this year is a comedy series called Comedy on Wry: The Mavericks. "This is the first time we've managed a comedy series, though we've been trying for years," Zuckerman says.

Films in this series include ones on Lenny Bruce, Danny Kaye and Don Rickles, and features the world première of Barry Avrich's *Jackie Mason: The Ultimate Jew*.

This year the festival introduces the David A. Stein Memorial Award, named after a gifted local filmmaker who died at 34 in 2004.

"David was a great friend to the festival who did some of our trailers in the past," Zukerman says. A $5,000 award will be given to the best documentary making its Canadian première at the TJFF.

Noodle opens up the festival with a gala on May 3.

The judges include Ralph Benmergui, Bravo's Judy Gladstone and Tereza Barta of York University. The winner will be announced at the opening night gala. As always, filmmakers and artists will be present at most screenings.

Families won't want to miss a free performance (you'll need tickets) by children's entertainers Sharon, Lois & Bram, followed by a screening of a CBC-TV concert special *25 Years of Skinnamarink*.

There is also an educational element called FilmMatters, through which schools are invited to attend special free screenings. "We started this with *Paper Clips* as an outreach to non-Jewish students," Zukerman said. Four films focusing on tolerance and diversity will be featured in this series. Interested schools should e-mail tjff@tjff.ca.

The festival closes with *Pete Seeger: The Power of Song*. The screening is a tribute to the late Dusty Cohl, a cinephile and promoter and a huge fan of Seeger.

All this and free herring and ice cream for those long lineups.

The festival runs May 3 to 11 at three theatres, the Bloor Cinema, the Al Green Theatre (Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre) and the Sheppard Grande. Tickets (single and passes) can be purchased now from the TJFF box office before May 3 (17 Madison Ave.), online at www.tjff.com or over the phone 416-967-1528. For a complete schedule and more information visit www.tjff.com.

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Dancap to mount shows in North York

Dancap Productions and the Toronto Centre for the Arts have reached a deal that will see the theatre company produce Broadway-style shows as the primary tenant of the venue's 1,800-seat main stage until the end of 2010.

Dancap's first show there will be the Cameron Mackintosh and the National Theatre of Great Britain's production of Lerner and Loewe's *My Fair Lady* from May 8 to May 31, the company said last week.

"*My Fair Lady* is one of those timeless and classic musicals that everyone will want to see again and again," said Dancap president Aubrey Dan. "It has continued to remain relevant and entertaining over the decades."

The Tony and Grammy Award-winning musical *Jersey Boys* will be presented from Aug. 21 to Oct. 5. It tells the story of a group of blue-collar boys from the wrong side of the tracks who became pop sensation.

Noa show disrupted in Spain

MADRID — A man carrying a Palestinian flag and shouting anti-Israeli slogans disrupted a concert by Israeli singer Achinoam Nini – known as Noa – in Tulsa, Spain, earlier this month.

The man was arrested, but Nini was visibly upset and had to be convinced by the crowd to return to the stage. There were also 80 protesters outside the venue, Ynetnews reported.

Nini's seven shows in Spain were sold out weeks in advance.

"It was a shame it had to happen, but it made me proud to be an Israeli," Nini said. "I hope my next show would be a peace concert of Israelis and Palestinians. This will prove to these demonstrators how wrong they are."

HealthForceOntario

We want you. A call for Transitional Councils and Registrars for New Health Regulatory Colleges: Homeopathy, Kinesiology, Naturopathy and Psychotherapy

Transitional Councils of new health regulatory Colleges have been established by the *Homeopathy Act, 2007, Kinesiology Act, 2007, Naturopathy Act, 2007* and *Psychotherapy Act, 2007* to regulate the practice of homeopathy, kinesiology, naturopathy and psychotherapy in the public interest. A transitional Council exercises the powers of a regular Council of a health regulatory College to carry out the statutory objectives of a College to serve and protect the public interest. The new Colleges will regulate the professions in the public interest by ensuring that individuals have access to services provided by competent health professionals, and that individuals are treated with sensitivity and respect in their dealings with health professionals. Members of the new Colleges will be governed in accordance with the *Homeopathy Act, 2007, Kinesiology Act, 2007, Naturopathy Act, 2007* or *Psychotherapy Act, 2007*, the Health Professions Procedural Code, the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, and the regulations and by-laws of their respective College. Colleges develop and maintain standards of practice, entry to practice requirements, standards of professional ethics, and promote and develop standards for continuing competence among its members. Various committees of the Colleges function in a quasi-judicial role with respect to the issuance, suspension and revocation of certificates of registration to practise in Ontario.

Council Members

You are an expert, clinical or academic, in the practice of homeopathy, kinesiology, naturopathy or psychotherapy, an expert in health professional regulation or the health sector or public administration; or a person with demonstrated interest or experience in public service. You have a commitment to the principles and values of public service. Members are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council for a specified term, subject to renewal. These are part-time positions.

Transitional Council of the College of Homeopaths of Ontario – File # PAS-0810.

Transitional Council of the College of Naturopaths of Ontario – File # PAS-0812.

Transitional Council of the College of Kinesiologists of Ontario – File # PAS-0811.

Transitional Council of the College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario – File # PAS-0813.

Transitional Registrars

As a Transitional Registrar, reporting to the Transitional Council and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, you will assist in establishing and operating a College, and developing and implementing regulations, by-laws and policies related to the practice of homeopathy, naturopathy or psychotherapy. In addition to 3 or more years of management or leadership experience in legal, health-care or professional regulation settings, you have a thorough understanding of the legislative process and health professional regulation, and excellent oral and written communication skills. Bilingualism in English and French is an asset. This full-time position is appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council for a three-year term. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Transitional Registrar of the College of Homeopaths of Ontario – File # PAS-0814.

Transitional Registrar of the College of Naturopaths of Ontario – File # PAS-0815.

Transitional Registrar of the College of Psychotherapists and Registered Mental Health Therapists of Ontario – File # PAS-0816.

Copies of the job descriptions for the Transitional Registrar positions are available by calling 1-866-656-7753. TTY: 1-800-387-5559. Downloadable application forms are available at **www.pas.gov.on.ca.** An application form, quoting the **appropriate file number,** must be received by **May 30, 2008, by: Public Appointments Secretariat, Room 2440, Whitney Block, 99 Wellesley St. W., Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A1.** Alternatively, you can apply online.
Only those applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

Ontario

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24 HOUSES WANTED TO BUY
25 HOUSES WANTED TO RENT
30 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE
35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
50 ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
65 ACCOMMODATION/SWAP/EXCHANGE
67 HOUSE SITTERS
70 UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION
75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
81 APARTMENT TO SUBLET
82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
84 ROOM WANTED FOR RENT
85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. AVAIL.
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT-OF-TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT-OF-COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH./SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND/LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND/LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
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325 GARAGE SALE

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345 ACCOUNTING
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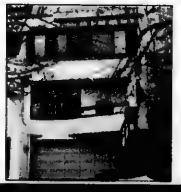

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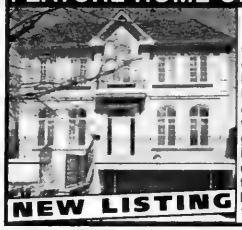

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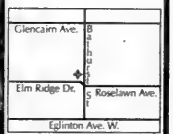

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Coast to Coast

Cotler bill proposes government divestment from Sudan

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Liberal MP Irwin Cotler hopes Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government will take over a private member's bill he tabled in Parliament April 11 that would make the Sudanese government accountable to Canada and the international community for the continued toll of death and suffering in Darfur.

Called the Sudan Accountability Act, Cotler's bill, C-536, would provide for "targeted" government divestment from Sudan and require Canadian government contractors to certify that they don't do business there.

Cotler said the divestment portion of his bill would target only Sudanese industries – including energy, petroleum and the military – directly involved in the genocide, so that the people would not be hurt: "We were very careful about that."

The proposed legislation "instructs" Canada to work with the international community and the United Nations to end the genocide.

"This is not a partisan thing," Cotler told reporters last week. "If we're going to combat the genocide in Darfur, we're going to need the involvement of the government and the people of Canada."

In addition to the steps proposed in his bill, Cotler, founder of the Save Canada Parliamentary Commission, said Canada should also consider using China's participation in certain Alberta tar sands projects as leverage to encourage it to decrease its involvement with Sudan. The Chinese Petroleum Corporation (the parent company for PetroChina) is currently "involved in oil extraction" at the sands, he said, but did not elaborate.

China is the main "enabler" of the genocide in Sudan through its purchase of most of Sudan's oil. The revenues from those purchases, Cotler said, are used by the Sudanese government to buy arms and perpetuate the "genocide by attrition."

"China is the most important player here," Cotler said. "China alone could stop the genocide.

"If we want to leverage China, we should hold them accountable with respect to their involvement in oil extraction in Canada and the like."

When asked how Alberta's provincial government might react to the idea, he replied, "We'll see."

Cotler called on Canada to be the potential site for a Darfur summit that would bring together all relevant parties, including representatives of the United Nations, NATO, the African Union, the European Union, the Arab League and the Sudanese government.

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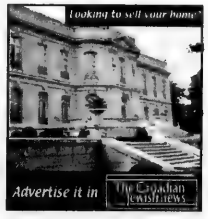

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Things not so good for Israeli hockey teams

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

There's bad news and really bad news on the Israeli hockey front this spring, and nary a silver lining to be found.

First the really bad news. Israel's under-18 junior team was thoroughly whacked, shellacked, shut out, bummed out and, as one sports cartoon reported tongue in cheek many years ago, discombobulated in five games in Talinn, Estonia, recently.

Playing in the International Ice Hockey Federation's Division IIB, only one division above requalification, the Israelis were completely humbled by the opposition, none of which are known as hockey powers.

Israel started with a 19-1 loss to Hungary, and the best thing that can be said for the boys in blue is that things didn't get worse from there. They followed the opening game with 12-4 and 12-0 thrashings at the hands of Spain and Britain and ended the tournament with 10-3 and 15-3 losses to Estonia and Romania. Gevalt. Without their best player, AAA skater Eli Sherbatov of Montreal, things would have been even worse.

As a result of its woeful performance, Israel was relegated to Division III next year.

Now for the bad news, which of course, could be worse.

At the senior men's level, Israel won two games, lost three and – here's the silver lining after all – won't be relegated.

Playing in Miercurea Ciuc, Romania, Israel defeated Bulgaria and Ireland while losing to Romania, Serbia and Belgium. Israel finished fourth in the tourney, behind Romania, Serbia and Belgium, but ahead of Bulgaria and Ireland.

The Israelis were led by Max Birbraer, the onetime New Jersey Devil draft pick whose career has seen him play in various minor pro leagues around the world. This past season, Birbraer was available to the Israeli nationals once his team, the Cardiff Devils, was eliminated in Britain's Elite Ice Hockey League.

Birbraer led all Israeli scorers with five goals and six assists in five games. His 11 points were 10th best among scorers, a statistic dominated by tournament champion Romania. Romanians claimed the top four tournament scoring positions and were seven of the top 10 scorers.

Alex Voihanski, a spokesman for the Israel Ice Hockey Federation, said head coach Jean Perron was hampered by the absence of Oren and Alon Eizenman, Israel's top players from past tournaments. Oren's Fresno Falcons are in the midst of the ECHL playoffs, and in two games so far, Oren has notched a pair of goals.

Alon, who played in the French professional league in past seasons, is practising law in Toronto.

The Eizenmans have, in the past, been responsible for nearly half the team's offensive output, Voihanski said. "Playing without Oren was a real loss."

The Eizenmans' absence and the lack of quality players able to skate for the juniors points to a hockey program in transition, he continued. Changes will have to be made, especially considering senior team goalie Yevgeni Gussin is pushing 40, and cracks may be showing in his armour.

Gussin remains by far Israel's best goalie, and when he retires, the team will face a huge hole in its lineup, Voihanski said. Last summer in the first-ever World Jewish Ice Hockey Tournament in Metulla, Gussin stoned Canadian shooters, blocking nearly 50 shots. Adding to his mystique is that he puts on the pads only about 10 times a year, including tournament games. "He's an anomaly," Voihanski said. "I have no explanation for how he can play that way."

With Oren Eizenman pursuing a pro career, Israel hockey's deep thinkers are wondering where the team's next batch of top level talent will come from. There are, Voihanski said, some good Israeli players coming up, but whether they'll be available to the program is another thing.

Daniel Erlich played this past season for London Knights of the Ontario Hockey League. Only 16, he has a tremendous upside, Voihanski said. In 27 regular season games with the Knights, Erlich scored six goals and six assists. In three playoff games, he notched one goal and one assist.

Ethan Werek is another talented youngster who could play for Israel. Also 16, Werek was a ninth round draft pick of Kingston Frontenacs of the OHL, but played for Stouffville Spirit in the second-tier Ontario Provincial Junior A Hockey League this year.

"He's the real deal," Voihanski said, noting Werek played for the tournament-winning Ontario team in the 2008 World Under-17 Hockey Challenge, which included top players from around the world.

Werek is committed to playing for Boston University, a NCAA team, instead of the OHL in 2009, Voihanski said.

Daniel Spivak is another good player – in the past, the Israel juniors' top defenceman – and he too played for Stouffville this year.

Unfortunately, the best Israelis are the ones playing the game in Canada, Voihanski noted. Very few quality players are coming out of Israel itself, and that's where the Israel Hockey Federation will place its emphasis in coming years.

First they must "coach the coaches," train the hockey guys living in Israel, most of whom immigrated from the former Soviet Union, to teach youngsters the fundamentals of hockey. The next task will be to try to convince the many roller hockey players in the country to switch to the on-ice sport.

Only if the sport grows at the grassroots will Israel be able to supply more than third and fourth line players to the national teams, Voihanski said.

Until then, the Israel hockey program will continue to struggle through a transition period, and unless some of the top talent decides to lace up their skates at international tournaments, you can expect bad, worse and even worse news for years to come.

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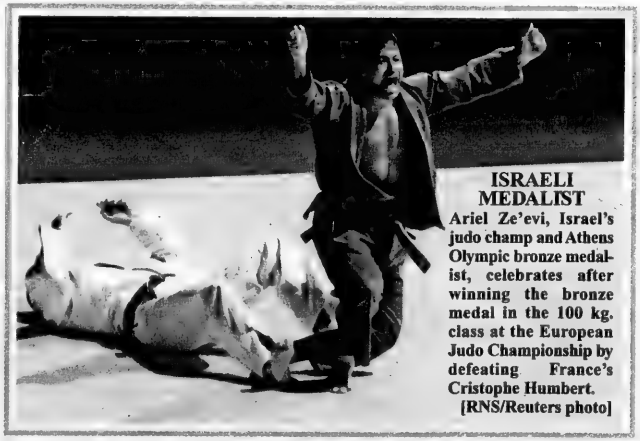

ISRAELI MEDALIST
Ariel Ze'evi, Israel's judo champ and Athens Olympic bronze medalist, celebrates after winning the bronze medal in the 100 kg. class at the European Judo Championship by defeating France's Cristophe Humbert. [RNS/Reuters photo]

End-of-life challenges for families

By MICHAEL GORDON

The Senior Side of Life

It was the second time in less than a month that a request came to me to assist families struggling with decisions about loved ones in serious end-of-life situations. The circumstances were similar. Members of both families were struggling with whether or not and, if so, how "to let go."

One loved one was in an intensive care unit and the other was in a regular unit in an acute care hospital. The outlook for both appeared dismal from the perspective of the medical staff who, according to the families, had done everything reasonably possible to salvage their loved one – but things hadn't gone well and now the end was growing near.

The families wanted to do the "right thing" not just as a family but also "Jewishly." In both families, the degree of observance was modest but the reverence for Jewish values and traditions was high. They had received some input from rabbis but were struggling with whether the advice truly reflected the values they shared as a family and the values of their loved one. Not an easy challenge for a devoted and loving family.

The question for me was what I might offer in my role as geriatrician, and one who had done post-graduate studies in ethics. I understood the limitations of my background and training but was also aware of the many situations I had witnessed and my great interest in and respect for the teachings and values of Judaism. I knew that not being a rabbi, my views were a secularized composite and understanding of the cases I had observed and the education I had been involved with over many years of practice. The challenge was mainly at the human level – the struggling with the notion of "letting go" of a beloved member of the family.

How a family deals with such heart-wrenching dilemmas can be addressed from many perspectives – ethical, legal and personal/family.

Ethically, most families want to do the "right" thing. Their understanding of the ethical approach to such decisions is usually a reflection of the principles and values on which they were raised. If there was a Jewish (strongly religious or not) component to such values, one hears often that families do not want any suffering for their loved one. Such concerns are fairly universal across all religions and ethnic groups. Families often struggle with concepts of their duty to provide food and drink, often translated into the more clinical "nutrition and hydration," but the association with the loving act of feeding often cannot be disregarded. Promoting sanctity of life, a common theme in the three monotheistic religions, often competes with the secular concept of quality of life and avoidance of suffering.

Ontario law expects family decisions to reflect what they believe their loved one would truly have wanted or what would be in their loved ones' difficult to define "best interests." Many family members do not truly know their loved one's wishes and values, as such issues are not usually discussed.

But it is at the human level that the real challenge exists. Time is needed to discuss, and to explore feelings and values. At some point, it becomes necessary to make a difficult decision.

I often counsel families that whatever decision they make, it is the "right one," whatever the outcome. Second guessing afterward with "what ifs" is a terrible process that can lead to lifelong doubts and recriminations. Talk and feel and share as a family, and then make the best decision that you can. That is all any loving family can do.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press).

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Epi on Education

Seymour Epstein

As I write this, Jews around the world are preparing for Pesach. As you read this article, you are in the midst of Pesach. We can only hope and pray that our preparations were sufficient to make this, once again, a meaningful holiday. Pesach is the holiday of education, since its primary purpose is to transmit to our children the agony of slavery, the joy of freedom, and the responsibility inherent in our relationship to God.

The eternal link between that first, primal Pesach of Egypt and what we have termed the Pesach of generations is what we hope to internalize through prayer, the seder, family time, eating matzot, tasting maror and charoset, and avoiding chametz.

From the first time that we as a people heard the command that Nisan would be like no other month, we came into contact with our national mission and vision. Up to that time, every month was like another. As we watched the moon wax and wane, we let it be our calendar, totally dependent on God's fixed cycles of nature.

Everything changed in Exodus, chapter 12, when we were told that what would happen in the coming month was an event we would never forget. Nisan became the first month in which history changed the cycle of nature. While both forces involved God's intervention, history was (and remains) radically different as a force since it involves women and men as active partners with God. There would be no Exodus if there were no Israelite slaves to free.

The ultimate message of Pesach is that humans have a critical role to play in God's world. Both nature and history have the potential for good and evil – hence the beauty of a summer morning and the destruction of a tsunami, or the difference between the discovery of a vaccine for polio and 9/11.

The radical difference between them is that we don't control nature, but we are the makers of human history. That heavy responsibility is ours, and ever since that first Pesach, we have been the teachers of that human partnership with God to our children and grandchildren.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Our brave Jews

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

On Friday, April 4, the board of directors of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) came under fire while standing on a hill, near Kibbutz Nir Am, overlooking the northern Gazan town of Beith Hanoun. Most rockets launched at Sderot are from Beith Hanoun.

The group was receiving a briefing from Israeli Minister of Public Security Avi Dichter. One of those shot at was Torontonian Moshe Ronen, the chairman of CIC. The following are some thoughts Moshe shared with me about this harrowing episode. He and his group are courageous.

A: *Moshe, what was the purpose of your trip to Israel?*

M: CIC board of directors try to meet once every year or two in Israel. Our board is composed of Christians and Jews.

A: *What was your objective in going to Sderot?*

M: We dedicated one day of meetings in Sderot as a show of solidarity with the city and its inhabitants who have been under terrorist attacks for so long. We ended up showing solidarity but also got a taste of what it really feels like to live there.

A: *Please detail for me what happened when you were shot at?*

M: Near the end of [Dichter's] remarks, a barrage of gun fire was heard and we soon realized we were being fired upon. Dichter and I were pushed to the ground by the Israeli Secret Service. I was told to tell the group to fall to the ground, lie flat and not to move or get up. This continued for about a minute. We could see the bullet shells falling around us.

It was really scary. The IDF post nearby started firing back heavy fire and the attack stopped. An ambulance came to clear Mati [the Minister's aid], who had been injured [Thank God he is recovering well]. Dichter told us to crawl to a fortified area, where we remained until the all-clear sign came and we were evacuated on foot to our bus.

A: *Moshe, how were you immediately after the attack?*

M: Very shaken but still calm and collected… very grateful we were okay and eager to call family, as we knew the media would be reporting this in Canada. We immediately decided to go on with our visit in Sderot, including a lunch in an outdoor café recently hit by Qassam rockets.

A: *What were you thinking about as it was happening?*

M: I thought about life, its value and family, and that this will not change our commitment, activism and support – only strengthen it.

A: *What was your family's reaction?*

M: Obviously concerned but calm and supportive. The kids asked questions and said it was scary, but no one even suggested I come home – in fact, two days later, I received a high-level [non-Jewish] CIC delegation in Israel, which included a Sderot visit on their itinerary.

A: *Have you ever been shot at before? Now that you have, what is your perception of the work of chayalim/chayalot [soldiers]?*

M: Never. It only brought home more vividly what Israelis face daily and the danger our soldiers put themselves in defending and preventing this.

A: *You told me "this needs to stop." Can you expand on that?*

M: The situation is intolerable, and the government and world community has the responsibility to react.

* * *

M: "I must confess the overwhelming emotion I am left with after today's experience is one of sadness. Sad for the people of Sderot. Sad for many more in Israel who want nothing more than to live in peace. Sad for those Palestinians who may have the same desires but are prevented by their leaders from realizing them. And I suppose I am sad on a broader scale for humankind which is so prone to this kind of behaviour, and much worse." (From an article by Michael Diamond, CIC member and Torontonian, who came under fire)

Avrum@veahavta.org Sderot/Sudan?

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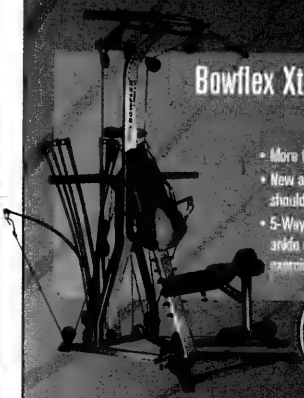

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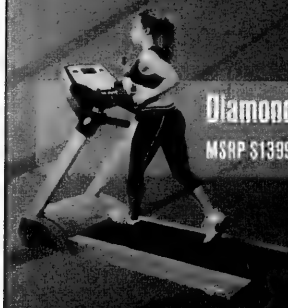

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This Week

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National

Rabbi sworn in as chaplain for Canadian Forces. *Page 6*

Campus

Student volunteers in African orphanage. *Page 36*

CJN Profile

Eugene Levy receives Governor General's Award. *Page 50*

Arts & Travel

Jewish film festival runs from May 3-11. *Page 52*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 14
Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah 23
What's New 28
Obituaries and Notices 30
Hebrew Corner 34
On Campus 35
Health & Lifestyle 40
Heebonics 42
Israel & the Jewish World 47
CJN Profile 50
Books & Authors 51
Arts & Travel 52
Classified 58
Sports 62

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Kidnapped soldier sends a message of tolerance and hope

Children's tale he wrote 10 years ago recently published

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Though he's still in captivity, isolated by Hamas from his family and all who long for his safe return, Israel Defence Forces Cpl. Gilad Schalit has, paradoxically, managed to send a message of peace and tolerance to the world.

It comes in the form of an allegorical children's story he wrote for a class assignment in Grade 5, when he was 11, titled *When the Shark and the Fish First Met*.

The tale, written in simple prose by a young, innocent Schalit, depicts the struggles the two animals go through to overcome their natural enmity and the worries of their respective mothers, who fear their children are making a grave mistake pursuing this friendship.

When the Shark and the Fish First Met

Schalit was abducted on June 25, 2006, in an attack by Hamas terrorists near kibbutz Kerem Shalom. He will be 22 on Aug. 28, and this year would mark the end of his three-year mandatory army duty in Israel.

His family has spent an agonizing two years awaiting word of his condition.

A former grade school teacher of Schalit's found the story last year among her belongings at home and brought it to his family as a gift, his father, Noam, told *The CJN* last week in a phone interview from Israel.

The Schalits decided to post the story on the website Habanim.org late last year. On it, they encourage Israeli children to read the story and download it as a colouring book.

The website is dedicated to providing updated information about three prominent captured IDF soldiers, Schalit, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev.

In a letter on the website, Schalit's parents, Noam and Aviva, asked children, parents and teachers to "illustrate Gilad's story, each one in his own way, and to discuss the story and how it relates to the issue of kidnapped soldiers. This way, we can keep them in mind... and be connected to the strong hope in all of our hearts that they will return home soon [and] that we will all live in peace and security."

Gilad Schalit

Word of Gilad Schalit's newfound tale spread in the country and in November 2007, owners of The Edge art gallery in Nahariya, together with the Israeli Illustrators' Association, presented a series of exhibitions across the country, showcasing illustrations by renowned Israeli artists inspired by *When the Shark and the Fish First Met*.

Continued on page 61

U.S. confirms Israel hit Syrian nuclear site

JTA

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration has confirmed that Israel hit a non-peaceful nuclear target in Syria last fall.

"Until Sept. 6, 2007, the Syrian regime was building a covert nuclear reactor in its eastern desert capable of producing plutonium," said the statement issued by the White House last Thursday afternoon. "We are convinced, based on a variety of information, that North Korea assisted Syria's covert nuclear activities. We have good reason to believe that the reactor, which was damaged beyond repair on Sept. 6 of last year, was not intended for peaceful purposes."

The statement came after administration officials briefed the U.S. House of Representatives intelligence committee on the attack.

House Republicans have been seeking confirmation of the hit for months in a bid to bolster arguments for further isolating Syria and North Korea. Israel has strongly resisted releasing such information, both because it prefers to maintain deniability on such attacks and because some Israeli officials want to keep avenues open for peace talks with Syria.

In related developments, the United Nations' atomic agency announced it would investigate whether Syria has a secret nuclear program.

The UN International Atomic Energy Agency's announcement came last Friday, a day after the Bush administration released photographic evidence it said demonstrated that the site Israel bombed in Syria last September was a nascent nuclear reactor.

After the photographs were released, Syria accused the United States of possible involvement in the Israeli strike on the facility.

Continued on page 47

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Jews leaving Bolivia — please see page 48

The News in Brief

CANADA

Christians Fete Israel

TORONTO — The Canadian Christian College will host a May 4 event to honour Israel for its 60th birthday. MPs and community leaders will attend, said B'nai Brith, which is co-sponsoring the event with the college and Christians United For Israel-Canada.

Uprising Recalled

TORONTO — This past April 19, Erev Pesach fell 65 years to the day after Jewish fighters, also on Erev Pesach, began a month-long stand against a Nazi assault on the Warsaw Ghetto, Canadian Jewish Congress said in a statement. Noting that the brave fighters were "the first free-standing Jewish army" since the Bar Kochba revolt, CEO Bernie Farber, son of Shoah survivors, said "they fought using only small arms fire, Molotov cocktails, moxie and passion against one of the best trained and equipped armies of its day."

WORLD

Ex-Editor Dies

LONDON — William Frankel, editor of the London *Jewish Chronicle* from 1958 to 1977, died April 18 of a cerebral hemorrhage at 91. Frankel expanded the scope of the *Chronicle*'s coverage to include global stories of Jewish interest, such as Vietnam, the U.S. civil rights movement and the trial of Nazi Adolf Eichmann. Born in London to Polish immigrants, Frankel earned a law degree at the London School of Economics. After retiring, he continued to write for the paper, and in 1991, he was named chairman of its board and worked to stem a drop-off in subscribers.

U.S. Matzah Crunch?

NEW YORK — The United States reportedly faced a matzah shortage last week. Shoppers nationwide had difficulty finding matzah on store shelves due to production problems at the Manischewitz plant in New Jersey, and because some stores decided not to carry matzah this year, the *New York Times* reported.

Shul Arson Suspected

MIAMI — Police are investigating a Miami Beach shul fire as possible arson. The Chabad House synagogue was severely damaged April 22, and its rabbi suspects arson because a piece of the shul's Torah was found on its front lawn while the rest wasn't found. Police agreed that could be a sign of arson, the *New York Times* reported. Rabbi Zev Katz said he will hold Shabbat services on the front lawn, "to show people that we are not quitting." There was a fire at another Miami shul last October, which police said they will now reinvestigate as arson.

Teens Identified

KIEV — Ukraine officials reportedly identified three teens who allegedly burned down a memorial in the Zhitomir Jewish cemetery. The suspects, aged 17 to 19, are accused of burning down the Ohel of Tzadik Rabbi Aharon from Zhitomir, a student of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Chassidism, on the night of April 15-16. It was the second reported incident of vandalism in Zhitomir, a city of 275,000 in western Ukraine, in five months. The the teens reportedly played soccer near the cemetery before lighting a fire near the Ohel to warm up, but the fire got out of control and burned down the monument.

Aleph Bet Beckham?

LOS ANGELES — Soccer star David Beckham and his wife, Victoria, a former Spice Girl, will send their son to a Jewish preschool. Cruz Beckham, 3, will attend a Los Angeles-area "exclusive Jewish school" that's "attached to a Jewish temple," the London tabloid the *Sun* reported. Beckam's mother is a non-practising Jew, the *Sun* said.

Pope's U.S. Tour Included Shul Visit

Pope Benedict

NEW YORK — Pope Benedict XVI concluded his visit to the United States, which included a meeting with Jewish leaders and a historic visit to a Manhattan synagogue.

His April 18 visit to Park East Synagogue was the first time a pope has visited a U.S. shul. The Pope gave brief remarks, lauding the importance of "building bridges of friendship" between different faiths. Rabbi Arthur Schneier presented him with gifts, including a seder plate.

"Your presence gives us hope and courage for the road we still have to travel together," Schneier told the Pope.

At the meeting in Washington with Jewish officials and at the shul, the Pope didn't refer to the Good Friday Latin prayer that seeks the conversion of Jews. His recent decision to reinstate it has roiled Jewish-Catholic relations.

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Postal workers back boycott, sanctions against Israel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Anti-Israel groups are praising the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) for being the first national union in North America to pass a resolution in support of the boycott, divestment and sanctions campaign against Israel.

The Coalition Against Israeli Apartheid (CAIA) released a statement after CUPW's 23rd triennial convention, held April 13 to 17 in Ottawa, that praised the union for passing a "historic resolution… in support of the global campaign of boycotts, divestment and sanctions against Israeli apartheid."

The CAIA says it's the first time in North American history that a national union has passed such a resolution against Israel.

"The resolution recognizes Israel as an apartheid state and expresses CUPW's support for boycott and divestment from Israel. It was passed almost unanimously after nearly one hour of discussion on the convention floor," the statement said.

The resolution states that CUPW, a union that represents more than 50,000 Canadian postal workers, will work "with Palestinian solidarity and human rights organizations to develop an educational campaign about the apartheid nature of the Israeli state and the political and economic support of Canada for these practices."

The resolution also calls on the Canadian government to increase humanitarian aid to the Palestinians.

CUPW spokespeople did not respond to repeated requests for interviews, but a letter posted on the union's website by new national president Denis Lemelin on April 23 said that the 600 union delegates who attended the convention "worked long hours and adopted resolutions that will improve both the functioning of the union and services to the members."

Referring to the anti-Israel resolution, he wrote, "The union calls on Israel to immediately withdraw from the occupied territories in accordance with UN resolution 242 and tear down the Israeli-West Bank barrier.

"The union calls on the Canadian government to increase humanitarian aid to Palestinians. The union will also support the international campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions until Israel recognizes the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and right to return to their homes as stipulated in UN resolution 194."

The CUPW resolution was modelled after a similar one passed by the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) Ontario in 2006, but Canadian Jewish Congress CEO Bernie Farber said that while CUPE Ontario passed its resolution regionally, the motion was never considered by the national union.

Bernie Farber

"Other unions like CUPE understand that they don't want their union side-tracked with these kinds of things," Farber said.

He noted that the latest resolution was first approved at CUPW's 23rd Ontario regional constitutional conference, held late last year in London, Ont.

He added that he wasn't surprised it passed at the national level.

"It was a foregone conclusion almost from the outset," he said.

"CUPW has a very well-established, almost an iconic, reputation as a radical organization on the far extremes of the Canadian labour movement."

He said the fact the resolution was largely ignored by mainstream media suggests that people don't take CUPW resolutions seriously.

"The vast majority of men and women working for the postal service have no clue about such resolutions," he said. "Very few pay any attention to it."

He said CJC will keep pursuing its outreach work to unions.

"We continue to monitor the labour file and we will do what we can with those major labour forces that require our attention."

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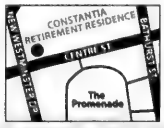

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A tearful, revealing contrast

From the editor's desk

Juxtapositions often lead to a clearer understanding of murky concepts or more precise outlines to hazy images. They sometimes also lead to a sigh of regret and the welling of tears.

Such is the case in a stark, poignant contrast that presented itself last week.

Israel's authoritative Intelligence and Terrorism Information Center at the Israel's Intelligence Heritage and Commemoration Center (IICC) published a study titled *Contemporary Arab-Muslim anti-Semitism: Its Significance and Implications*, which warns of the dire long-term effect of the rise of official, state-sanctioned anti-Semitism throughout the Muslim Middle East.

Among its various conclusions, the authors of the study note: "Anti-Semitism and the accompanying hate industry are a strategic danger for Israel and the Jewish people: generations of Palestinians, Arabs and Muslims are brought up hating the Jews; the peace process is damaged and obstacles to the normalization of Israel's relations with the Arab countries of the Middle East are erected; indiscriminate Palestinian terrorism against Israel is made palatable, as is Hezbollah's Shi'ite terrorism and that of Al Qaeda, when directed against Israel and Jews around the world."

The authors urge "the State of Israel and the Jewish people to cooperate with the international community to struggle effectively against [anti-Semitism]... And for the struggle to be effective, there must be an international task force with the ability to take action, leading the struggle against Arab-Muslim anti-Semitic incitement as part of a general campaign against anti-Semitism, with political, media and legal tools."

(The summary of the study is available at the centre's website, www.intelligence.org.il.)

In contrast to this increasingly troubling image of attitudes in the Muslim Middle East is the news that even today, after the failure of the Oslo accords, after the unceasing anti-Jewish and anti-Israel incitement in the Palestinian territories, after the calculated terror-driven intifadah of 2002, after the takeover by a terrorist regime of the Gaza strip, after the unceasing barrage of rockets upon the civilians of northern Israel in the Second Lebanon War, after all of the discouraging evidence of Muslim enmity toward the very idea of a Jewish state anywhere in the Middle East, around half of Israelis would support giving back all or some of the Golan Heights for the sake of a peace agreement with Syria.

As reported by *JTA*, a poll last week by *Yediot Achronot*, found that "32 per cent would agree to Syria's demand for a full return of the Golan Heights in exchange for a comprehensive peace deal, while 17 per cent would support only a partial handover of the strategic plateau."

The yearning for peaceful coexistence, for acceptance by their neighbours, is deeply embedded into the Israeli psyche. There is no more poignant or compelling proof of this than the story reported by *The CJN*'s Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf on the front page of this issue.

The heart of Israeli society has been captivated by a children's tale told by Gilad Schalit, the Israel Defence Forces soldier kidnapped nearly two years ago by Hamas terrorists.

Schalit wrote *When the Shark and the Fish First Met* when he was but 11 years old and in grade 5. The story was recently rediscovered and has become a rallying cause for the release of the the Israelis held hostage by their Hamas and Hezbollah kidnappers.

As the story notes, Schalit's parents have publicly asked children, parents and teachers to "illustrate Gilad's story, each one in his own way, and to discuss the story and how it relates to the issue of kidnapped soldiers. This way, we can keep them in mind... and be connected to the strong hope in all of our hearts that they will return home soon [and] that we will all live in peace and security."

Young Schalit concludes his story with a wishful hope. "The shark said, 'You are my enemy, but maybe we can make peace?' The little fish said, 'Okay.' They played secretly for days, weeks and months, until one day the shark and fish went to the fish's mother and spoke together with her... they did the same thing with the shark's mother. And from that same day, the sharks and the fish live in peace. The End."

To be sure, not all Palestinians harbour hatred in their hearts toward Jews and Israel. Perhaps even the majority of Palestinians wish, simply, to live in peace side by side with the Jews of Israel? But where are they? Where is their voice? Where is the countervailing societal call for peace in the Muslim Middle East?

The Jews of the Diaspora – individuals, synagogues, schools and federations – indeed, all people who yearn for a true peace in the Middle East, should acquire Schalit's book when it is available.

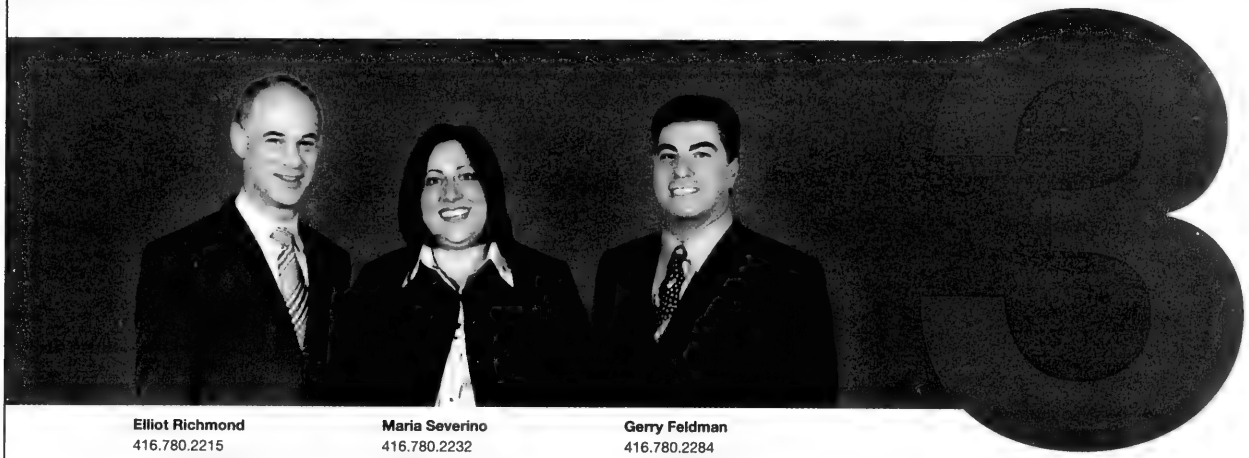
We must do so as a testament to him and to the other IDF soldiers who were kidnapped. We must also do so as a visible, demonstrable affirmation that the guileless, innocent words and hopes of an 11-year-old Israeli child might one day become the living reality the Jewish state and its Muslim neighbours.

– *MBD*

See]N

CLOSING PESACH WITH MIMOUNA

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, second from right, concluded the holiday of Pesach by attending a traditional Mimouna celebration in the town of Ofakim in the Negev. To Olmert's right are Transport Minister Shaul Mofaz and Finance Minister Roni Bar-On. Mimouna is a traditional celebration that has its roots in North African Jewish communities, notably Morocco. As soon as Pesach ends, families and friends offer festive hospitality to each other. In Israel, Mimouna has been adopted and adapted by many other ethnic groups, and the day following the conclusion of Pesach is usually marked by family picnics and barbecues. [Israel photo]



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Toronto rabbi joins Canadian Forces

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Even though Rabbi Lazer Danzinger had carved a successful 20-year career for himself in the field of information technology, it wasn't until he became a chaplain that he felt he was pursuing his passion.

During an April 17 ceremony at the Denison Armoury in North York, Rabbi Danzinger, 52, was officially sworn in as a captain with the 25th Service Battalion of the 32 Canadian Brigade.

The rabbi is the first Jewish chaplain in the Canadian Forces born of Holocaust survivors and the first rabbi in the brigade since World War II.

Rabbi Danzinger, who is a rabbinical consultant for Chabad.org and a Jewish chaplain for both York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill and the Correctional Service of Canada in the Kingston, Ont., area, said that he decided to look into chaplaincy with the Canadian Forces about four years ago.

When a now-retired Jewish general, Ed Fitch, heard that Rabbi Danziger was considering joining the forces, he put him in touch with Maj. Gillian Federico, a chaplain with the 32 Canadian Brigade.

Federico recalled meeting Rabbi Danzinger a few years ago.

"I went to talk to him about what was involved, and he was just checking out information at that point. Because I'm very strongly committed to interfaith ministry, I was really delighted to hear from him," Federico said.

With his left hand resting on a Tanach, Rabbi Lazer Danzinger, right, was sworn in as a chaplain for the Canadian Forces by Lt. Col. Andrew Zalvin, the commanding officer of the 32 Canadian Brigade. [Sheri Shefa photo]

"She came to my house and spoke to me and encouraged me, but for some reason, I felt that the time wasn't right," Rabbi Danzinger said, adding that he first wanted to gain experience and confidence by working as a chaplain elsewhere first.

In 2005, after 20 years in the computer industry, Rabbi Danzinger got a contract with Jewish Family & Child Services (JF&CS) to be the Jewish chaplain at York Central Hospital, and a few months later, he also began offering his services to Jewish inmates in Kingston area prisons.

With 2½ years of chaplaincy experience under his belt – and after having been evaluated at the recruiting centre with an aptitude test, a medical test, an interview and a physical fitness test – Sgt. Matt Charlesworth, a recruiter for the 32 Canadian brigade, said that Rabbi Danzinger would be a great addition to the forces.

Charlesworth said that when a soldier is deployed overseas, he or she meets with a social worker or a padre – another term for a chaplain – to talk about any problems at home that may arise from their absence.

Some soldiers also choose to meet with padres or social workers upon their return.

"Soldiers do come back with scars, some deeper than others. So we do what we can to help," Charlesworth said.

"Rabbi Danzinger worked with hospitals, worked in the prison systems. He works with people who are distressed, day in and day out. Regardless of whether he deals with a single person who is of the Jewish faith for his entire career, if he saves one soldier's life, we win."

Federico said she's certain that Rabbi Danzinger will be a "tremendous asset to the team."

"I think he has a very positive outlook, he's very outgoing and friendly, and in conversation with him, I realized that he is very inclusive in his approach to caring for people, and that is essential for a military chaplain," she said.

"He'll be caring for soldiers of all religious denominations. The motto of the Canadian Forces Chaplaincy is that we worship with our own, we facilitate the worship of others and we serve all."

Rabbi Danzinger – who grew up in a Reform household (where he was known as Larry) and studied at Associated Hebrew Day School, the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and Ner Israel Yeshiva – said that offering spiritual guidance to Jews and non-Jews alike is part of his philosophy and theology.

"As a chaplain in the Canadian Forces, even though I'm a Jewish chaplain, and I will administer to my own, provide Jewish services to whatever number of Jewish soldiers are there, spiritual care will be given to any and all soldiers."

Continued on page 37

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Soliloquy of hatred

Though radical Islamists and Jihadists hate Jews and the sovereign Jewish state of Israel, their common hatred does not bind them into a benevolent brotherhood of co-religionists. Far from it. Ancient theological rivalries still trump common theological antipathies. And atavistic suspicions are not assuaged by centuries of modern life.

Last week, the acknowledged second in command of Al Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri, registered deep umbrage with the Shia leaders of Iran. His anger was kindled by the suggestion, which he attributed to the Iranians, that the 9/11 attacks were an Israeli enterprise.

"The purpose of this lie is clear," al-Zawahiri was reported to have said. "[T]o suggest that there are no heroes among the Sunnis who can hurt America as no one else did in history."

The slaughter of nearly 3,000 innocent individuals is clearly a source of immense pride for Al Qaeda. They will allow no one to undermine that feeling of ghoulish achievement and celebration.

But lest anyone hastily attribute Al-Qaeda's pique at the Iranian establishment merely to Sunni and Shia differences, Osama Bin Laden's Sunni terrorists also administered a severe tongue-lashing last week to the Sunni jihadists of Hamas.

As reported by *JTA*, Al Qaeda also scorned Hamas officials last week for publicly musing that they might support a peace agreement between the Palestinian Authority and Israel, and that they might even accept a truce with Israel.

Al-zawahiri issued a statement attacking their Sunni colleagues after Hamas leaders told former U.S. president Jimmy Carter that they could support a future peace accord if it were to be ratified in a Palestinian referendum.

"As for peace agreements with Israel," Al-zawahiri said, "they spoke of putting it to a referendum despite considering it a breach of Sharia [Muslim law]. How can they put a matter that violates Sharia to a referendum?"

Of course, Al-zawahiri was feigning annoyance, for he knew that the Hamas spokesmen were merely going through the public relations motions. Hamas leaders have time and again publicly emphasized that they will never acknowledge the legitimacy of a Jewish state, irrespective of any terms of an agreement with the Palestinian Authority. To do so would offend their religion. And as for the demand for a national Palestinian referendum, they added the convenient condition that millions of "exiled" Palestinians be included in the vote.

No government of Israel will ever be party to Hamas' prescription to Jewish national suicide. Al-zawahiri knew this, too.

Thus, Al-zawahiri's publicly expressed indignation with both Hamas and the Iranian regime was really but a soliloquy on the international stage of terrorist theatre, a sordid speech aimed at reaffirming Al Qaeda's doctrinal purity among the worshippers of anti-Jewish, anti-Israel and anti-Western hatred.

It is a performance that all should note with great alarm.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

A report from Canadian Jewish Congress' law and social action committee showed that women were underrepresented in positions of power in Canadian Jewish organizations. Although they held 75 per cent of the salaried positions, and 59 per cent of senior administrative jobs, they held only 32 per cent of volunteer policy-making posts, the report said.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
FOOD FOR THOUGHT
WITH THE MATZOS OF PASSOVER BEHIND US, WE NOW COUNT THE DAYS
UNTIL THE CHEESE-EATING HOLIDAY OF SHAVUOT.
JUDAISM IS A RELIGION THAT TRAVELS ON ITS STOMACH.
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To CIJA: stay away from Durban II

I have two words for the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), which, for reasons I find utterly baffling, is intent on attending the Durban Review Conference (Durban II): stay away ("Iran tries to exclude CIJA from Durban II conference," *CJN*, April 24). The conference on "racism" is nothing more than another UN-sanctioned excuse to spend far too much time and money trying to gain consensus for the idea that Israel's existence is morally indefensible. The Jew-hating thugs who are organizing the event, including Iran, which has vowed to wipe the Jewish "blot" off the Middle East map, need this consensus so that they can justify Israel's destruction on moral grounds.

Not even Adolf Hitler, with all his maniacal hatred, would have been so brazen as to convene an international conference on racism to deal with his "Jewish problem." He had to do it in secret, at a conference in Wannsee.

Alone among nations, Canada has taken a moral stance and announced that it will not take part in this odious event. Instead of begging the country in the forefront of global anti-Semitism for permission to attend what is shaping up to be a second Fiesta of *Judenhass* (with Israel as the piñata), CIJA and every other NGO and nation that can see this farce for what it is should take a cue from Canada and refuse to participate.

To attend Durban II is to validate it. Far better to stay away and heap contempt on it from the comfort of home.

Mindy Alter
Toronto

Dry Bones
YES FRIENDS, HERE IN ISRAEL, ONCE AGAIN IT'S...
NATIONAL LET'S-START-A-DIET WEEK
WHICH COMES RIGHT AFTER I-CAN'T-BELIEVE HOW-MUCH-I-ATE-DURING-PASSOVER WEEK.
AND JUST BEFORE THE ANNUAL IT'S-TOO-LATE-TO-GET-INTO-SWIM-SUIT-SHAPE PERIOD.

* * *

Don't close She'arim!

I am a parent with a child in Grade 6 at She'arim Hebrew Day School. I commend the community's past efforts in assisting She'arim financially, educationally and morally. Closing She'arim, however, will bring its students one step closer to the two-thirds of Jewish children, mentioned by David Koschitzky in his article, who do not attend Jewish day school ("Debate on closure burdened by misinformation," *CJN*, April 10).

Many of She'arim's children have already attempted to enter mainstream Jewish day schools and could not adapt. I am not convinced, nor likely will the rest of the She'arim parents be, that Mercaz (formerly the Board of Jewish Education) will be able to successfully put in place an integrationist transition strategy in a mere matter of months without stigma or prejudice to She'arim students. Our children, for whom our community allegedly "cares deeply," will suffer during the transition.

Moreover, without She'arim, future parents of children with learning disabilities will likely not even consider approaching or registering their children in the regular Jewish day school system. The result will further compound the two-third's statistic referred to by Koschitzky.

She'arim presently provides a plethora of assistance tools to its students, including an occupational therapist, art therapist, social worker and music therapist. It is not realistic to think that such varied assistance will be available in the new integrated schools.

More likely, in the absence of a She'arim, the struggling student will have no alternative but to enter the public school system, thus effectively denying him or her a Jewish education. Mounting debt is indeed a problem. But filing for bankruptcy, which is what Mercaz is basically doing, for our precious Jewish children of today and of tomorrow is a far greater problem.

Closing a school is never a good precedent. The board of She'arim probably had no choice but to close the school. However, it must have been precipitated by Mercaz putting the brakes on any further funding.

You are right, Mr. Koschitzky. This is a "magnificent community" that seems to always be at the forefront of great Jewish causes locally and in Israel. But let's put the nurturing of our children's Jewish souls first, even if means incurring debt.

Matthew Moyal
Toronto

* * *

Ridiculous and dangerous claims

I was very concerned about the article "Honey product can stimulate the immune system" (*CJN*, April 17), with its suggestion that honey can, in some undetermined manner, "boost one's immune system." Suggesting that honey has a role to play in treating leukemia in a patient whose daughter is profiting from its sales is a brazen conflict, with the potential to steer patients away from accepted and potentially effective treatment. It is hard to imagine that, with today's medical advances, *The CJN* would peddle such ridiculous and dangerous claims to its readers under the guise of news. I sincerely hope that your paper considers focusing on health care information with the potential to lengthen rather than shorten the lives of those without significant medical knowledge. Patients are entitled to choose their own therapy in any way that gives them comfort. *The CJN*, on the other hand, has a responsibility to promote accurate health information for the benefit of our community.

Dr. Rob Myers
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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'The dream has risen'

The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, 65 years ago

Mordechai Anielewicz was the commander of the ZOB *(Zydowska Organizacja Bojowa)*, the Jewish Fighting Organization, in the Warsaw ghetto.

On April 19, 1943, the Nazis commenced their final operation to remove the remaining Jews in the ghetto. The ZOB fought back.

Mordechai Anielewicz

The mostly young fighters of the ZOB, an amalgamation of a number of Zionist movements, carried their fight to the Nazis and held out against the German forces until May 16, longer than any of the armies of continental Europe.

Along with many of his comrades, Anielewicz died on May 8, 1943 in his command bunker under Mila 18, preferring to commit suicide rather than be captured by the Nazis.

His body was never found.

This is Anielewicz's last letter. It was written to his friend Yitzhak Cukierman on April 23.

Sixty-five years later, it is important that we recall Anilewicz's words, the heroism of the fighters of the ZOB and that of all of the victims of the Nazi genocide who resisted in whatever way they could.

* * *

It is impossible to put into words what we have been through. One thing is clear: what happened exceeded our boldest dreams. The Germans ran twice from the ghetto. One of our companies held out for 40 minutes and another for more than six hours. The mine set in the "brushmakers" area exploded. Several of our companies attacked the dispersing Germans. Our losses in manpower are minimal. That is also an achievement. Y. [Yechiel] fell. He fell a hero, at the machine gun. I feel that great things are happening and what we dared do is of great, enormous importance...

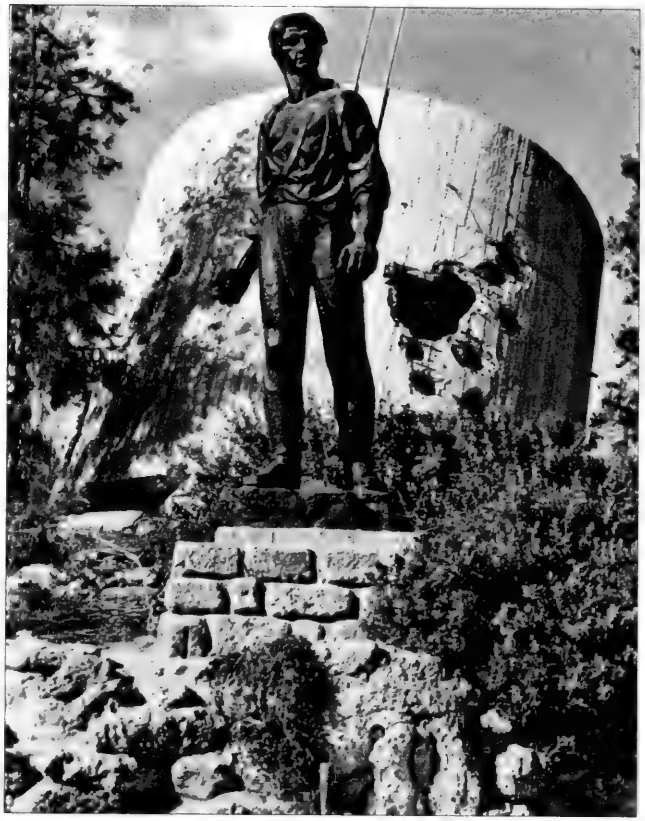
Beginning from today, we shall shift over to the partisan tactic. Three battle companies will move out tonight, with two tasks: reconnaissance and obtaining arms. Do you remember, short-range weapons are of no use to us. We use such weapons only rarely. What we need urgently: grenades, rifles, machine guns and explosives.

It is impossible to describe the conditions under which the Jews of the ghetto are now living. Only a few will be able to hold out. The remainder will die sooner or later. Their fate is decided. In almost all the hiding places in which thousands are concealing themselves it is not possible to light a candle for lack of air.

With the aid of our transmitter we heard the marvellous report on our fighting by the "Shavit" radio station. The fact that we are remembered beyond the ghetto walls encourages us in our struggle. Peace go with you, my friend! Perhaps we may still meet again!

The dream of my life has risen to become fact. Self defence in the ghetto will have been a reality. Jewish armed resistance and revenge are facts. I have been a witness to the magnificent, heroic fighting of Jewish men in battle.

M. Anielewicz



A larger-than-life giant bronze statue of Mordechai Anielewicz, grenade in hand, sculpted by Nathan Rapaport, stands beside the battle-scarred remains of the water tower on Kibbutz Yad Mordechai in the southwest part of Israel. The members of the kibbutz fought furiously against the Egyptian army during Israel's War of Independence, significantly delaying the army's intended advance toward Tel Aviv. [WZPS photo]

The horrors that 'normal' people can perpetrate

By JAY M. SOLOMON

A friend of mine recently reminded me that history is all too often recounted as a series of events – a story of the what, the where, and the why. As an alternative, he suggested, history should be a telling of stories about how real people transcended situations, survived the unimaginable or succumbed to the perils of the time.

Real people and real stories – that is how we should remember events of the past.

Recently, I viewed a compilation of photographs taken during the early 1940s of life for the Nazis in Auschwitz. The images were both shocking and frightening, but not in the way one might have expected.

The photographs didn't show any images of soldiers hailing Hitler, or packing Jews onto trains, or conducting medical "experiments," or incinerating people by the thousands, or forcing starving men to dig the mass graves in which they would soon themselves lie.

Rather, the pictures could have been from anyone's personal family collection – of a vacation or a day at the cottage. The pictures depicted the seemingly normal, day-to-day lives of seemingly normal individuals.

We see pictures of soldiers tanning in the sun, sharing a meal under the stars, enjoying a sing-along, laughing and smiling. All this, while thousands upon thousands of people in the camp were being massacred.

By day, the Nazis were monsters; by night, they partied. To paraphrase Eichmann, they really were "just doing their jobs."

This is why the album is shocking and scary. This is also why it is so important.

If we take a look around the world today, anti-Jewish sentiment runs rampant, much as it did in the 1930s. Iran's president wants to "wipe Israel off the map." Indeed, in 2005 the United Nations did wipe Israel off the map when it displayed a map of "Palestine" that conveniently omitted the State of Israel. The Jewish state is almost always singled out for condemnation at the UN and its related world bodies.

Hateful academics at some of the world's most respected post-secondary institutions ridicule Israel for, well, simply existing.

But the rest of the world seems not to be bothered and, certainly, not to care.

I used to doubt my ability to imagine what the late 1930s must have been like.

How can one conceptualize something as barbaric as Nazism?

How could it be that this actually happened? The Nazis were people – real people, with names, families and friends. How could seemingly average, "normal" individuals be capable of such extreme evil?

The first attempt to answer this question came in the early 1960s, when psychologist Stanley Milgram conducted his now infamous conformity test. He found that ordinary people could be convinced to commit unconscionable acts by people in authority. People were willing to abandon their own morality when told that it was appropriate to do so.

On the 27th day of Nisan, Jews around the world pause to commemorate Yom HaShoah. We stop to remember the names, faces and stories of the millions of people, Jews and non-Jews alike, who were wiped out by Nazi fanaticism.

The Holocaust should serve as a stark reminder of the horrors that normal people are capable of perpetrating when taught to hate by an authoritative leadership, and when the rest of the world displays just the right amount of apathy.

Jay M. Solomon is a Toronto-based motivational speaker and freelance writer.

Opinions

Zionism is in danger

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein and her family spent Pesach in Israel, as she told us in this paper before they left. One of the reasons for her joy about a Jerusalem Passover is how easy it is to celebrate the holiday there, not least because of the availability of kosher-for-Pesach food, including the chocolate cake that one of her sons so adores.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Her testimony may be good news for tourism, but it is problematic for Zionism when she writes: "In Jerusalem… well it almost makes you want to live there. At least for the week of Pesach."

Nowadays, Jews come only for a week or two. Last year, more left Israel for good than came to live there.

I am not suggesting that Rabbi Goldstein and her family should move to Israel. Their absence would be a great loss for Canadian Jewry. But her stance illustrates the most serious challenge Zionism is facing today. For what is Zionism without aliyah?

Though Israelis on average have more children than Jews in the Diaspora and their risk of assimilation is smaller, the highest birthrate is among the haredim and the Arabs. Neither are Zionists.

Soon, we are told, some 40 per cent of the population of Israel will be non-Jewish. The very Jewishness of the state is, therefore, at risk – and with it the Zionist dream.

There are no more Jews from oppressed countries waiting to come. Even aliyah from the former Soviet Union has dried up. Many of those who first came have finally settled in other countries, including Canada. Some have even returned home.

The only potential source of aliyah is Jews from the West. But they are not coming other than to eat chocolate cake on Pesach and similar activities. Even the overwhelming majority of those who are clearly committed to the Jewish state only make excursions to it.

In response, the government of Israel is trying to find novel ways of attracting Diaspora Jews, including aliyah fairs and even financial inducements. Of late, serious consideration has been given to accepting "partial aliyah" by people such as my wife and I, who divide our time between Israel and another country.

Ironically, there are many non-Jews who yearn to be Israelis. They include workers from the Philippines, Thailand, Romania and elsewhere who have been in Israel for years. They married in Israel, have Hebrew-speaking children and now want to stay for good. And then there are the refugees from Africa – notably Darfur and Eritrea – who risk their lives to reach Israel. For them, Israel is the Promised Land, even when they can't afford chocolate cake.

Though there are cogent humanitarian reasons for taking them in, they are not likely to fulfil the Zionist dream.

Campus groups should advocate for Israel together

A hundred or so students gathered around a display in the Unicentre Atrium at Carleton University recently. Some were angry and some were curious. All of them were engaged.

What drew them to this spot was a 15-foot by five-foot fence with pictures of terrorists on one side and pictures of terrorism victims on the other. It was an aggressive argument in favour of Israel's security barrier, which has drawn international condemnation since it was first erected.

Mark Masters in Ottawa

The event held on April 3 was organized by the Jewish fraternity on campus, Alpha Epsilon Pi, and represented the most aggressive form of pro-Israel activism on an Ottawa campus in years. It was about time.

I am a member of the fraternity and supported the event, and I think it is clear the initiative achieved its desired goal: attention to the issue.

This year in Ottawa there have been no shortage of anti-Israel events, including a speech by Norman Finkelstein, someone who says that the Holocaust has been exaggerated and the Hamas record is actually quite good. The year also included the annual Israel hatefest known as Israel Apartheid Week.

The fence presentation was a powerful message but by no means over the line. You wouldn't know this by reading the Carleton campus newspaper, the *Charlatan*. Like most student rags, it takes a left-of-centre editorial approach, and like most other student papers, its views on the Middle East are uninformed.

The newspaper said the fence event should not be allowed on any university campus because it promotes "segregation and hate between people of different origins."

Usually newspapers are on the side of freedom of expression, but not so, it appears, when it comes to advocating for the Jewish state.

The editorial actually proves why more aggressive Israel activism is needed at Carleton and other campuses where the Jewish population is not as large as it is in Toronto. For so long, students have only gotten one side of the story. They have not been exposed to aggressive pro-Israel activism and, as such, as with anything new, it startled them.

What they fail to realize is Israel doesn't want to have a fence but has made the decision to have it in order to protect their people from harm. Without the security fence exhibit, this argument would not have been heard at Carleton this year.

If events such as the security fence presentation become more common, they will become not just expected but accepted as part of the discourse. Look at how Israel Apartheid Week has caught on. It is based on rhetoric and manipulation, and yet it is slowly becoming a staple on the university calendar for Israel's detractors.

In its poorly written and poorly argued editorial, the *Charlatan* refused to label suicide bombers as terrorists, instead choosing to put quotations around the word, and basically labelled fraternity members as racists.

I urge readers to e-mail letters in response to editor@charlatan.ca to express their views on the matters.

But also of note from the security-fence event is how it was perceived in the Jewish community.

While Alpha Epsilon Pi organized and sponsored the event, every other Jewish group on campus did everything possible to publicly distance themselves from it. Privately they expressed support, but many feared the possible backlash from such aggressive activism.

I understand their position. Student leaders at Carleton have punished student groups for taking views they don't agree with before, and the Jewish Students' Association does not want to risk jeopardizing its relationship with the students' union or other groups on campus.

Still, fear is no reason to compromise one's principles. Our community is at its best when we are united, and there is no better issue to unite on than advocating for Israel, the Jewish state.

I hope more aggressive pro-Israel activism will take place again next year on campus, and next time I hope a coalition of all Jewish groups and other supporters of Israel on campus sponsor it. Then, as a united group, we can start chipping away at the ignorance and misrepresentation of Israel on campus, symbolized in the *Charlatan* editorial.

Alpha Epsilon Pi has shown such events can happen in Ottawa without the sky falling. The precedent has been set; now it's time to take the next step.

Sixty years later

Israel has come a long way in its 60 years and has accomplished much to be proud of. It has made the desert bloom and gone from a fledgling agricultural economy to a leading technological nation. It has seen wars fought on its land and has withstood and debunked accusations of racism. It has provided a haven to Jews from around the world and has gone to extraordinary lengths to protect those in need.

Jesse Mintz in Halifax

Born as the homeland of the Jewish nation, though, its place as the historical bastion of the Jews can no longer be taken for granted.

I went to the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. I was taught the same historical narrative that many of you undoubtedly recognize: Britain tried to discourage the establishment of Israel; the fledgling Jewish state faced a militarily superior and united Arab army; the Palestinians abandoned their homes and fled their villages of their own volition and were even encouraged to do so by scheming Arab leaders; the Israeli army has subsequently practised a "purity of arms" that's unparalleled in the world.

Despite this account, or perhaps because of it, there exists a tremendous narrative gap between the Zionist version of *azma'ut* and *shichrur* – independence from the British and liberation from the Diaspora, respectively – and the Palestinian tale of "al Naqba" – meaning, literally, the catastrophe. Much of the cause for the current divide between the two communities can be attributed to the discrepancies between these two versions of history.

One of my classes at Dalhousie University is a course on critical theory of history. Much of the year in this class has been spent deconstructing the relationship between west and east. When, for the final paper, I was given the chance to write about Israel, I took it. I wasn't sure exactly what I would learn, but, being well aware of both the traditional historiography of the founding of the state and the contemporary political situation, I was positive that there was more to the story.

Israel – like Canada, the United States and Britain – declassifies sensitive government documents 30 years after the fact. In light of such declassified documents, a revisionist school of Israeli historiography has emerged that is challenging the traditional version of events. While the members of this school often reject the title, such historians have been labelled "new historians," and much of their thought has been deemed "post-Zionist."

These new historians have endeavoured to rethink Israeli history with an awareness of the influence of the Zionist project on the traditional narrative. By doing so, they have tried to create a more equitable joint narrative and eliminate the contradiction in terms that exists between the Zionists' "liberation" and the Palestinians' "catastrophe" that has dogged the peace process throughout.

Within the camp of new historians, however, there is a great range of debate. New historians, in general, see the legitimacy of both peoples' claims and, all things considered, place a certain level of blame on all parties involved: Israel, the Palestinians, Arab countries and the West.

This new academic approach is far from wholly accepted in Israel, but it is making important inroads.

Meretz MK Zahava Gal-On wrote a letter recently to Education Minister Yuli Tamir insisting that students be taught dark chapters from Israel's past. She has asked the government to consider returning the study of the Kafr Kassem massacre – in which 47 Israeli Arabs were murdered in 1956 – to the civics curriculum. The issue was first raised in 1999, when then-education minister Yossi Sarid urged teachers to force students to come to terms with "ugly stains" of history, as he called them. At the same time, textbooks used in elementary schools began to question the traditional historiography of the 1948 War of Independence and tacitly acknowledged the expulsion of Palestinians.

Far be it for me to tell anyone what paradigm to use when looking at Israeli history. The debate between traditional historians and the new academics is far from settled, and many historical truths, on both sides, have yet to be uncovered.

But, to paraphrase historian Benny Morris – perhaps the dean of the "new historians" – after 60 years, Israel is strong enough as a state and Israelis are mature enough as a people to admit their mistakes.

The Kirshner File

Letter from Orlando

There is no shortage of hotels in Orlando, Florida's third-largest city after Miami and Tampa. By one estimation, Orlando has nearly 450 hotels and motels, with 112,000 rooms. Once the centre of Florida's still-thriving citrus industry, Orlando has become the premier leisure destination in the United States, thanks to such alluring attractions as Walt Disney World Resort, Cypress Gardens Adventure Park, SeaWorld, Busch Gardens Africa and The Holy Land Experience.

Sheldon Kirshner in Florida

Last year, 48 million tourists, 45 million of whom were Americans, poured into the greater Orlando area – which consists of Orange, Osceola, Seminole and Lake counties – and spent a cool $30 billion.

Yet not all visitors flock to Orlando and environs in pursuit of fun. Since Cape Canaveral and the Kennedy Space Center are close by, the aerospace industry here is big. And because Lockheed Martin – a mammoth defence contractor – has plants in central Florida, Orlando is on the cutting edge of advances in technology.

Orlando, set in a sub-tropical region, has come a long way since being officially incorporated in 1875.

Cattle ranches were the backbone of the economy for many years, but with the extension of the South Florida Railroad, citrus growers flourished, being able to ship fresh oranges, grapefruit and tangerines to northern markets, and the first tourists arrived. As roads were improved and highways were gradually built, tourism grew at a steady clip. Florida's first theme park, Cypress Gardens, which is now known as Cypress Gardens Adventure Park, opened in Winter Haven in 1936, and soon served as a backdrop for a string of Esther Williams Hollywood films.

Gatorland appeared in 1954, but the event that utterly and irrevocably transformed Orlando was the opening of Walt Disney's Magic Kindgom in 1971. SeaWorld followed in 1973, and Epcot, a branch of the Walt Disney empire, was inaugurated in 1982.

Since then, Disney's Hollywood Studios and Animal Kingdom, not to mention Universal Studios and a host of other theme parks, have emerged with a splash.

These parks revolutionized the tourist industry here and touched off a frenzy of hotel construction in and around Orlando, resulting in the rise of such hotels as the Lake Buena Vista Resort Hotel, the Hilton, the Doubletree Guest Suites, the Royal Plaza, the Best Western and the Regal Sun Resort.

Harris Rosen, hotelier extraordinaire, is a key figure in Orlando's success as a tourist destination. A former high-level Disney employee, he is president and chief executive officer of Rosen Hotels & Resorts, the biggest independent hotel company in the Sunshine State, with seven hotels and 6,500 rooms in the greater Orlando area.

"He's an icon in the industry," said one of his competitors, Anthony Aslanian, director of marketing at the Hilton Hotel.

Rosen is a significant player. Last year, his chain, with an occupancy rate of about 80 per cent, drew more than two million guests.

Now a spry 68, Rosen launched his career as a convention salesman at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City, where he was born. Subsequently a Hilton manager in Florida, New York and Texas, he bought his first hotel, the Quality Inn, in 1974.

Two years ago, on his birthday in September, he inaugurated the crown jewel of his properties, the Rosen Shingle Creek resort, which is set on 230 acres at the headwaters of the Florida Everglades and employs 1,500 workers.

Built in Spanish Revival style, at a cost of $300 million, the hotel has 1,500 rooms, a profusion of restaurants and cafes, a 13,000 square foot spa, 445,000 square feet of meeting space, one of the nation's largest column-free ballrooms, a championship golf course, tennis courts and four swimming pools.

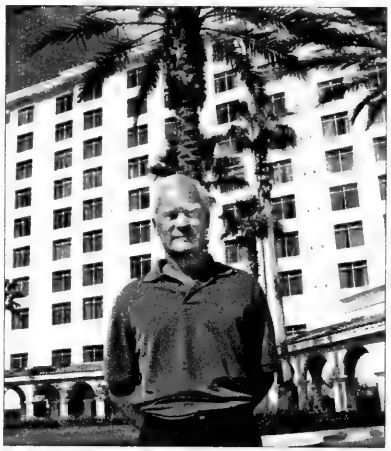
Bill Peeper, president of the Orlando/Orange County Convention & Visitors Bureau, described Shingle Creek as "a landmark for tourism in Orlando and Florida."

Rosen, a slim, fastidious, hands-on man given to wearing jerseys and chinos and personally cleaning up after interviews, explained that Shingle Creek caters to "a corporate clientele" rather than to families heading to Disney. "We're much more oriented toward the business segment."

Surprisingly, perhaps, he has no immediate plans to build new hotels. "There's so much inventory out there that it doesn't make sense to build a new property," he observed, alluding to the darkening economy and Florida's sagging real estate market.

Yet Rosen is not standing still. Within the next five years, he intends to add 500 rooms and a further 125,000 square feet of meeting space to his existing hotels.

"Adding on is far less expensive than building new hotels," he said an interview at a sparse conference room deep in the bowels of the Rosen Shingle Creek resort. "We're being a bit cautious. We're not over-extending ourselves."



Harris Rosen at his newest hotel, the Rosen Shingle Creek resort. [Sheldon Kirshner photo]

But when Rosen – the son of a hotel safety engineer and a graduate of the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University – purchased his first hotel, he was far more audacious.

In 1971, three years after he joined Disney as director of hotel planning, a job that originally brought him to Orlando, Rosen was fired.

"I was expecting a promotion, a nice bonus and a pay increase for work well done," he said. "Instead, I was told I could not become a 'Disney person.' I think it was probably a valid comment. Corporations have cultures, and I didn't fit into Disney. I was listening to a different drumbeat."

Rosen, an entrepreneur at heart who developed a small apartment complex on his own time during his Disney period, was suddenly at loose ends.

But later, when a friend tipped him off that a hotel was for sale, he jumped at the chance to fulfil a dream of being self-employed.

"The owner was desperate to sell," he recalled. "His family was begging him to get out of the business."

By this time, the U.S. economy was struggling, having been battered by the 1973 Arab oil embargo in the wake of the Yom Kippur War. As a result, hotels in Orlando such as the Quality Inn, which Rosen had his eye on, were, as he put it, "dropping like flies."

Undeterred by the gloomy economic climate, Rosen emptied his bank account and purchased the hotel for $20,000, assuming its mortgage. On June 24, 1974, he walked into the Quality Inn – whose occupancy rate was running at a measly nine per cent – and a wave of despair engulfed him. "I didn't have a clue how I'd survive," he recalled.

But Rosen soon developed a plan. Hitchhiking to Boston in search of business, he convinced five motor coach companies to buy up rooms. By then, fortunately for Rosen, the oil embargo had ended. "I used my business card as a contract until something more formal could be signed. And the rest is history."

For the first 16 years, Rosen, a bachelor until middle age, lived in his office at the Quality Inn. But since his marriage and the birth of his children, he has left that rather spartan lifestyle behind.

A philanthropist today, he donated the land and provided the funding for the University of Central Florida's Rosen College of Hospitality Management. As well, he pledged $3.5 million for a Jewish community centre in Orlando, named after his parents, Jack and Lee, that is expected to be finished by 2009 at the latest.

It is badly needed. Thanks in no small part to its tourist-driven economy, of which Rosen is a luminary, the Jewish population of greater Orlando has reached 35,000, pushing Florida's Jewish population to 750,000.

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Largest Conservative shul leaves USCJ

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Beth Tzedec Congregation has become the third Toronto synagogue to end its affiliation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), retroactive to July 2007, following a vote by its board of governors last Thursday night.

A news release issued Friday by Beth Tzedec said that the needs of "Canadian Conservative congregations will be better served by allocating our resources directly toward local, provincial and national programs and services."

Beth Tzedec, which follows Adath Israel Congregation and Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue in leaving the movement, is – or was – the largest affiliated Conservative congregation in North America, with 2,650 member families.

The news release affirmed the shul's ongoing commitment to "Conservative Judaism in Canada, Israel (the Masorti Movement) and throughout the world, and to the ideology that recognizes the pluralistic framework of Conservative Judaism."

Beit Rayim Synagogue, Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, Beth Tikvah Synagogue and Shaar Shalom Synagogue have also had recent board or membership votes, but they aren't leaving the movement.

The votes followed 15 months of negotiations between Toronto congregational representatives and the New York-based USCJ. An agreement was reached in early March and ratified March 16 by the USCJ, after which each shul scheduled their own ratification votes.

Gary Mansfield, a past shul president and the spokesperson for Beth Tzedec on this issue, told *The CJN* that the reason for the negotiations was "a feeling that Conservative Judaism was waning" in Toronto, based on an increasing number of unaffiliated families, reduced youth participation, reduced congregational school enrolment and decreasing membership numbers, particularly among young adults and young families. "The goal was to revitalize Conservative Judaism in Canada."

But, he said, there was "virtually no money for programming," because of the USCJ's dues policy.

As Mansfield explained it, 55 cents of every dollar paid to the USCJ stays in New York to support the organization's infrastructure. The other 45 cents supports local programming and initiatives, and underwrites expenses for the USCJ's Canadian regional office in Toronto. The office has been without an executive director for the past year, but has a full-time youth director and executive secretary.

"For the last so many years the 45 cents has not been sufficient to run our own Canadian operation," said Mansfield, who would not provide specific numbers about the amount of Beth Tzedec's USCJ dues, but he confirmed that a synagogue half Beth Tzedec's size would pay approximately $41,000 annually.

Under the terms of the deal, the United Synagogue would have provided $116,000 in discretionary funding to the region for the 2008-09 fiscal year. An additional $96,000 would be provided the following year, and $76,000 the year after.

In addition, the central body would create a "Canadian Public Policy and Social Action Committee" in response to complaints the organization doesn't reflect Canadian priorities.

Among the reasons Mansfield cited for rejecting the agreement, he said it was only a temporary solution – "a small, inadequate Band-Aid on a large wound that was going to be removed anyway in three years." He was involved in negotiating the deal, but was out of town for the final negotiations and did not sign off on the document.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl

Paul Kochberg, president of the USCJ's Canadian region, told *The CJN* that of the organization's 15 regions, the Canadian region is "the lowest paying region in terms of dues per family unit."

He likens USCJ dues to synagogue dues, in that some congregants may also feel they don't get value for their dollar, "but their dues are still needed in order to provide resources and professional staff."

Kochberg said he was disappointed and saddened by the news of Beth Tzedec leaving.

Mansfield said the Beth Tzedec vote was "not unanimous, but certainly overwhelmingly positive in one direction."

Because of the longstanding nature of the issue, there had been "a great deal" of discussion leading up to and on the night of last week's board meeting, Mansfield said. Congregants wrote letters to the board both for and against leaving the USCJ.

In a sermon prior to the vote, Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, the congregation's senior rabbi, argued strongly in favour of remaining within the umbrella organization, although he noted that there is "much that might be improved" in the USCJ.

He said that to leave the USCJ "is to send a message to our members that affiliation is only for what you get and the wealthier families (like the larger and more substantial congregations) should only look out for themselves."

He also expressed concern that leaving the organization would "weaken the fabric of the Conservative movement," and noted that the synagogue would lose access to services such as rabbinical, cantorial and educational placement services, United Synagogue Youth (USY) and Kadima youth programs, leadership training and educational ideas.

Beth Tzedec's USY group has "a very small number of members" and only one is scheduled to attend USY's spring conclave, said Mansfield.

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl declined to comment for this article, but Mansfield said that he believes that despite their divergent ideas about leaving USCJ, he and the rabbi share "the same goals of promoting Conservative Judaism and furthering Conservative Judaism in our community and beyond.

"The lay leadership, having had many years of trying to promote change from within the organization, felt they had exhausted all their means of doing that," Mansfield said. "It is relatively inactive, especially relative to the size of the synagogue."

He said that more funding would allow the formerly USCJ-affiliated shuls to do things like assist small congregations that are starting up. "It's not so much to keep more money in their own individual pockets."

Also, he said, USCJ dues have risen every year for the past few years, and about 14 per cent in the past year alone.

Mansfield said the synagogues "hope to establish a vibrant and active [youth] program" that would include inter-synagogue programming.

He said that Beth Tzedec is "still a Conservative congregation" and would continue to support Conservative-related organizations such as the Jewish Theological Seminary, Camp Ramah, United Synagogue Day School and the Rabbinical Assembly.

The Conservative movement's ideology did not enter into the synagogue's decision, Mansfield said. "The policy of the group of Canadian synagogues is in keeping with the Conservative philosophy of pluralism. In the Conservative movement, there's a wide spectrum of ideology."

A letter was to be sent to Beth Tzedec members on Monday of this week to explain the new situation and invite them to the synagogue's annual general meeting later this month to give learn more.

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'There's no way to emulate the USY experience'

Teen gives his take on shuls leaving Conservative movement

By MAXWELL MARMUR
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

I have been following the Toronto synagogue disaffiliation discussion for a while now. As a three-year member of the Eastern Canadian Region of United Synagogue Youth (ECRUSY), the youth branch of USCJ in eastern Canada, and the communications vice-president on its regional executive board, this issue concerns me very much.

Over the past three years, I have gone through a multitude of new experiences and been exposed to the wonderful world of Conservative Judaism, all because of USY. What most people do not see are the opportunities provided to USYers by the regional and international level of USY. My concern is that by disaffiliating, some of the Toronto synagogues will be denying many teens the same opportunities and experiences that USY has provided me over the past three years. I know that there is no way to emulate the USY experience that provides Jewish teens with more than one could ever imagine.

For the past two winter breaks, I have had the opportunity to experience a wide range of Jewish observance, been exposed to Jewish teachings, participated in USY's spirited Ruach sessions, advocated for fellow human beings around the world through social action programming, experienced Israel without actually going, made amazing friends and experienced social programming that I have not only participated in but also had a chance to run myself.

There is only one place to have all these experiences, and that is USY's International Convention. The convention is held once a year and brings together more than 1,000 Jewish teens from all over North America. It provides us with all of these opportunities and more.

USY also gives Jewish youths the opportunity to go and see Israel for themselves. This coming summer I, along with several other ECRUSY members, will be participating in one of USY's many summer programs. These programs range from spending six weeks on a bus with more than 40 other people like you touring Canada and the United States, to experiencing eastern Europe or Spain or Poland and Israel on one of USY's many Pilgrimage programs. I know that I speak for many USYers when I say that I am very excited to go on my trip.

A little bit closer to home, we have our amazing region, ECRUSY. We may be a small region, but we have great spirit and an incredible drive to learn and help change the world. Each year, we provide Jewish teens with four opportunities to get away from the busyness of life and come together at our amazing conventions. Each has a different theme that's connected to Jewish life. Using the particular theme, we create fun social programming, interesting learning and discussion groups, great opportunities to help our communities, and the opportunity to make new friends for life.

USY also offers opportunities for leadership. It is a youth-run organization with minimal adult influence. Every level of USY, from the international level to the chapters within many Conservative synagogues, is run by young people. We have the opportunity to learn about working with a group and how to be a leader through the experience that we gain on these executives. We plan and run programming; teach our fellow USYers about our religion, culture and history; and get many teens involved in social action, ruach and fun social programming. Throughout my whole career in USY, I have held at least one position each year, if not more, and each has taught me more about leadership and Judaism than anything else ever could.

Without USY, my life would be very different. I would not have friends from all over North America. I would not have much opportunity for leadership. And I would have even less opportunity for social action and helping to repair the world. As well, I would not have much opportunity to learn more about my religion and I would not have a very strong connection to Conservative Judaism.

I know that there is no way to emulate the USY experience. I would like to make that clear.

Maxwell Marmur is communications vice-president of ECRUSY and a member of Shaar Shalom Synagogue's USY chapter.

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Jewish Life

Holocaust narratives

By DANIEL HELD

For David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, establishing a Holocaust memorial day was a fundamental step in forming the national identity of the new Jewish state. In choosing a date for Yom Hashoah, Ben-Gurion made two important considerations.

Class Act
By Daniel Held

First, the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising was chosen. The symbol of the Jewish warrior fighting to the end was a critical demonstration of the heroism needed in the fledgling Jewish state. Just as Mordecai Anielewicz and the courageous fighters in Warsaw took a stand, so would the pioneers and fighters of Israel.

Second, a Hebrew date was selected – the 27th of Nissan. Establishing Yom Hashoah on a Jewish calendar demonstrated the essential Jewish nature of the State of Israel. The 27th of Nissan, however, is not the Hebrew anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, which actually took place on Passover. In order to avoid a conflict, Ben-Gurion moved the memorial day a week later – after Passover and one week before Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzamut.

The placement of Yom Hashoah between these holidays plays into the themes that Ben-Gurion envisioned. Passover, marking the journey from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Land of Israel, represents the Zionist pioneers' return to Israel. Yom Hazikaron, the memorial day for Israel's fallen soldiers, and Yom Ha'atzamut, the celebration of Israel's independence, rest upon their prerequisite, Yom Hashoah.

Ben-Gurion's Holocaust narrative is one of heroism, struggle and ultimately nationalism. It, however, is not the only narrative, nor the only form of commemoration.

Many in our community memorialize the Holocaust on Tisha b'Av, a day of fasting and lamentations during the summer marking the destruction of the two temples and countless other tragedies in Jewish history.

Ismar Schorsh, former chancellor of the Conservative Jewish Theological Seminary, wrote that it is the "expansive and inclusive quality of Tisha b'Av," encompassing tragedies from across history, "that makes the day for me a vehicle to mourn the six million." Moreover, in contrast to Ben-Gurion's vision, Schorsh continued, by arguing that Kristallnacht, Yom Hashoah and Tisha b'Av, "three distinct days of mourning on the Jewish calendar threatens to turn martyrology and victimhood into a world view."

While Yom Hashoah may be seen as a national day of mourning, Tisha b'Av couples this with a religious framework of history and practice. To Schorsh, it is the ritual of reading Lamentations and fasting that are the markers of commemoration.

In Toronto, we hold Holocaust Education Week in November. The annual event centres around Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass, on Nov. 10. Such a commemoration remembers Jewish victimhood during the Holocaust, recounting the narratives of millions who were murdered, enslaved and persecuted by the Nazis.

In recent years, the United Nations, European Union and others have recognized Jan. 27 as Holocaust Memorial Day. Jan. 27 is the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau by the Soviet army. The selection of such a date offers yet another narrative – the victory over evil, the pursuit of justice and the granting of freedom to those victimized. Unlike the other memorials, it shifts the significance of the Holocaust beyond the Jewish world, across cultures, religions and borders.

When teaching the Holocaust we are confronted with each of these narratives and more. Each voice harkens to our remembrance and vies for the attention of our students. Each voice holds an important place in the chorus of Holocaust narratives. Critical to Holocaust education, however, is the extrapolation of the lessons of the Shoah into a world filled with the stories of Rwanda, Darfur and a dozen other genocides. Drawing upon the distinct narrative of each Holocaust commemoration, we must teach our children lessons desperately needed in today's world: the lessons of tolerance, justice and Never Again.

There's life yet in organ donation debate

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Some may consider the yom tov of Pesach to be the one occasion where the greatest division between Sephardim and Ashkenazim exists. I am, of course, referring to that curious Ashkenazi custom of refraining from eating kitniyot, as well as from chametz.

In fact, a much greater chasm has recently developed, one stemming from a life-and-death issue that touches the very core of the sanctity of life and its definition: the recent passing by the Knesset of regulations facilitating organ donation according to Jewish law.

Contrary to a common misconception, Jewish law does not forbid organ donation. Yes, you read correctly: Jewish law does not forbid organ donation. Allow me to explain: the saving of a life – pikuach nefesh – is of such importance that it overrides all other considerations. Hence the giving of a lung, heart, kidney, etc., is nothing but the greatest mitzvah, as one is by this act, literally saving a life.

There is one proviso to this simple, straightforward thought: the sanctity of human life is so supreme that it supersedes all other rules, except for the transgression of the three cardinal sins, one of which is murder.

In other words, Jewish law says it's wrong to take one life in order to save another.

A long and heated debate has been waged as to when exactly life ends and at which point doctors are allowed to immediately remove vital organs from a body to save the life of others in dire need of them.

On one side is the opinion that as long as one's heart is still beating, one is alive. On the other side is the position that once all activity in one's brain shuts down, one is no longer deemed to be alive.

For the group equating death with brain death, organ harvesting is at this point not only permissible, it's among the greatest of mitzvot. For the camp that believes life continues until the heart ceases to beat, the removal of organs before the heart stops is nothing less than murder – something that's not justified, even if it will directly save the life of many individuals. However, an organ may be of little or no value once the heart stops.

The new Israeli law was supported by the Shas party, with the endorsement of Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef. At the same time, the Ashkenazi haredi camp under Rabbi Yosef Shalom Elyashiv opposed the law, as Rabbi Elyashiv's understanding of when life ends extends until the last heartbeat.

While this important difference is not necessarily an issue of Sephardi versus Ashkenazi – the late Rabbi Moshe Feinstein's opinion on this point has been vigorously argued by his students, with each interpreting their teacher's ruling in a mutually exclusive fashion – it's a difference that certainly pits the followers of one interpretation against the other.

For those interested in halachic organ donation, I invite you to visit the website of the Halachic Organ Donation Society at www.HODS.com.

Jewish Life

Saul Bellow didn't 'bug God'

***Do You Believe?*, edited by Antonio Monda, Vintage (2007).**

Books
Bernard Baskin

This slim paperback contains brief interviews about God and religion with 18 well-known and influential creative personalities.

The interrogator is convinced that these talented individuals have something perceptive, illuminating and valuable to say about "religion's central place in existence."

The list of interviewees include Paul Auster, the late Saul Bellow, Michael Cunningham, Nathan Englander, Jane Fonda, Richard Ford, Paula Fox, Jonathan Franzen, Spike Lee, Daniel Libeskind, David Lynch, Toni Morrison, the late Grace Paley, Salman Rushdie, the late Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Martin Scorsese, Derek Walcott and Elie Wiesel.

Antonio Monda is a cultural critic and writer for a number of Italian newspapers, as well as a film and television teacher at New York University. He is an ardent Roman Catholic who, in this work, enters into rigorous and candid conversation with six Jews, five Protestants, a Catholic, a Muslim and a remaining group of self-proclaimed atheists and agnostics.

Monda's invariable opening question is "do you believe in God?" He also asks most of those interviewed to comment on Dostoevsky's challenging statement, "If God doesn't exist, then everything is permitted." Most of his other questions concern the origin of the Bible, the Messiah, life after death and religious faith as a source of creativity.

As one would expect the answers are diverse and disparate – and sometimes unexpected and surprising.

Wiesel, Holocaust survivor, social activist and prolific author, asserts that "in the end the existence of God is the only true problem in which all other problems are subsumed and minimized. At times, I think that we are always talking about God without realizing it."

He also makes it clear that there are moments when it is necessary to interfere with what happens in history. "For example, when life and human dignity are in danger, different cultures become irrelevant. The moment a person is persecuted for his race, his religion, his political ideas, he becomes – for those who think they have a religious spirit – the centre of the universe."

Paley, an atheist, turned the tables on Monda, quizzing him about his beliefs, even as he was trying to ask her about her own. "Do you think you are happier than I am?" she asked him. The writer told Monda she had no longing for religion, but she mentioned that in the last 10 years (she died in 2007 at 85) she attended a synagogue, not for religious reasons but to connect to her community.

Auster, a writer, emphasizes his concerns with organized religion. "I believe that religions are stained, all religions. Think of how many times the name of God has been invoked to conquer or kill. Think of the Inquisition, of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain, or of the conflicts between Hindus and Muslims. The fundamentalist tendency of religion today frightens me, and I see around me a world filled with more and more fanatics."

Bellow asserted that he doesn't believe in petition prayers. "My requirements are trivial, I don't bug God." Also, "I see prayer as an intimate checkup with the headquarters of the universe." When he was asked, "What do you think happens at death?" he responded, "I don't know, but I don't think everything is resolved with the destruction of the body. What science has to say seems to me insufficient and unsatisfying."

How will readers respond to this work? Some will find the material compelling – replete with intellectual and theological insights. Others, however, will find the one- or two-sentence replies to difficult questions too brief and fragmentary.

Ultimately, the brisk give and take format is stimulating, but little emerges that is ground-breaking or original. This is an ideal little book for group discussion, a helpful guide to some of religion's profound and enduring questions and answers.

Tracing survivors, Holocaust vicitims

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The photographs have faded. The memories are hazy. But for many, the dream of finding out what happened to a love one remains. That hope could be a reunion with a survivor of the Holocaust who has settled elsewhere in the world. Or at the least the certainty of knowing where and how a loved one perished. To mark Yom Hashoah, a column on how to use the Internet to look for survivors and victims of the Holocaust.

There is a surprising number of registries available on the web, and while there is bound to be duplication, I recommend searching as many as possible, because you never know which database will have the name you have been hoping to find. Please note also that some databases list either survivors or victims, while others list both.

Yad Vashem, the Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Authority in Jerusalem, has been collecting Pages of Testimony for decades. Its goal is to document all six million Jewish victims of the Shoah. To date, it has reached half its goal. I was impressed with Yad Vashem's easy-to-search database. You are presented with a scan of the original hand-written Page of Testimony as well as a very good translation into English. **[tinyurl.com/5rt63]** You can also submit an online Page of Testimony for victims not yet recorded in the database. **[tiny url.com/ysIrds]**

A few weeks ago, the International Tracing Service made headlines when it provided to Yad Vashem, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and the National Institute of Remembrance in Warsaw the names of 3.5 million people displaced after the World War II. **[tinyurl.com/6azry2]** This forms part of the Tracing Service's 67 million images of Nazi-era index cards, documents and files that had been locked away for 60 years. Although the data cannot be searched via the Internet, victims and their families can place online requests that typically take eight weeks to research. **[tinyurl.com/44lbpv]** The BBC visited the Tracing Service based in Bad Arolsen, Germany, and prepared a very good video report. **[tinyurl.com/484763]**

The JewishGen Holocaust Global Registry contains about 3,500 names of survivors trying to find family and family searching for survivors. Just looking through the names and personal histories presents a chilling reminder of the countless lives shattered by the Holocaust. Elise Bercovitz wrote that she was born in Paris "around" 1926 and remembers "being taken off the steps of my school in 1940 by the Germans and taken to Drancy then forwarded to Auschwitz… My brother was bar-mitzvahed in Paris just before being taken away. I am looking for any known relatives." **[jewishgen.org/registry]**

If you are looking for someone, you can leave information in the Making Contact section of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website. **[tinyurl.com/6gtuwf]** The museum also maintains a Survivors' Registry, which is not online but does welcome inquiries via telephone, letter or e-mail. **[tinyurl.com/3mruth]** One more fascinating list maintained by the museum contains the name and information about the fate of each of the 937, mostly Jewish, passengers who fled from the Third Reich on the ill-fated SS St. Louis. **[tinyurl.com/46hmwf]**

One of the most heartbreaking sites I came across was created to help child survivors of the Holocaust piece together their past. When you visit the Missing Identity Website you are greeted by the photos of 60 young faces and this note. "Some hope to find surviving relatives who can tell them about their parents and family. Others hope to find out the most basic information about themselves — their own name, their birth date and birthplace, the names of their parents… By looking at the photos and reading the profile of each young Holocaust survivor child, you may be able to help." **[missing-identity.net]**

And sometimes the unbelievable does happen. For 65 years, siblings Simon Glasberg of Ottawa and Hilda Shlick of Ashdod, Israel, thought the other had perished in Holocaust. The path to finding each other started when Hilda was erroneously listed in Yad Vashem as having been murdered in the war. Her son came across the document and then noticed the reference to family in Canada they knew nothing about. That led to the emotional reunion of the brother and sister in Jerusalem. **[tinyurl.com/573lbh]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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In Memoriam

HY ISENBAUM, FCA ז"ל

It is with sincere regret that Soberman LLP announces the passing of Hy Isenbaum, a founding partner of the firm.

Hy was a very active and respected member of the Toronto community.

The Partners & Staff of Soberman LLP, Chartered Accountants extend our deepest condolences to his wife and family.

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Women's Torah commentary a milestone publication

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

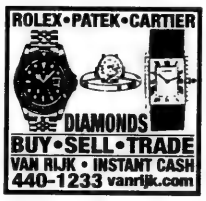
The Torah: A Woman's Commentary probably could not have been published a generation ago.

A 1,350-page scholarly tome released by URJ Press in December and now in its second printing, the book is a Chumash featuring commentary by more than 100 women rabbis and academics including Torontonians Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, rabbinic director of Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning, and Anna Urowitz-Freudenstein, adjunct professor of Jewish studies at Gratz College and department head in Jewish thought at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

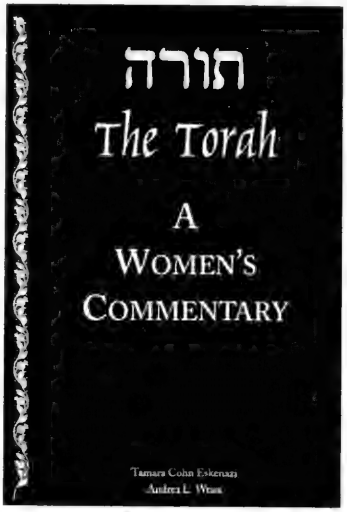
Rabbi Goldstein was something of a pioneer in the Torah commentary field with the publication in 2000 of her book *Revisions: Seeing Torah Through a Feminist Lens*, and another that she edited: *Women's Torah Commentary: New Insights from Women Rabbis on the 54 Weekly Torah Portions*.

She sees the new commentary as "very full" and "very rich," she told *The CJN*.

Each section in the new book relates to a specific parshah and has a central commentary with Hebrew text and English translation; a shorter essay focusing on a specific element in the parshah and complementing, supplementing or challenging the primary interpretation; a section showing how traditional Jewish sources responded to texts pertaining to women; a more philosophical essay from a contemporary perspective; and a "creative" response, in most cases poetry.



The book was a 15-year, $1.5-million project initiated and funded by the Women of Reform Judaism and edited by Tamara Cohn Eskenazi, a Bible professor at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles, and Rabbi Andrea Weiss, assistant professor of Bible at the institute's New York campus.



Its aims included being Jewish, contemporary and women-focused, said Rabbi Hara Person, URJ Press' editor-in-chief and managing editor of the project, in a telephone interview.

The commentary, which was proposed in 1992 by Cantor Sarah Sager of Beachwood, Ohio, had to be "relevant to contemporary Jews and bring in the best of contemporary scholarship," Rabbi Person said. As well, the focus was on "issues related to women, where relevant.

"We see it being used in a synagogue service setting, but also in a class setting," she said.

The book "does not seek to supplant existing Torah commentaries but to supplement them," wrote associate editor Rabbi Weiss in a December JTA column.

Although all the authors are Jewish, not all are Reform. Leading Modern Orthodox feminist Blu Greenberg is one contributor of note.

"We wanted a diversity, and we wanted the best people out there," Rabbi Person said. "As long as there was nothing antithetical to Reform Judaism, there was no reason not to include [non-Reform commentators]."

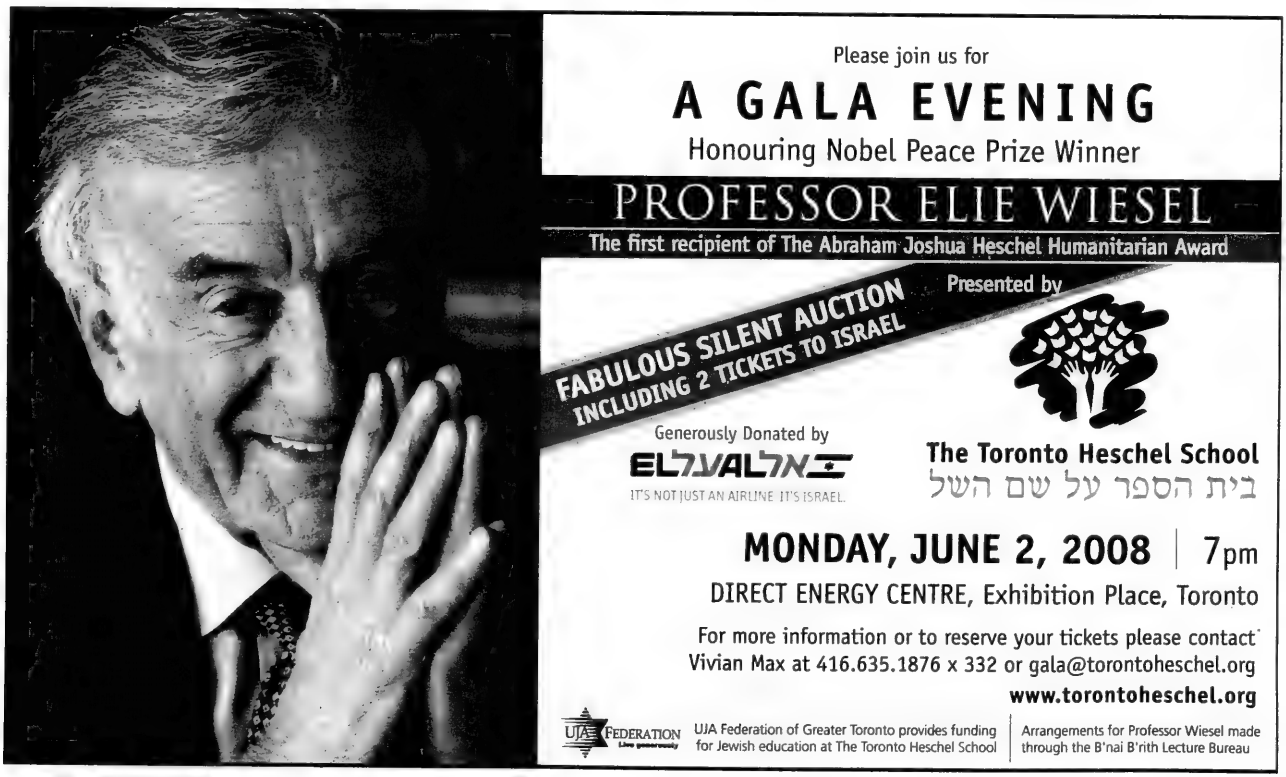
In the academic sphere, Duke University professor Carol Meyers, author of *Exodus (The New Cambridge Bible Commentary)*, is "one of the foremost Bible scholars working today," Rabbi Person said. Meyers was asked to work on one of the Exodus chapters because of her expertise in the area.

It's only in the past century that women have entered the field of Torah commentary, Rabbi Person said.

"We feel this was an opportunity to mark a meaningful and important moment in the history of Torah," she said. "There's never been a real Chumash that has all this commentary by women. It's also a time in history when we have a critical mass of senior women scholars of Bible. We felt like it was an appropriate time to mark that turning point in the history of Torah commentary and to focus on just scholarship by women – the senior scholars and this emerging generation of their students."

Publishers are in the early stages of talks regarding a Hebrew version of the book.

With files from JTA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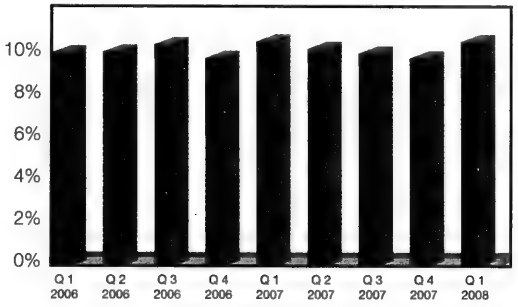

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CJC urges Toronto police to investigate Islamist

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

In response to a *National Post* article in which an Islamic fundamentalist called for the murder of Zionists and moderate Muslims, the Canadian Jewish Congress is urging Toronto police to investigate whether he should be charged with hate speech and incitement to genocide under the Criminal Code.

CJC wants police to investigate 23-year-old Toronto resident Naeem Muhammad Khan – who considers Osama bin Laden a "hero" and a "champion of Islam" – based on an April 25 article in the *Post*.

The article referred to Khan's online postings that said moderate Muslims are "apostates," and under Islamic law, the punishment for apostasy is death.

He also wrote that "Jews who support Zionism and Israel… since they are killing Palestinians… killing them is not bad… they deserve to die."

Congress CEO Bernie Farber said he's been in touch with Toronto police and expressed his concerns about Khan's message.

"They will determine whether or not there is enough information for there to be a charge laid," Farber said.

In a statement, CJC co-president Sylvain Abitbol said he expects Toronto police to launch an investigation immediately.

"Calling for the murder of an identifiable group of people may well constitute the promotion of genocide under the laws of this country," Abitbol said.

Farber said he was stunned by Khan's willingness to share his extreme views with the media.

"I guess in this day and age, nothing should surprise us anymore, but he felt so comfortable saying that… Jews who support the State of Israel – and that is the vast majority of Jews around the world – should be killed," he said.

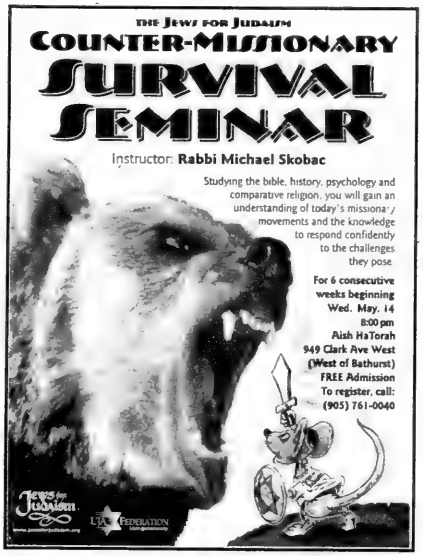
"This to me, is in my view, as close to a call to genocide as anything I've seen. It is certainly hugely troubling."

CJC co-president Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka said in the statement that he was shocked and horrified by the comments.

"Promoting violence towards members of the Jewish community and those whose practise of Islam is deemed to be inferior is an affront to all Canadians. There is no room for this kind of blatant hatred in our society."

Toronto police spokesperson Mark Pugash said that although he is unable to discuss specific investigations, he said police are interested in looking at anyone or anything that has the potential to present a risk to public safety.

"What I can tell you is that our highest and most important concern is protecting public safety and we will look closely at anyone we believe has the potential to affect public safety, but I'm not prepared to discuss specifics of cases or individuals."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REENA FUNDRAISER: The fourth annual Not Just Another Saturday Night raised more than $37,000 for the Reena Foundation early last month, funds that will help provide a variety of services for people with developmental disabilities. This year's event at the Dominion Club in Toronto included a cocktail reception, an art show, live entertainment and opportunities to win prizes. Seen from left are Not Just Another Saturday Night committee member Esther Benarroch, Darren Inspektor and Reena volunteer Amy Tepperman. [System 4 Productions Inc.]

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About Nutrition

Q. I suffer from frequent constipation, although I often have bran cereals. Is there something else I can do?

A. While bran cereals offer relief for many people with chronic or occasional constipation, I find that the more effective choice is a bran cereal containing psyllium (pronounced "silly-um"). Psyllium can be found in a few bran cereals currently on the market. The packages often recommend consuming only one-third of a cup, and this means you can mix them with your other favourite cereal or cereals.

When you start one of these cereals, try to have it daily for one or two weeks to see results. I don't think you'll be disappointed.

Lisa Weinberg

An added benefit of psyllium is that it is very effective at reducing bad cholesterol, an excellent added bonus. For anyone who doesn't suffer from constipation necessarily but is trying to reduce or control cholesterol, this is beneficial too.

Still, you should remember that any time you are consuming foods high in fibre, like bran or psyllium, it is essential to have a lot of water with them to help them move freely through your system. Picture what a bowl of bran cereal in milk looks like after it is left to sit awhile. It's a sponge – it soaks up the liquid and becomes quite solid. To avoid this, always drink a glass of water along with bran for best results.

Another thing to remember is that fruits and vegetables are also a great source of fibre.

Q. My kids both just had strep throat and were on a course of antibiotics. Are there any healthy foods they should eat to boost their health?

A. At this time of year I urge everyone to take advantage of the rainbow of colours coming into season – local fruits and vegetables that we have been missing over the winter. Getting many different colours will give you broad benefit.

The other really important element for anyone after a course of antibiotics is to include probiotics in your diet, preferably daily, for a least two weeks.

When we take antibiotics, they do a great job of killing the bad bacteria that make us sick, but they are not very selective and can also kill some of the good bacteria that naturally live in our gut. Probiotics are found in yogurt, yogurt drinks etc., and are an ideal way to rebalance this system.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

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* *Tickets to the Festival DO NOT include admission to the evening program. All regularly priced tickets guarantee admission to all activities.*

Yachad program celebrates 20 years in Canada

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Yachad, an organization that brings together young adults with developmental disabilities and their peers, is celebrating its 20th anniversary in Toronto.

"The whole goal is for those with disabilities to be together [with their non-disabled counterparts] and have a good time," said program co-ordinator Galya Ouanounou.

Yachad means "together" in Hebrew, Ouanounou explained. Its events include science centre outings, trips to the zoo, challah baking and out-of-town excursions for Shabbatons.

In 1988, Torontonian Chana Zweiter, who had a child with special needs, wanted her child to become involved in the Jewish community. Rabbi Nosson Westreich, who led the Toronto branch of the youth group National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY) at the time, became interested in duplicating a New York program for children with and without disabilities, and merged Yachad's programming into NCSY's.

"It was an avant-garde idea at the time, but now it's mainstream. We found these programs weren't just for their benefit [the young people with special needs], but for the benefit of the volunteers, as well," Rabbi Westreich said. "It was a transformative experience for me, too. At the time, I didn't have contact with the special needs population."

He credited Yachad's early accomplishments for inspiring the work he does today. He works at the adolescent outpatient clinic at Sunnybrook Hospital, where he treats psychiatric illnesses in children with developmental challenges.

Ouanounou became involved with the group when she was in high school, and 15 years ago, was hired as Yachad's co-ordinator. At first, she oversaw a handful of participants.

Today, the organization in Toronto has about 50 members, with two dozen university-aged volunteers. There are even waiting lists to volunteer for the night learning classes, she said.

Up to 40 high schoolers participate and offer help at any given Shabbaton, Ouanounou said.

In addition to its own events, Yachad also participates in a variety of outreach and community events, including Out of the Cold, a program that helps feed the homeless, and Tikkun Toronto, an organization of youth groups who get together once a year to do charitable works.

"This kind of involvement allows Yachad members to have a fun feeling of being Jewish and have fun celebrating holidays, and it's something that's grown and developed over the years. They might not have the opportunity to do these things if we weren't here," Ouanounou said.

Another program included a joint effort by the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and the Reena Centre to have a "move and mingle" program, an eight-week session of folk dancing, followed by dinner and socializing.

Seen here, top row from left, David Silver, Galya Ouanounou; bottom row, from left, Tehila Berglass, Lauren Krieser, Yachad member, Rafaela Grodzinski, and Daniel Krieser.

"Whatever abilities they have, they love these programs, and we feel that with these events, they're feeling more confident," Ouanounou said.

In recent years, some Jewish high schools in the Toronto area have networked with Yachad, including Yeshivat Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot. Together, students host parties for Yachad members, with raffles, food and games.

David Silver, 21, a psychology major at York University, became involved with Yachad two years ago. As assistant co-ordinator, he helps Ouanounou plan events.

"I want to emphasize that you don't want to define them by their disabilities. It's not, 'Sarah, the Down syndrome girl,' but 'Sarah, the 12-year-old who happens to have Down Syndrome,'" Silver said.

Susie Sokol, mother of Talya, 23, has been with the organization for 12 years. "It's a truly inclusionary program," Sokol said. "Galya's very respectful of the kids. She deserves kudos. It's her attitude that has been caring and supportive, and it stays with the kids."

Sokol added that Yachad has helped Talya feel more integrated into the community.

"I often take her to a mall or food shopping, and someone will come over and greet her because they know her from Yachad. It gives her support, and it makes a parent feel secure," she said.

"What's outstanding is that those [who are] a part of Yachad are given that chance to do what everyone else does at Shabbatons, like sleep away at someone else's house and enjoying other's company."

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Zareinu breaking down barriers for special needs kids

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Toronto's Zareinu Educational Centre for children with special needs is gearing up for its 11th annual Moveathon fundraiser, a two-part bike ride and community festival slated for early and mid-June.

In advance of the Moveathon, the centre – which has provided an array of treatments in a Jewish setting for children with physical and developmental needs for the last 20 years – is in the midst of an extended education campaign targeting children in mainstream day schools.

11th annual Moveathon planned for June 22

The objective of Zareinu's Project Outreach is to teach the children how to interact with and accept their peers who have special needs, by engaging them in role-playing scenarios and experiential exercises that simulate what it would be like to live with a special need.

A typical example would be that a child could be asked to put on mittens and then encouraged to try and button up his jacket to see what it's like to live with motor skill limitations, said Randy Spiegel, the centre's executive director for the last six years.

As of last week, Zareinu employees had already gone out numerous times to various schools around the city to help advocate for kids with special needs, he told *The CJN*.

"What's important for all of us, not just children, is to have contact with people who are not always the same as us… and break down the barriers."

Project Outreach "is available particularly where we're looking at a child who will be part-time at Zareinu and part-time in another setting or host school" Spiegel said.

Zareinu students range from age six weeks to 21 years, and the centre can serve 70 children. Spiegel said he wished he could double that number, adding that there are still hundreds of "Zareinu-eligible" children out there.

"We need a new facility for these children. We need more spaces… and we desperately need more core funding," he said. "We need to create awareness among everyone in the community… that we're not all alike. One in five children has some kind of learning disability. We have an obligation to be accepting of this and do everything we can to allow those kids to achieve their own potential [and] also prop up their family units."

It costs anywhere from $40,000 to $50,000 a year to have a child at Zareinu, Spiegel noted.

He said it's "critical" for Jewish parents of children with special needs to know that there's a place for them when they find out their kids will need the help.

"Most parents, when they have a child, the first thing they hear is 'mazal tov' from their doctor," Spiegel said. "Our parents don't hear that. Instead, they hear, 'We have to talk.'"

Often, those families fall off the Jewish community radar while caring for their children, and Zareinu plays a vital role in bringing them back into the fold, Spiegel said.

"It's our human and Jewish responsibility," he said. "The beauty of these children and who they are is inspirational."

But since they are a non-profit centre, getting the funding for that goal rests primarily in the hands of private sponsors and the community.

That's where the Moveathon comes in.

Last year, the fundraiser netted $1 million, and organizers are hoping to top that this June.

Hershey Weinberg, the founder and chair of the Zareinu Moveathon, started it as an act of tikkun olam a decade ago after a suggestion by his rabbi.

"When I look at the parents and and the hurdles they have to overcome, I have to give something back to God for giving me healthy children and grandchildren," he said.

Weinberg told *The CJN* he chose the name "Moveathon" because almost half of Zareinu kids are "mobility-challenged."

According to Weinberg, the 2007 fundraiser drew nearly 5,000 participants.

"This year, we have the most picturesque ride, because [the route] goes along the Niagara escarpment," he said, adding that this year's cycling tour, slated for Sunday, June 1, has added a third option for riders.

On top of the traditional 50-kilometre and 100-km routes, a new 162.5-km "pro-tour" has been included to attract cyclists and sponsors from around the world.

The Zareinu Moveathon Festival, a full-day affair featuring food, rides and entertainment is scheduled for Sunday, June 22, at Downsview Park.

For more information, visit www.moveathon.com

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Torontonians recall joyous moment 60 years ago

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Though 60 years have passed since Israel became a state, there are still many members of Toronto's Jewish community who remember that joyful moment in May 1948 like it was yesterday.

Just a week before a massive 60th Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration sponsored by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is set to take place in the city – next week at the Ricoh Coliseum on May 8 – two local women and passionate Zionists spoke to *The CJN* about their recollections of May 8, 1948, in downtown Toronto.

Hindy Hirt, 67, a retired Jewish school teacher who taught at both United Synagogue Day Schools and Bialik over the course of her career, has a vivid memory of the festivities that erupted in Toronto's Jewish neighbourhoods after the state of Israel was declared.

"I was only seven, just a *piskeleh* at the time. I don't remember the actual declaration, but I remember walking down Brunswick Avenue with my father and my uncle and there was this prickling in the air," Hirt said. "We walked along College Street all the way to Maple Leaf Gardens."

Hindy Hirt's commemorative pins and memorabilia from Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations in Toronto over the years. Of note, a 10th anniversary pin sits atop the 50th anniversary handbag.

Once in the Gardens, Hirt said she remembers the "throngs and throngs of people" that just kept pouring in to celebrate the birth of the Jewish state.

Of particular note was the raucous singing of *Hatikvah* that erupted at the gathering, she said.

"It was the loudest *Hatikvah* I heard in my life," Hirt said. "That was my introduction to being a passionate Zionist."

Hirt added that as a result, she's been active in support of Israel and of UJA Federation causes ever since, as both a donor and a volunteer on numerous projects over the years.

"I tried to instil in my students my own passion for Israel," she said.

While Hirt was a young, enthusiastic bystander at the Maple Leaf Gardens celebration back in 1948, she clearly remembers the woman who was on stage, leading the rapturous crowd in the singing of *Hatikvah*, Bayla Chaikof.

Chaikof, 77, also told *The CJN* about her memories of the event.

"We were ecstatic, overwhelmed [at the proclamation]," she said. "It was a Friday night and we ran out into the streets... dancing horahs. That Sunday, we [Zionist youth group] students marched to the rally at the Maple Leaf Gardens. My father was the leader of the Labour Zionist Movement in Toronto."

Chaikof said the feel of the celebration was different back then, adding that the Jewish community wasn't as "spread out" in Toronto as it is today.

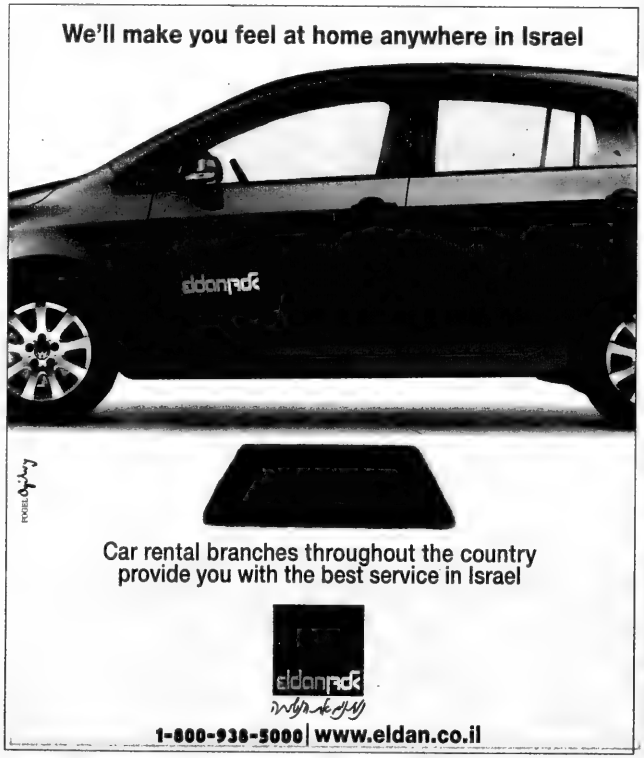
"We were concentrated in the College and Spadina neighbourhood. Remember, three years before, [Holocaust] survivors had started coming to the city," she said. "A few of the boys at the time, managed to get a truck... with loudspeakers and drove up and down the streets advertising one, that the state of Israel had been declared, and two, there would be a Sunday rally at the Gardens.

"I don't know why, but I led *Hatikvah*, and Maple Leaf Gardens looked full to me from on stage. It was a very exciting time for Jews in Toronto."

Hindy Hirt

Both Chaikof and Hirt said they will be at the 60th anniversary bash next week, happily celebrating Israel's continued survival and successes to this point.

For more information on the event, visit www.jewishtoronto.com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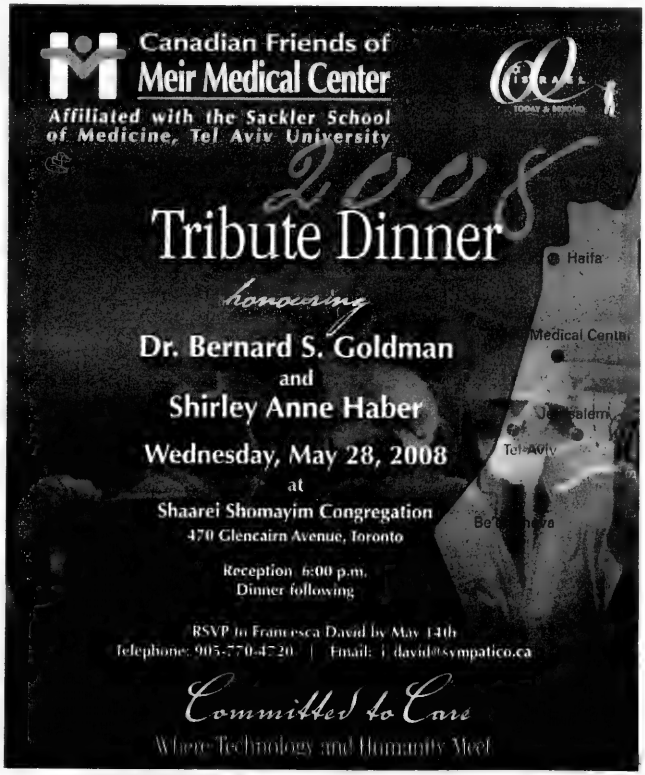

Toronto Shoah survivor captivates N.S. kids

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — On a recent Friday morning at Windsor Forks District School in Nova Scotia, a short, grey-haired grandmother looked fondly at the children seated in front of her on the gymnasium floor.

As the kids listened, she slowly weaved her story of hope, heartbreak, chance and, finally, survival to make a full life.

Edith Gelbard, a 76-year-old Torontonian, was five years old in 1938 in when the Germans rolled into her native Austria to persecute Jews and other non-Aryans.

Her family escaped to Belgium, then to France, as the German onslaught continued. In France, little Edith, then eight, and her three-year-old brother, Gaston, were placed in one non-Jewish foster home after another for the next five years. In the latter stages of the war, to hide her Jewish heritage, she changed her name and birthplace and told people that she was an orphan.

Toronto author Kathy Kacer heard Gelbard speak in Toronto and asked to write her story. In 2006, Kacer published a 150-page illustrated book that has been re-printed twice, as well as translated into Japanese and printed in braille.

A chance discovery of that book led to Gelbard's visit to Nova Scotia.

Windsor Forks Grade 6 teacher Melissa Fox found the book, *Hiding Edith*, on her mother's kitchen counter last summer.

"I read the blurb on the back of the book, was interested and read it," she recalled. "I was so captivated, I read it to my class last fall, and they wrote letters to Edith. They asked tons of questions and she answered them all. Then they asked her to come to our school to visit."

Gelbard started telling her story to schools and other groups seven years ago after her husband died.

Melissa Fox, a Grade 6 teacher at Windsor Forks District School in Nova Scotia, watches as Toronto's Edith Gelbard, a Holocaust survivor, autographs a book after speaking to more than 240 students at the school.

"It was something I needed to do," she said, "even though I don't sleep the night before any of my talks."

At Windsor Forks, she showed pictures of her youth and related stories of how she was uprooted at age five, with her family, from their Austrian home; of how they escaped to Belgium and France; of separation from her mother and father, and of being hidden by fearless people until the end of the war, when she was reunited with her mother and sister.

She was 13 in 1945 and had spent more than five years in hiding.

Gelbard captivated more than 240 children at Windsor Forks, some of whom came from other area schools to hear her.

They sat silently for more than 40 minutes as she told them how, as a child, she could no longer go to school, movies, or to the park, and how stores owned by Jews were closed and Jewish teachers were unable to teach.

She talked about being bullied because she was Jewish, and implored the children, "Please, please, please don't be a bully. Be good to everyone. You're our next generation. Don't let another Hitler come back."

She talked about lacking food and eating rotten carrots that she found in garbage.

"I still eat carrots today, though," she said with a smile. "But I cook them how I like them."

Several times, she heard bombs dropping nearby, and, she admitted, "I'm still scared of thunder today."

The students in grades 4 to 6 wrote poetry about Gelbard's experiences and painted pictures of areas where she lived, of her hiding behind bushes, and of her eating carrots that she found in the trash.

Hands flew into the air when she asked for questions.

One boy asked about her family.

She told him her father was in the Buchenwald concentration camp but was liberated on April 10, 1945.

"He died the next day," she said, sadly.

Fox was pleased with the students' reaction.

"When I was reading the book to them, they'd say, every day, 'Don't stop.' As children, they could relate to Edith at a young age. When we invited her to speak to us, I told the kids we wouldn't have this opportunity forever to hear, first hand, from a survivor," she said.

"It's important that the story never be forgotten. These children will be able to carry on the stories of the Holocaust."

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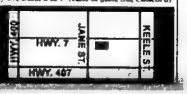

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LIFESTYLE Retirement Communities

Riding to remember the Shoah

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Heeding the words of Canadian classic rock group Bachman-Turner Overdrive, a group of Toronto Jewish motorcycle enthusiasts will "roll on down the highway" later this month to commemorate the Holocaust.

Local members of the Jewish Motorcycle Alliance (JMA) – an international organization that comprises 21 clubs totalling more than 2,000 riders – will participate in the fourth annual "Ride to Remember," which takes place in Omaha, Neb., from May 22 to 25.

The alliance was founded in 2004 by five member clubs, one of which is Toronto-based group, Yidden on Wheels.

Steve Stein, the Yidden's immediate past president and JMA treasurer, told *The CJN* that the ride is also open to any unaffiliated Jewish biker who wants to register.

Yidden on Wheels has 130 members, making it the largest North American club in the alliance, and participates in various rides throughout the year with other JMA clubs, but the Ride to Remember is the organization's "signature event," Stein said.

This year's ride spans four days and centres mostly on the University of Nebraska campuses in Omaha and Lincoln "with a ceremony to be held at the Nebraska Holocaust Memorial," according to alliance literature.

For the 2008 Ride to Remember, the alliance has partnered with the Heartland Holocaust Educational Fund (formerly the National Holocaust Endowment Fund), a Nebraskan organization that provides Holocaust and genocide education to universities across the Midwest.

Jewish Motorcyle Alliance riders from Canada, the United States and Australia ride in New York's Salute to Israel Parade last year. [Steve Stein photos]

Alliance riders will help raise money for the fund "to further Holocaust education in the Midwest," Stein said.

As of 2006, the Jewish population of Nebraska stood at 6,850, with about 6,500 located in the Omaha area.

"There is one promise that every Jew must keep and the one commitment that every Jew has made – knowingly or not … to our parents, to our grandparents, and to all of mankind. It is the promise to never forget," reads this year's alliance ride statement.

In the past, Yidden on Wheels were joined on their rides by other Jewish biking groups with colourful names such as the New York Chai Riders, the New Jersey Hillel's Angels, the Montreal Maccabees, the Israel Motorcycle Club and the United Kingdom's Yids on Bikes.

Since 2004, the Ride to Remember has gone to Washington, D.C.'s Holocaust Memorial Museum; driven to Whitwell, Tenn., to honour the staff and students of the Whitwell School for their Paper Clip project in honour of the victims of the Holocaust; and participated in New York City's Salute to Israel parade last year, Stein said.

The ride typically attracts "anywhere from 150 to 300 riders," according to Stein. So far, this year's ride has close to 100 registered riders, but he hopes more will turn out for this year's event.

As part of the itinerary of the 2008 ride, alliance bikers will attend a gala dinner in honour of the founders of the Heartland Holocaust Education Fund – Sam and Frances Fried of Omaha – and will have various touring options in the Nebraskan countryside among other items on their agenda.

Stein, 58, said he encourages anyone interested in networking with Jews from diverse regions to check out the JMA.

"For a Jewish group, we have a unique way of honouring the Holocaust," he said. "And we've brought together Jewish bikers and communities that otherwise wouldn't have [connected]. I've made friends all over the world. The JMA gives us a sense of community that we need, considering the challenges Jews face in the world today."

For more information, visit www.jewishbikersworldwide.com.

Eli and Nomi Liran, members of the Israel Motorcycle Club in Haifa, ride on the Henry Hudson Parkway in Manhattan in May 2007.

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London author recounts story of survival

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Fanny Goose isn't a name one tends to associate with the horrors of the Holocaust. Rather, it sounds like a monicker given to a cherished children's author.

In fact, it's a name that has undergone a transformation. A Jewish Pole who endured the Shoah and witnessed her family obliterated by the Nazi regime, Fanie Steinbock became Fanie Gusz through marriage.

She changed the spelling of her name upon immigrating to Canada after the Holocaust. Her friends convinced her it sounded charming, evoking the image of "Mother Goose" of nursery rhyme fame, and would be good for her then-fledgling family clothing business, Goose's Family Clothing, in London, Ont.

Goose, 85, was one of the lucky ones, miraculously surviving the Shoah, thanks in part to the bravery of Righteous Gentile neighbours and the help of Polish clergy, who risked their own lives to shelter her in a monastery as the rest of her town's Jewish population was either shot on site, relocated or rounded up and shipped off to Treblinka and other death camps after the Nazis invaded.

All these tales and more are chronicled in Goose's recently released autobiography, *Rising from the Holocaust: The Life of Fanny Goose* (Believe Books), co-authored by Janet Fridman. It is a first-person perspective on her travails as she did what was necessary to survive.

Throughout the book, Goose expounds on two central themes; one of hope and the other a belief that God had spared her to carry on and ensure that her family line would continue.

In a particularly poignant passage, Goose recalls returning to her home town of Skalat, Poland, after months in hiding, only to find much of it, including her family home, razed to the ground.

Fanny Goose

She manages to locate the spot of her family home only by recognizing a landmark – a family tree that miraculously survived the bombing of Skalat. In a further miracle, Goose finds, buried at the base of the tree, jewelry and family heirlooms that she feels her father must have hidden, somehow knowing she would come back to discover them.

The treasure eventually proves useful, as Goose uses the find to help her invest in a new life. It also proves her mental undoing for a time and sends her into a deep depression, as she realizes this is all that is left of her family in Poland .

In the book, Goose describes how she puts the pieces of her life back together in postwar Europe, meets her husband, Jerzy, has her first child and finally comes to Canada, sponsored by an aunt who moved to Toronto years before the war.

Once here, she becomes a successful and well-known entrepreneur, landowner and is active in support for the Liberal party in London, Ont.

Over the years, she describes befriending numerous dignitaries and politicians, including Pope John Paul II, former prime minster Pierre Trudeau and former Ontario premier David Peterson.

Speaking to *The CJN* from her home in London, Ont., last month, Goose recalled the difficulties in finalizing *Rising from the Holocaust* and putting it out for public consumption.

"My mother told me, 'We need someone to remember and tell our story,'" she recalled in her still heavily accented English. "It took me 20 years… and was very hard writing this book. But my friends kept telling me they knew I could help others. We have to believe in miracles and in God. And I am a miracle because I survived."

When asked how difficult it was to put down memories of her time in the Holocaust, Goose replied humbly that even though her life wasn't easy while hiding in Nazi-occupied Poland, she was fortunate not to have gone to the camps.

"I didn't see everything bad [that others saw]. My family pushed me away from everything bad," she said. "The worst time was when I came back [to Skalat] after being in hiding… finding nothing. I became mentally disturbed right away."

Not wanting to dwell on the atrocities of the past, Goose changed the subject to her life in Canada, citing the acceptance of her London, Ont., community as one of the shining aspects of her "new" life.

"In Canada, the people accept me the way I am," she said, adding that she credits her innate abilities to succeed in business and as a socialite to her mother, who believed in the goodness of people.

"My whole purpose with this book is to [show] that there are still good people," Goose said.

Since coming to Canada, Goose said she has made it her mission to help other immigrants adapt to their new environment as a way of paying back the country that has been so accommodating to her.

"It pays to be good to people and to believe in God. Because there are miracles."

Goose is scheduled to appear at the Chapters bookstore at noon in Toronto's Bayview Village mall on May 4 for a book reading and signing event.

For more information, visit www.believebooks.com.

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Sunday, May 11
$10.00/Pre-Registration by Friday, May 9 - $7.00
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aish Toronto

Documentary planned for survivor's story

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

For freelance journalist Roxana Olivera, the list of coincidences was too much to ignore.

Some sort of intercontinental karma seemed to be at play that put her in mind of *Hana's Suitcase*, the children's book that told the story of George Brady's reconnection with the sister he lost during the Holocaust, thanks to the unlikely resurfacing of the suitcase she took with her to Auschwitz.

Olivera had just finished reading the book to her daughter and noticed events were conspiring to bring to the forefront a wartime story of death and survival – just as they did for George Brady.

Years ago, while a graduate student at the University of Toronto, Olivera had travelled to Italy to interview Holocaust survivors. It was part of the work on her thesis, which examined why 85 per cent of Italian Jews survived the Holocaust despite living in a fascist country allied with Nazi Germany.

While cleaning out some long forgotten audio tapes, Olivera came across an unmarked one that contained a nearly hour-long interview with Bruna Belgrado, a Florentine woman who had survived the war along with her sister Fernanda and small children. The tape was 14 years old and it made her decide to reconnect with the woman whose story had captivated her in her student days.

Bruna Belgrado

Olivera tracked down Bruna's son, but learned through him that his mother had died a few years before. To her surprise, Bruna's son, Gabriele Veneziano, a world renowned physicist considered a father of "string theory," knew almost nothing about his mother's wartime story.

Coincidentally, Gabriele's sister, Debora, had of late been trying to learn more about their family history. When she spoke to Debora, Olivera learned both had been taking the same medication for sciatic problems.

Something, she felt, was connecting her to Bruna's family.

Olivera outlined for them their mother's remarkable story.

In 1943, while Bruna was living in Florence, rumours began circulating that a roundup of Jews was imminent. Bruna, who was six months pregnant, her husband and 14-month-old son Gabriele travelled to Sienna to find safety with her mother's family.

Two days later fascist police appeared at the apartment with an order to round up Bruna's mother, father and sister. The presence of Bruna's family confused the police – they weren't on the list – and as they argued amongst themselves what to do with the others, Bruna's toddler son, the physicist, crawled into the room. One of the police had a child the same age, and – perhaps that made a difference, perhaps not – they decided to take only Bruna's father.

"Someone has to come with us, because the Germans are downstairs," the police told the family. "We'll take the father."

Needless to say, he was never heard from again and the family's best guess is that he was among those transported to Auschwitz.

On their way out, one of the police turned to Fernanda and whispered in her ear, "you shouldn't have opened the door. If you hadn't opened the door, we would have left."

That remark has haunted Fernanda ever since, and her life in Israel has been punctuated by bouts of depression for which she has been prescribed medication, Olivera said.

Bruna too felt guilt – for surviving while others did not – and for letting her sister open the door.

"The 'what if' has played on their minds," Olivera said.

After the incident in Sienna, the family split up to survive. Bruna's husband began living on the street. He fell ill with typhus and Bruna had to leave her infant son with nuns in a local monastery so she could care for him. While he was in their care, the nuns baptized her boy.

"That tormented her," Olivera recalled.

Bruna, meanwhile, travelled back to Florence to live with her mother-in-law, who had converted to Christianity. Around that time, she gave birth to her second child, Giuseppe, who lives in Florence to this day, running his father's store.

Bruna and the rest of her family survived the war. She later gave birth to Daniele and Debora. Academic excellence was important to Bruna and she insisted her children study hard. Gabriele became the theoretical physicist, Daniele a professor of civil and environmental engineering (he played a key role in ensuring the continued safety of the Leaning Tower of Pisa) and Debora is a software engineer in Massachusetts.

After the war, Bruna became an observant and proud Jew and wanted the same for her children. They felt she was too fixated on religion and they preferred to be identified as Italians.

Olivera, a Roman Catholic native of Peru, believes Bruna's and Fernanda's story deserves wider attention; she is working on a video documentary of their history. As it happens, Bruna's grandson, Ariel Veneziano, is a film producer in Hollywood and he's assisting her with the project. Another coincidence.

Bruna and her son Gabriele

Olivera will travel to Israel later this spring to interview Fernanda, whose three children also did not know the details of their mother's survival during the war.

The documentary will rely on the audio tape of Olivera's interview with Bruna, the interview with Fernanda, family photos and stock footage, Olivera said.

So why did a Peruvian Catholic living in Toronto take an interest in Jews surviving the Holocaust in Italy?

Olivera had studied the Holocaust at the U of T and was always curious why Jews in most European countries were annihilated while the majority of Italian Jews survived. It seemed odd, given Italy's fascist government. She found it was a complicated story with a number of contributing factors, including the relatively small Jewish population, their assimilation, an absence of anti-Semitic attitudes among Italians and resentment at the Nazis for giving orders to Italians in Italy.

Her research also led her to a rabbi in Sienna who put her in touch with Bruna, who at first was cautious about Olivera's intentions. Later she opened her heart and told her remarkable story.

Primo Levi, the Jewish Italian writer who survived Auschwitz only to commit suicide years later, felt the need to honour those who died by telling their stories.

"He felt guilty for having survived," Olivera said. "That's what you see here.

"I don't want Bruna's story to die once again. I want to revive it."

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To learn more about our school, visit our website at bialik.ca.

All interested candidates should send a cover letter, resume, and references to: Simona Dayan, Principal of Jewish Studies: simona_dayan@bialik.on.ca

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Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah

Seven Ventura Park Public School students, wearing "Together We're Better" T-shirts, planned this week's student conference on Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity. In front, from left, are Ben Kideckel and Josh Valentini. Standing, from left, are Daniel Schiffer, Justin Rain, Gaby Gerson, Melissa Siu-Chong and Hila Berger.

Public schools mark day

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Among the public schools marking Holocaust Memorial Day this week and next are Thornhill's Yorkhill Elementary School and Ventura Park Public School – each with a different emphasis.

* * *

Harriette Fleising, a junior and senior kindergarten teacher at Yorkhill Elementary School, feels an obligation to take on Holocaust education responsibilities at her school, although her own students are too young to take part in the programs she has organized.

About five years ago, Fleising organized her first school program for Holocaust Memorial Day. Since then, the program, for students in grades 4 to 8, has evolved and grown.

On May 6, about 350 students are scheduled to take part in a morning assembly that will be the culmination of 3½ weeks of Holocaust study in conjunction with an in-class "adopt a survivor" program that Fleising instituted last year.

Each participating class has "adopted" one of three Holocaust survivors: 98-year-old Polish Catholic rescuer Irena Sendler, who saved 2,500 Jewish children; Toronto resident Benny Turk, a Partisan child survivor who will attend the assembly; and the Stermer family, who were among 38 people to survive the war by spending a total of more than a year in two underground caves consecutively.

"[The Stermers'] courage and their fortitude and their ingenuity and their creativity were beyond anything you can imagine," said Fleising, a daughter of survivors whose octogenarian mother and mother-in-law were among those taking part in last year's assembly.

At least one member of the Stermer family will be at this year's event. In the afternoon, the adopted survivors or their representatives will speak to individual classes. Assembly speakers include Ted Chudleigh, the Progressive Conservative MPP who sponsored the legislation that resulted in Ontario's Holocaust Memorial Day, and Frank Dimant, vice-president of B'nai Brith Canada.

Based on past years, Fleising said the children "get so much out of this."

She said she is motivated by a desire to raise awareness of the Holocaust. "I want to make [students] sensitive about good and evil. I want them to be able to say, when the deniers are saying it never happened, 'I was part of the project. I spoke to a survivor. It did happen.'

"In light of what's happening in the world today, maybe to prevent [another Holocaust], stand up for what's right, make the world a better place, keep these stories alive."

"In a way, it's my duty, even though I do not officially teach those grades."

* * *

At nearby Ventura Park Public School, about four kilometres away, grades 7 and 8 classes – about 200 students in total – have been gearing up to participate in a "Student Conference on Antiracism and Ethnocultural Equity" that was to take place on Tuesday of this week.

The conference is not a Holocaust memorial event per se, but Lilian Tolensky, the teacher-librarian overseeing the program, said that Holocaust-related material would be included as part of the presentation.

She noted that Ventura Park students, most of whom are Jewish and some of whom are from survivor families, are "very familiar" with the Holocaust, but "don't know what's going on in Rwanda or Darfur."

Holocaust education is not part of the school's formal curriculum, she said, but it has been incorporated in the past by having lots of guest speakers and related activities.

This year's half-day event grew out of a York Region District School Board conference on anti-racism and ethnocultural equity, in January, called "Together We're Better."

Tolensky, who attended that conference with seven grades 7 and 8 students chosen in part for their good citizenship, said that their mandate after the conference was "to make the student population aware of the issues and the possible solutions." The group decided to plan its own school conference.

Tolensky said the students left the January conference with an increased awareness of how much they have and a desire to make a difference in the community. "These kids were very committed to making sure their peers knew there was a world outside of Thornhill."

Continued on page 37

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Gabrielle Yona Fisher, wearing her mother's old dress, prepares to greet the Passover holiday and her new cousin from Philadelphia.

Adin Moshe Bendat-Appell smiles broadly at the thought of celebrating his first Pesach in Toronto with his cousin Gabrielle Yona.

Mazel tov to Dora Lichtenfeld on her 90th birthday on May 10. With love from her daughters, sons-in-law, five grandchildren and 12 great-greatchildren.

Mazel tov to Mara Koven & Irwin Gelman on their engagement. Also to Sydonie Audrey and Maris Gelman, Hannah & Arnold Rosenblatt, Maya and Noah Koven.

Inna & David Groisman and Baila & Murray Kane are proud to announce the engagement of their children Shelly & Philip.

Mazel tov on the recent marriage of Melissa, daughter of Dr. Allan & Susan Hoffer, and Daniel, son of Alan & Marilyn Stober.

Gordon Engel and Isaac & Perla Meszen are excited to announce the engagement of Ryan & Shoshannah. Grandparents, Esther Azoulay, Helena Meszen and Lisa Berenhaut.

Marla & Neil Lipman are excited to announce the birth of their daughter Lauren Allie, born Feb. 28.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New Deadlines: NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES. Friday, May 9, is the deadline for the May 22 issue, and Friday, May 16, is the deadline for the May 29 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, May 1

YOM HASHOAH SERVICES

Am Shalom Synagogue, Barrie, is hosting its annual program, 7-9 p.m., featuring Holocaust survivor **Judy Cohen**. Appropriate for children 10 and up. Open to the public.

Temple Har Zion's Yom Hashoah service, 8 p.m. at the temple.

Shaar Shalom Synagogue's Yom Hashoah presentation, 7:30 p.m.

BOUTIQUE NIGHT

Temple Sinai Nursery School's, annual Boutique Night, 4:00-9:00 pm., featuring women and children's clothing, giftware, jewelry, accessories, home décor. Lots of great prizes. Call **Marcie**, 416-487-3281.

JEWS OF OLD TORONTO

Bill Gladstone, genealogist and journalist, speaks at Free Times Café, 12:15 p.m. $15 includes lunch. 416-967-1078

Saturday, May 3

SHIR LIBEYNU

Innovative, egalitarian and participatory Torah services are held the first Saturday of every month at the Miles Nadal JCC, Michael Bernstein Chapel. Free childcare available. Call 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

BETH TIKVAH SHABBAT

"The New Anti-Semitism," last of the Shabbat Lunch and Learn series with **Rabbi Allen,** for young adults 20-30, after kiddush.

Sunday, May 4

TEMPLEICIOUS

Temple Har Zion hosts Templeicious Afternoon, a chance to get a taste of Reform judaism and the activities taking place at Temple Har Zion. 1-4 p.m. All welcome. free. Info, 905-889-2252.

SENSE OF SPADINA

Take a walking tour of historic Jewish Toronto with the Ontario Jewish Archives. 11 a.m. Register, 416-635-2883, ext. 170 or ojal@ujafed.or

WALK AND TALK ETC.

Join the walking club for singles 50+ for a ravine walk in the Vale of Avoca Ravine. Meet 10 a.m. in Yonge and St. Clair area. For information, walkandtalketc@hotmail.com

NA'AMAT BREAKFAST

Clubs Ilana, Masada and Tamar are hosting Breakfast with **George Anthony**, author of *Starring Brian Linehan*, 10 a.m., Borochov Centre, $36. 416-636-5425.

MY ISRAEL

Broadcaster **Ralph Benmergui**, host and producer of *My Israel*, will share stories of his experience in Israel, 11:45-12:45 p.m., Downtown Jewish Community School, Room 318. Free.

YOM HASHOAH FILM

Beit Yayim Synagogue presents *Purity Beats Everything*, a film by John Bang Carlsen. Q and A follows, 927 Clark Ave. W., free.

AFTERNOON TEA

Club Beersheba is holding a tea reminiscent of old Hollywood, 1-4 p.m., 40 Old Park Lane, Richmond Hill. $18 entry benefits Na'amat shelters and day-care centres in Israel.

YOM HA'ATZMAUT

First Narayever Congregation is

Continued on page 29

Canadian Friends of the
HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM
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presents

A true story of a 10-year-old boy and his family's journey from Ethiopia to Jerusalem.

ONE NIGHT ONLY !!!
Tuesday May 20, 2008
6:00 p.m. - Kosher Pizza Dinner
7:00 p.m. - Play
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One of A Kind is both an African and Israeli tale of community, journey and the rebuilding of a home in a new land. It touches the hearts of children and adults alike and reminds us about the importance of family, home, faith and dedication.

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$12 per ticket, includes dinner, with proceeds to establish a scholarship fund for an Ethiopian student at Hebrew University.

For tickets call CFHU at 416-485-8000 or visit our website at www.cfhu.org and click on event registration.

Feeling depressed or low?

Age 60 years or over?

Doctors at Baycrest's Research Centre for Aging and the Brain are conducting studies on emotion in late-life depression, and need participants who are:

- 60 years old or older
- Currently depressed with symptoms such as:
  - poor appetite and sleep
  - low motivation and energy
  - poor memory and concentration
  - change in ability to enjoy activities
- Not on antidepressant medication
- In good general health

Eligible participants will receive a thorough mood assessment and compensation for time and travel expenses.

For more information, call 416 785 2500 ext 2142

Baycrest

What's New

Continued from page 28

celebrating Israel@60, 3:30-6:30 p.m. Speakers, kids' activities, music, dancing and refreshments. www.narayever.ca

ILAN RAMON STORY

Beth Tikvah presents the film, *The First Israeli in Space: The Story of Colonel Ilan Ramon, Israel's First Astronaut*, 7:30 p.m. Reserved seats $36, general seating $18, students, no charge. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 0.

Monday, May 5

CHUG HATANACH

Prof. David Novak leads a study group in a discussion of *The Book of Ezra*, chapter 10. 8 p.m. at Beth David Congregation. All welcome.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

Temple Emanu-El spring lecture series continues with "Music with a Message" with **Rick Phillips**, CBC radio host. 2-4 p.m., $10

ISRAEL AT 60

18th annual Frances Bitterman Memorial Lecture, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, features **Alex Serota**. 8 p.m. Free admission, refreshments.

Tuesday, May 6

KAFKA AND FRIENDS

Rabbi Michael Stroh begins a four-week series on "Kafka, Kierkegaard and Friends." Tonight through May 27, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Har Zion. $5/session for non-members. 905-889-2252

LIFE CYCLE CRASH COURSE

A high-speed practical and mystical exploration of Jewish life with **Rabbi Mitch Mandel**, 8 p.m., Aish, 949 Clark Ave. W., $5., www.aishtoronto.com.

ROSH CHODESH LUNCH

Emunah Women is holding a Rosh Chodesh lunch, noon, 4300 Bathurst St., main floor party room with guest speaker **Leah Aronson.** $10 members, $18 non-members. Call 416-636-0039.

NO KIDDING

Kehillat Shaarei Torah Synagogue presents a series of talks for parents, 7:30 p.m. Tonight's talk, **Dr. Alan Brezen** and **Dr. Jeff Wisebrot**: "Teething Causes Fevers and Other Stories Your Grandmother Told You" and **Dr. Larry Danilewitz**, "Managing Anxiety in Children." Donation to chesed fund can be made in lieu of admission. Call 416-229-2600, ext. 5, or education@shaareitorah.com to rsvp.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Jerry Gray, original and continuing member of the Travellers, Canada's longest running folk group, will entertain, Beth Tikvah, 12:15 lunch, 12:45 learn. $20 per session. Series, $65 members, $75 non-members. By reservation only, 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Wednesday, May 7

ISRAEL'S 60TH

Annual community-wide Yom Hazikaron/Yon Ha'atzmaut celebration in honour of Israel's 60th anniversary, 7:30 p.m., BAYT Congregation. Live music, food. Guest speaker, **Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb**.

Other News

EATING DISORDERS SUPPORT

Eating Disorders of York Region provides services, support groups for families and friends of those affected by eating disorders. Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m. at Thornhill Square Mall, Suite 271. 416-576-0457 or visit www.edoyr.com.

MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Brotherhood and Club Chaverut are hosting a mother's day brunch and entertainment by **Peter Marino**, May 11, 10:30 a. m. $10. For reservations, call **Myra Shinwell**, 416-633-2345 by May 4.

SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE

The Leslie and Ethel Gross scholar-in-residence weekend featuring **David Horovitz**, editor-in-chief of the *Jerusalem Post*, May 9 and 10. He speaks on Friday after Kabalat Shabbat services and dinner; gives a sermon on Shabbat; and speaks at the Shabbat lunch-and-learn. Shabbat dinner: members, $29 adults, $10 children 3-12; non-members, $36 adults, $15 children. Lunch, members $20, non-members $25. Call 416-783-6103.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Circle of Care needs volunteers for its Friendly Visiting program. Call **Selena**, 416-635-2860, ext. 462.

JF&C GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com.

For information on the following programs call ext. 246.

- Looking Ahead: A six-session group for newly separated for divorced individuals who are dealing with the initial feelings of loss, anger and loneliness and want to let go of the past, Thursday, May 1, 7-9 p.m.
- The Challenge of Anger for Women: A six-session group for women to learn how to express anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way, Wednesday, May 7, 7:30-9 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 34

CLUB FOR THE BLIND

The Hebrew Club for the Blind and Visually Impaired seeks young adults for an offshoot group, the Jewish Visually Impaired Network. The club, formed 50 years ago, is a vehicle for seniors to socialize and listen to speakers. Call **Bess Lokach**, 905-508-2892.

BEREAVEMENT GROUP

Circle of Care's spouses bereavement group, an eight-week group for people over age 55, examines a variety of issues. Begins May 5, 10-11:30 a.m. Call **Marisa Di Nardo**, 416-635-2900, ext. 418.

STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

Join Mekorot for "Ethics of the Fathers/Pirkei Avot: The Spirit Within the Letter of Law," a six-week examination of Pirkei Avot with the aid of classical and contemporary commentaries with **Rabbi Joseph Kanofsky.** Thursdays, May 1-June 5, 10-11:15 a.m. at Ulpanat Orot, 45 Canyon Ave. And "*Iggeret Ha'Ramban*: The Letter of a Sage to Our Hearts," one of the oldest mussar/ethical texts, the letter of Nachmanides to his son with **Rabbi Michael Skobac**. Tuesdays, May 6-27, 10-11:15 a.m. at Sephardic Kehila Centre. Register, www.mekorot.ca or 416-877-2050.

FOR SENIORS

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Sunday dance, May 4, 18. Those interested in Hebrew conversation class, call for information. *Guys and Dolls*, Mother's Day, May 11, 2 p.m., call for tickets. Seniors Walk the Walk and Talk the Talk in the park, Thursdays. Call to register. Info, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Lecture by **Fran Saltzman**, "My Experience as a Woman in the RCMP", May 6, 10 a.m., $3 members, $6 non-members. Yom Ha'atzmaut party, May 7, 6-10:30 p.m., $20 members, $23, non-members, sign up at ticket sales desk.

Wellness lecture, **Ruth Barker** of the Sunnybrook Rodette Cancer Centre, "Men and Cancer," 1:30 p.m., free.

Beth Tzedec Congregation Haverim Program and Holy Blossom Temple Lunch and Learn participants come together at Beth Tzedec to hear the Barons of Barber Shop perform the golden oldies. $2, May 5, in the main hall.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca

jVIAnetwork for active vision-impaired Jewish adults, features recreational programs, outings, activities. **Bess**, 905-508-2892.

Join Conversation Café, a joint program with JIAS, for newcomers who want to practise their English. Call ext. 240.

Koffler Centre of the Arts' student show returns for spring, May 1-23. Loggia Gallery, Koffler Centre.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org

"Savvy Singles: Cooking with Itka," is cooking the way to a person's heart? Meet cook and enjoy. Wednesday, May 7, 7:30 p.m. $18.

Register, randis@mnjcc.org or ext. 154.

Kolel @ the J – Conversation about Conversion, Thursdays for six weeks beginning May 1, 7:30-9:30. Call 416-636-1880, ext. 385, or www.kolel.org.

55+ Forward, May 9, noon, Toronto Jewish Film festival screening of *The Goldbergs*. $7. Followed by discussion with bagels and coffee, $2. Pre-register by May 7, Phyllis Fien, ext. 155.

BLACK TIE AND PEARLS: Na'amat Toronto held a benefit to raise funds for the protection of children and caregivers in the Na'amat day-care centres in Sderot. From left are Irwin and Muriel Michaels; Laurel and Gary Wiseman. [Mollie Rothman photo]

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Sat&Sun 10-6
BRIDAL REGISTRY

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Bev Cohen	Apr 4/08	23 Bittany Rise
Gertie Bokofsky	Apr 11/08	866 Sheppard Avenue W
Libby Ravica	Apr 12/08	866 Sheppard Avenue W
Martin Smith	Apr 13/08	176 Springhead Gardens
Deborah Troister	Apr 13/08	47 Wembley Road
Stephen Stein	Apr 13/08	40 Joshua Court
Freddy Ambrose	Apr 14/08	57 Willowbrook Road
Sophie Sherman	Apr 15/08	271 Metcalfe Street
Hy Isenbaum	Apr 15/08	63 St. Clair Ave. West
Betty Steinberg	Apr 16/08	135 Antibes Drive
Stephen Newton	Apr 16/08	131 Beecroft Road

HEBREW BASIC

Adina Jurman	Apr 17/08	3560 Bathurst Street

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Nyul, Lea	April 11/08	3560 Bathurst St
Moskovitz, Deborah	April 12/08	12 Rockford Rd
Gladstone, Max	April 13/08	Private
Brassel, Sydney	April 14/08	10 Twickenham Ct
Ackerman, Ida	April 14/08	7420 Bathurst St
Sztajman, Dora	April 14/08	45 Brunswick Ave
Davis, Morris	April 16/08	89 Sultana Ave
Koffler, David	April 15/08	
Iczkovitz, Roza	April 16/08	
Meshnik, David	April 16/08	

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
CHUCK LEVY ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 4th, 10:00 a.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Community Section
Phase 5, JJJJJ, Row J
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
LIBBY MANGARTEN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 4th, 2:00 p.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Wierzbniker Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
JOSEPH ZARNETT ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 4th, 12:00 noon
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Adath Israel - New Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

ICRF
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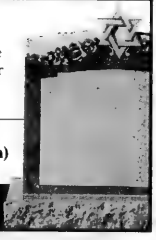

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Anne Faye KRAUSS,
(née Milavsky)
June 4, 1924 to April 4, 2008

"Annie" to her family and many friends, passed away quietly at her home at the Sunrise (Vancouver) at the age of 83.
Beloved wife of the late Jack Krauss, she also was predeceased by her parents, Jack and Clara Milavsky, her sister Molly Grotsky and brothers David and Sam. Loving mother of Rona Black and Michael (Susan) Krauss, adoring grandmother of Marni (Nir) Kushnir, Steven Black and Rebecca Krauss and devoted great-grandmother of Aila Kushnir. She is survived also by her sister Jean Bortnick and brother Harold.
Born in Limerick, Saskatchewan, the second eldest of six children, she and her family moved to Saskatoon in 1940 where she helped run the family grocery store and raise her siblings. She married Jack Krauss in 1946 and the two ran their own grocery store in Saskatoon until 1956 when the family moved to Moose Jaw where they had purchased a dry cleaning operation and other businesses. As well as tending their home and raising their children, Anne helped Jack run the businesses and together, they built a prosperous life for 57 years. Anne and Jack "retired" to Vancouver in 1974, where Anne promptly became a star salesperson at People's Jewellers.
As well as travelling with Jack, Anne loved to visit with friends, play Mah Jong, garden, go to synagogue, attend auctions and collect salt-and-pepper shakers. She was known for her generosity, compassion and kindness; the importance she placed on family; her strong work ethic; the joy she found in life; and her contributions to the community. She canvassed for many causes — Heart and Stroke Foundation, Kidney Foundation and Cancer research to name a few. She was a Life Member of Hadassah, active in Beth Tikvah Synagogue and in later years when she retired again, she volunteered in the gift shop at the Louis Brier Home.
She will be remembered and dearly missed by her family and by the many others whose lives she touched.
Annie was buried at the Schara Tzedeck on April 7. Memorial donations can be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Beth Tikvah Synagogue (Richmond, BC), Cancer research or Alzheimer Society.

Obituary

Philanthropist leaves a 'powerful legacy'

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Philanthropist Anne Tanenbaum died peacefully at home last week. She was 99.

Recipients of her generosity included the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT), which is now known as the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto; Baycrest; Mount Sinai Hospital; the Art Gallery of Ontario; York University; the University of Toronto; Shaare Tzedek Hospital, the Canadian Opera Company, and Ben Gurion University of the Negev (BGU).

Anne Tanenbaum

Tanenbaum endowed six chairs for research into neuroscience and molecular medicine – two at U of T's faculty of medicine, as well as others at Baycrest, the Hospital for Sick Children, Mount Sinai, and Toronto General Hospital. She also supported projects at Mount Sinai and North York General hospitals in digital mammography and breast cancer care.

She received honorary doctorates from U of T and BGU. In 1995, she received the Outstanding Philanthropist Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals' Greater Toronto chapter.

Tanenbaum was "a visionary in health care who understood the importance of research and its ability to affect the lives of people around the world," said Mark Gryfe, Baycrest Foundation president.

"The two research chairs in cognitive neuroscience at Baycrest, established in her and her husband's names, helped catapult research at Baycrest to extraordinary levels," Gryfe said.

"Equally important is the powerful legacy of philanthropy carried on by her children."

Paul Shaviv, TanenbaumCHAT's director of education, said that multi-million dollar gifts to the school from Tanenbaum and her late husband Max helped fund extensive additions to its Wilmington campus and constituted the main donation for the school's new Vaughan campus. As well, he added, the gifts made TanenbaumCHAT "a destination for educational philanthropy on a major scale."

Tanenbaum's "smile at seeing the students was memorable. A family member once told me that her gifts to TanenbaumCHAT gave her the most pleasure of all of her major philanthropies," Shaviv said.

"They were visionary gifts, made by a remarkable personality, and they were directed to the welfare of the very heart of the Jewish community – its young people."

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, senior rabbi at Beth Tzedec Congregation, described her as "warm, gracious, elegant, and caring, a loyal and devoted Jew whose family taught her the importance of Torah, mitzvot, chesed and tzedakah."

Tanenbaum's daughter, Tauba Spiro, recalled that in the early 1990s, she and her husband, Sol Spiro, ran the Max Tanenbaum music program at Princess Margaret Hospital every Wednesday. Every week, her mother "came and sat in the front row. She couldn't go anymore to the symphony or concerts, which she loved to do, so she really enjoyed this."

The New York-born Tanenbaum's early life was not easy, Spiro said.

Her mother died when she was only six, and she helped care for her siblings, and later her step-siblings. She began working at age eight.

The family eventually moved to Toronto, where she met Max Tanenbaum. They married in February 1930. Max Tanenbaum later amassed a fortune in steel fabrication and real estate. He died in 1983.

"They were an incredible team," Spiro said. "They set a high example of generosity and sharing. Our home was open to anyone who needed [a venue for fundraising] – Mizrachi, Israel Bonds, United Jewish Appeal, her Scopus chapter of Hadassah."

The couple were among the first to invest in orange groves in Israel, and the family still owns one near Kfar Saba, Spiro said.

Long before it was fashionable, and even before she herself visited Israel, she encouraged Spiro to spend a summer there when she was only 17.

Spiro praised her mother for being one of the first women to give to the United Jewish Appeal independently from her husband.

Friday night and Shabbat were especially important to Tanenbaum, Spiro said.

"She thrived on it – the shopping, the cooking, the baking. Friday night was the most special dinner of the week."

Tanenbaum was predeceased by her husband Max, her son Harold, and siblings Jack Wolf, Molly Rafael, Dorothy Roher and Esther Carmen. She is survived by children Joey and Toby Tanenbaum, Minda and Les Feldman, Tauba and Sol Spiro, Howard and Carole Tanenbaum, Larry and Judy Tanenbaum, Carol and Jeannie Tanenbaum, brothers Bill and Noah Wolf, 22 grandchildren and 43 great-grandchildren.

Winnipeg mourns loss of community leader

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Harold Buchwald's death on April 17 sent shock waves through not only the Jewish community but the larger community as well.

Buchwald was the consummate community leader, always ready to provide advice and leadership. Although he recently turned 80, he was still a going concern involved in a myriad of activities.

"I had known Harold my entire life," says Jonathan Kroft, president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg. "The whole community, organized and otherwise, is shocked by his sudden passing. He had such amazing energy and such a breadth of interest. He was involved in so many things. There was so much important work he had yet to finish."

Buchwald was born in Winnipeg to Frank and Bessie (Portigal) Buchwald. He received his BA in 1948 from the University of Manitoba and his bachelor of laws in 1952. (He earned a master of law in 1957 and was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University in 1994.)

At university, he met Yude Henteleff, and the two became law partners and lifelong friends. In 1965, they formed the law firm Buchwald Henteleff. In 1970, they joined forces with the late Israel Asper to form Buchwald Asper Henteleff.

Continued on page 34

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Dr. Anne Tanenbaum changed the face

Philanthropist extraordinaire pers

(Left photo) Anne Tanenbaum (centre) at a groundbreaking event held at TanenbaumCHAT's Wilmington Campus in 2001.
(Above photo) Anne Tanenbaum surrounded by young people bound for Israel on a Canada Israel Experience trip she sponsored in 1999.

By Daniel Horowitz

Dr. Anne Tanenbaum, a woman synonymous with tzedakah, passed away on April 20 in her 99th year, but fortunately for countless Torontonians and Israelis, her legacy of vision and giving continues.

The wife of the late Max Tanenbaum and the mother of six, grandmother of 22 and great grandmother of 43, Anne learned the importance of giving at the tender age of five. In a conversation I enjoyed with her at a groundbreaking event held at TanenbaumCHAT's Wilmington Campus in 2001, Anne told me that it all began with the milk money.

Her father had left his young daughter with the important task of paying the milkman while he was at work. After weeks of doing just that, a stranger knocked on her door saying that his five children were hungry and he had no money. He asked for the young girl's help.

Anne told me that she remembers thinking to herself, "I have to give him all of the milk money; after all, he's got five children, I've simply got to help them."

That selfless entrée into the world of tzedakah is one reason the Tanenbaum name has defined philanthropy across the Greater Toronto Area for an extraordinary nine decades.

Universities, schools, synagogues, hospitals and various art institutions have all benefited from the philanthropic largesse of Dr. Anne Tanenbaum, her late husband, and their children.

"Whether it was her involvement and generosity in the arts, medicine, Israel, or Jewish education, Anne Tanenbaum was a committed, compassionate visionary intent on making the world a better place for all of us," said UJA Federation chair David Koschitzky. "She was a strong woman who, despite encountering a number of challenges over the years, never gave up, remained optimistic, and did more than merely talk the talk. She made the world a better place for many people and for that alone, though there is much more, she will be sorely missed."

Howard Tanenbaum shares a laugh with his mother at the 2001 TanenbaumCHAT groundbreaking.

"Anne understood that tzedakah can nurture a vision," said Rav Baruch Frydman-Kohl, Beth Tzedec Congregation. "She enjoyed giving while living, because she got *nachas* from seeing how others grew as a result of her kindness. She gave for the institutions and causes that were dear to her and many around the world have benefited because of Anne's outstretched hand of encouragement and support."

The future of Jewish education throughout the GTA was forever changed by the Tanenbaum vision and generosity, most notably through the Tanenbaum-CHAT partnership. In 1999, a trailblazing gift of $2.5 million - which ultimately grew to $6.5 million - from Anne to CHAT – one of North America's most renowned Jewish high schools – not only established a new standard of educational philanthropy in Toronto; it also set the school on a course of growth and expansion from which it has not looked back.

Thanks to that gift, The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Education Centre at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) Wilmington Campus, positively influenced Jewish teenagers at a pivotal point in their lives. Today, the new TanenbaumCHAT in the Kimel Family Education Centre – part of York Region's Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus – spreads the gift of a quality Jewish education to those living north of Steeles Avenue.

# of Jewish philanthropy across the GTA

sonified tzedakah for nine decades

"Dr. Anne Tanenbaum was an exemplary philanthropist. Her successive gifts to CHAT - as it then was - not only materially helped us to inaugurate the major period of expansion of the school, but also established new precedents for gifts to Jewish schools in our city - and especially to CHAT," said Paul Shaviv, CHAT's director of education. "In 1999, following her first major gift, we designated our Wilmington Avenue campus as 'The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Education Centre', and then following a second generous gift, the school itself was named "The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto'. Its everyday name – TanenbaumCHAT - is now a community byword and it is our honour to bear the Tanenbaum name."

Anne's far reaching and diverse philanthropic philosophy has also funded, among other things: The Anne and Max Tanenbaum Chair Program in Biomedical Research at the University of Toronto; an initiative to reduce wait times at Mount Sinai Hospital's Schwartz/Reisman Centre; a scholarship in English literature at the University of Toronto and a scholarship endowment at Israel's Ben Gurion University where Anne was awarded an honourary doctorate in 1993.

"When her husband Max was alive, Anne was a wonderfully supportive wife who always stood at his side and reveled in his successes," said David Goldstein, a UJA Federation leader, and a friend of the Tanenbaum family for many years. "After Max died in 1983, Anne became even more philanthropically involved with a number of causes, all of which touched her heart, including, of course, Jewish education. She was truly a grand lady."

"What impressed me the most about Anne was her optimistic nature, her love of people, and the fact that she was truly a visionary," said family friend and long-time advisor, Martin Rochwerg. "In 1999, before *Birthright Israel* existed, Anne gave a million dollar gift to UJA Federation to be used by the Canada Israel Experience Centre to increase the number of young people participating on Israel programs. In addition, these funds were used to greatly enhance the educational quality of these programs. Anne was just such a great human being."

"Along with her husband Max, Anne Tanenbaum helped create what has become the template for Jewish education in the new millennium through her visionary partnership with the Community Hebrew Academy of CHAT which is now simply known as – appropriately enough – TanenbaumCHAT," said UJA Federation president & CEO, Ted Sokolsky. "But my real memory of Anne will always be of her smile, a smile she radiated whenever she was surrounded by children and young people. I will never forget that smile as she stood surrounded by CHAT students at the Wilmington Campus groundbreaking or when she came to the airport to wish bon voyage to a planeload of young students bound for Israel on a Canada Israel Experience trip she sponsored. The kids were her inspiration and no doubt she will remain an inspiration for them for years and years to come."

Anne Tanenbaum spends a moment with one of the many students she helped send to Israel in 1999 as she visited Pearson Airport prior to their departure.

Anne Tanenbaum shares a laugh with an El Al pilot.

(left to right) Anne Tanenbaum, Larry Tanenbaum and Leo Goldhar

Anne Tanenbaum with David Goldstein

Two Generations on: The Legacy Continues

Ken Tanenbaum (l) and David Spiro, Anne Tanenbaum's grandsons, continue her legacy today. Ken chairs UJA Federation's Bay Street Division with Bruce Leboff, while David is the North American chair of UJC's National Young Leadership Cabinet. Both are Board Members of UJA Federation's Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto.

UJA FEDERATION
Live generously

Obituary

CIC founder an active volunteer

Continued from page 31

"The three of us were bound together by a love of the law and a commitment to social justice," Henteleff says. "We also shared a commitment to the City of Winnipeg and the arts, and a passion for the Jewish people and for education. We felt strongly that as lawyers, we were in an ideal position to serve as advocates in ways that would enrich our community."

The partners each served as president of the local chapter of the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University, and on the national board and on the board of governors of the Hebrew University. Buchwald was honoured by that university two years ago when it created a permanent lecture series in his name.

Buchwald was a founder of the Canada-Israel Committee and served a term as president of the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba.

In the arts, Buchwald took on the challenge about 10 years ago of saving the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra from bankruptcy. He was also a founder and the first executive director of Arts Stabilization Manitoba Inc., an organization whose purpose was to help arts organizations become more businesslike and efficient.

In addition, he served as head of the Health Sciences Centre Foundation and the Canadian Consumer Council and was a founder of the Business Council of Manitoba.

Harold Buchwald
[CJN file photo]

In 1993, he was inducted into the Order of Canada.

About 10 years ago, Buchwald Asper Henteleff merged with another law firm and became Pitblado. Buchwald retired from active practice three years ago and began a new career as a regular columnist for the *Winnipeg Free Press* and the *Jewish Post and News*.

He had most recently joined the fight to preserve the historic site of Upper Fort Garry in the heart of Winnipeg by stopping residential development there.

"Although Harold wasn't coming into the office anymore, we still got together regularly for lunch," Henteleff says. "We shared 60 years of ideas, thoughts and aspirations.

"Harold was a great soul who approached all issues with equanimity."

Jonathan Kroft notes all the holes that will have to be filled as a result of Buchwald's passing. "His leaving us is not only sad but also daunting," Kroft says. "They don't make men like Harold Buchwald every day. It will take time to pick up the pieces. We will never forget him."

Buchwald is survived by his wife, Dee, who is active in the community in her own right, sons Jeffrey and Richard and their families.

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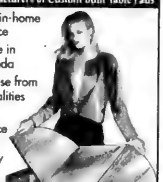
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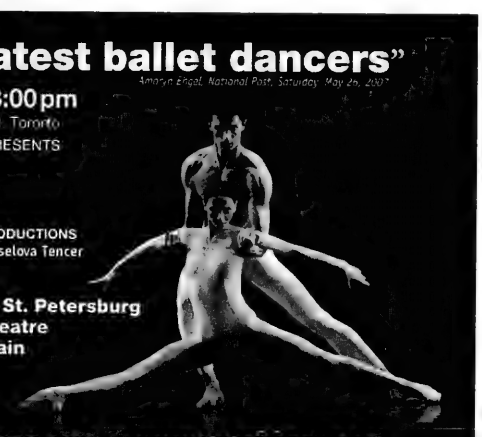
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ש'שאר י'נ'ן

גידי קורן וחברים

"כפר"-לכו לראות

בכיר המחזאים הישראלים, יהושע סובול, הגיע לדעת רבים לשיאו בהצגה "כפר" שהספיקה לכבוש את הקהל בישראל ובמדינות רבות בעולם. זהו סיפורו של כפר ישראלי בשנות הארבעים של המאה העשרים, כפי שנתאו על ידי נער, כשברקע מלחמת העולם השנייה, השואה, הכרזת המדינה ומלחמת השחרור.

את "כפר" מביאה אלינו בשלישי במאי יעל פינגולד המתנראליזית, שהקימה שם את סדנת התיאטרון העברי בחסות הספריה היהודית העממית. פינגולד, בנוסף להיותה במאית מחוננת ואדם מקסים, היא גם בתו של הסופר והמנהיג הישראלי משה שמיר, כך שהתפוח לא נפל במקרה זה רחוק מן העץ. יעל הביאה לטורונטו את ההפקות הקודמות של "אשה, בעל, בית" ו"מקווה"- שתי הצגות שהתצוגו בהצלחה רבה לפני אלמנות מלאים.

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Up The Yangtze

יאנג צ'אנג, קנדי ממוצא סיני, נסע לארץ מולדתו וצילם סרט מדהים שחובה על כל מי שגר בעולם הזה לראות. בְּמקום להראות את נפלאות החומה הסינית, הוא מראה איך שני מליון איש נעקרים מבתיהם כדי לאפשר פתיחת סכר מים שיספק חשמל למליונים אחרים. אבל מה זה שני מליון איש בארץ של מיליארד ושלוש מאות מליון איש.. צ'אנג מתמקד בילדה של חקלאים עניים שנעקרים מאדמתם על שפת הנהר, ואיך מזלה שָׂפַר כי היא התקבלה לעבוד וללמוד במעבדת תיירים. הסרט מראה איך הָאדם בדיקטאטורה הסינית מתאים לחלוטין. מעניין איך איפשרו לצ'אנג לחזור לשם שוב. ובינתיים, עם הצלחת סרטו בקנדה, הוא מגייס כספים שבעזרתם עזר למשפחה העקורה לקנות חלקת אדמה ולהתאושש, ואת הכספים שממשיכים לזרום הוא מתכוון להשקיע במשפחות נוספות.

עשר בסולם קורן, רוצו לראות.

Shine a Light

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הבמאי האגדי מרטין סקורסזה הציב ארבעים מצלמות וצילם את הקונצרט שלהם בניו יורק, והתוצאה מדהימה גם למי שלא אוהב רוקנרול. מעבר למוזיקה האנרגיה המדהימה על הבמה, הסרט מדגיש כמה זקנה או הרגשה צעירה הן עניין פנימי. יש אנשים זקנים בני עשרים, ויש אבנים מתגלגלות שנשארים צעירים גם בגיל ששים ושש. עשר בסולם קורן.

Concordia library to be dedicated in young scholar's memory

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Avriel Butovsky was a brilliant scholar of Islamic history and culture at a time when the world was paying much less attention to this civilization. He was at the start of a promising career as a teacher and a writer on the Middle East when he was killed at age 34 in a road accident in Syria in 1993.

On the 15th anniversary of his tragic and sudden passing, his parents Rivka and Mesh Butovsky and the Concordia Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies are honouring his memory with the creation of the Avriel Butovsky Research Library.

As Rivka noted, Avriel loved and avidly collected books, as does his father, who taught English literature for nearly 40 years at Concordia University. The library's 3,500 volumes on modern Judaica represent just a fraction of the massive number of books on countless subjects Mesh Butovsky has amassed over his 80 years.

"Effectively, this library constitutes a gift from father to son: Mesh's deep love for books embodied in his deep love for Avriel," Rivka Butovsky said at the inauguration.

The institute's chair, Norman Ravvin, welcomed the fact that the Judaica collection was received intact. The books range from works on religion and philosophy to Bible studies and the history of 20th-century Jewish culture.

The library is housed at the institute's premises in the Samuel Bronfman Building, at 1590 Dr. Penfield Ave., which is also the site of the Canadian Jewish Congress' national archives. Open to academics and students, the collection is expected to be of special interest to scholars of Jewish thought and history, and the literature of postwar North American Jews.

Mesh Butovsky taught Canadian and American Jewish literature, the Bible as literature, Holocaust narratives and modern Israeli literature.

An interest in Islam such as Avriel Butovsky's, pre-9/11, might seem odd for a young man who attended the secular and Zionist Jewish People's School in Montreal, and was in the first graduating class of Bialik High School. At the time of his death, Avriel was living in Cairo.

Butovsky killed in road accident in Syria in 1993

Avriel's brother Yaron, a lawyer, however, sees the "Folk Shule" as the place where his younger brother's love of "the life of the mind," openness to diverse cultures and strong notions of justice took root.

After Bialik, Avriel, then 16, left for Israel to study history and international relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. During those four years, he became fluent in Hebrew and Arabic.

He then went to Oxford to study the origins of present-day Islamic fundamentalism. The late professor Albert Hourani, who was of Lebanese background and was considered the founder of modern Middle East studies, became a mentor and role model.

Yaron Butovsky said his brother saw himself as an intermediary between Israelis and Arabs. "He would often tell us of his awkward situation: defending Israel before his Cairo Arab colleagues and friends, while defending his Arab friends against the charges of his Israeli colleagues."

After graduating with a master's degree from Oxford, Avriel Butovsky worked in London as a research officer for the World Jewish Congress.

With an award from the Egyptian government, he returned to his graduate studies at Cairo University in 1987-88, studying Egyptian history, Arabic, and Ottoman Turkish. It was then on to Harvard to pursue a doctorate in Middle Eastern studies, in particular Egyptian social history. His research on his dissertation took him back to Cairo, a city he loved, Yaron Butovsky said.

Avriel was nearing completion of that work, which examined the anomaly of the Egyptian royal family's use of French and Italian in court, rather than the Arabic of the people they ruled.

Avriel's parents earlier established two scholarships in his name at the Hebrew University and at Harvard. The first is designated for an Israeli-Arab student, the second to buy the latest literature in Arabic.

Two of Avriel Butovsky's friends from his days at Bialik also spoke at the inauguration: Howie Gold, now a professor of political science at Smith College in Massachusetts, who actually met him in kindergarten, and Mia Barsheshet, now an interior designer and community activist.

Gold remembered how at ease Avriel was moving in both the Jewish and the Arab cultures while living in Jerusalem, and his fervent hope for peace, even then, between the two peoples.

"I honestly believe that even as a teenager, Avriel had an unusually acute sense of humanity and decency; he felt that humanity and decency were lacking on both sides and were necessary to bring about lasting peace."

One person who never knew Avriel personally also reflected on his legacy. Matthew Ellis is a doctoral candidate in Middle Eastern studies at Princeton, whose interests parallel Avriel's. He knows the man he considers his intellectual guide only through the writings he published.

"It has become clear to me that, for Avriel, intellectual and academic endeavours were always fundamentally bound up with the personal and the moral... Avriel's intellectual vision... was also an impassioned moral one."

A catalogue of the library's books is available on the Institute's website: www.concordia.ca/jchair.

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Explaining "custody" terms

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator for 26 years

Question. I am the primary parent of two young children. I am currently negotiating a separation agreement and I'm confused about the term "custody."

If I settle for something less, like the term "primary care and control" or "residential parent", will it be harder for me to relocate with my children if I ever need to move away from Toronto at some time in the future?

For instance, I might find a better job or wish to remarry. If I lose such a fight in Court later, what to do?

Answer. The term custody in itself will not be the determining factor. There are many factors that matter to the Courts. According to the Ontario Court of Appeal, it is not only what the agreement says, but *which parent has actually provided the primary care role in reality*. If the facts on the ground measure up to what the agreement says, parents such as yourself have traditionally been permitted to move with their children, if heard by the Court of Appeal. However, until the matter reaches the Court of Appeal level, the results in what are called "mobility rights" cases at the trial level in Ontario are anybody's guess.

The outcome before reaching the appellate level will depend slightly more on the facts of each case, and less on principles of law and which Judge hears the matter.

Frankly, at the Ontario trial level there appears quite often to be no law or guideposts. And the trial Judges or "motions Judges" do not appear to be following the rules laid down by the Court of Appeal, even though that is what is supposed to happen.

Some do and many others simply try each case on the facts before them based on the "best interest" tests. This has meant the following in a number of decisions: Notwithstanding that a parent is the primary or custodial parent, a child shouldn't be separated from an access parent with whom a child is so sufficiently bonded that it would betray his or her best interests. Such trial level Judges feel that the primary parent may not have a sufficient reason for moving.

In such cases, the primary caregiver or custodial parent has therefore been denied permission to move permanently with the child, irrespective of the principles laid down by Ontario's Court of Appeal. So in that case, the best bet for such a parent is to appeal.

Mr. Syrtash has now moved to a new law firm and has been appointed as Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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On Campus

Student volunteers in African orphanage

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Bonnie Zipursky always knew that she would volunteer abroad one day, but she had no idea the effect it would have on her.

"I grew up with parents who always made travel a very big part of my life. And when we would go on family vacations it wasn't only to sit by the pool all day, but to reach out to the community, spend a day at an orphanage, that sort of thing," Zipursky said.

"So I think travelling and volunteering has been something I always knew I would do."

Zipursky's mother, Fern Levitt, said that although her 21-year-old daughter was always compassionate, until she travelled to Africa eight months ago to volunteer, she wasn't an activist.

"She was always more of a shy kid, so when she went off on her own… I was thrilled. Absolutely thrilled. I want my kids to be activist and to do something. They live privileged lives, living in this country," Levitt said.

After deciding to take a year off from pursuing an English degree from Dalhousie University, Zipursky got in touch with Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish humanitarian and relief committee, to seek volunteer opportunities in Africa.

She was put in touch with a man in Tanzania who used to do international consulting and has worked with Ve'ahavta in the past.

"He found a local orphanage that was desperate for volunteers, and so I planned my first seven weeks in Africa volunteering for them," Zipursky said.

"It was also really important to me to do something with African wildlife, so I did some research online and found a wildlife sanctuary in Namibia where you get to live in the bush looking after orphaned and abused animals – everything from meerkats to lions – and I did that for four weeks."

She said that her next opportunity was based in Cape Town, where she landed an internship working for a local magazine.

"When I arrived in Cape Town and started the internship, it just didn't feel right. I missed the daily interactions with local people, especially children," she said.

Soon after, Zipursky met someone who was volunteering at St. Joseph's Home for Children, in a Cape Town suburb, a place for chronically ill children, many of whom come from low-income families or have lost their parents to AIDS.

Bonnie Zipursky, who is volunteering at St. Joseph's Home, a home for chronically-ill children based in a Cape Town suburb, poses with some of the children who receive care there.

"I realized that was what I really wanted to be doing."

For the past four months, Zipursky has been working with children who range in age from a few months to 14 years. The children receive 24-hour medical and emotional care from nurses, staff and volunteers.

"When I first started, it was a huge adjustment to seeing kids so young and so vulnerable to these horrible diseases, knowing that they are here because their family is unable to look after them, or they don't have a family at all," she said.

"But by far the most difficult part is when there is nothing more St. Joseph's can do for them because they're not responding to treatment, and they are sent home to spend their last few weeks with family. I could never adjust to saying goodbye."

Although there have been emotionally difficult times for her, the experience has given her a more positive outlook on life.

"They have taught me how to appreciate my own fortune, and although it sounds so cliche, made me realize the things in life that really matter," she said.

When Zipursky was asked to think of ways to raise money for the home, which relies heavily on donations, she reached out to her mother for suggestions.

"She called me asking me what she could do in terms of raising money and I had no idea," Levitt said.

"But I heard of another family who went to Africa and did a party at their home to raise funds before they left and I thought that was a fabulous idea."

She decided to throw a party at her home and charge a $25 cover that would be donated to the home.

"We e-mailed everyone we knew… and I put together a silent auction. I got donations from friends and people in the neighbourhood for the silent auction."

She said that one friend who owns a sailboat auctioned off a day on the boat, and another friend, an electrician, offered his services.

Levitt owns a horse and sold a riding lesson for $150, while her husband, Arnie Zipursky, who is a filmmaker, offered a dinner and movie night with him that sold for $250.

"The house was packed with well over 100 people. We raised $10,000 in one night," she said. "And even people who couldn't make it sent money. Our community was so happy to be part of it, so happy to give."

Levitt, her husband and two daughters travelled to Africa on April 30 to visit Zipursky for four weeks, to tour, to volunteer as a family and to deliver the $10,000 cheque to the home.

"I am so overwhelmed by everyone's unbelievable generosity," Zipursky said.

"I never thought when my parents told me they were going to do it, that the amount would reach anywhere close to $10,000. It was so nice to hear how everyone was so willing to donate, and I am very excited for my parents to come and bring the donation to the home," she said about a week before their arrival.

She said the money will go toward new playgrounds for the kids.

"There are 150 children, each separated into different wards [in the home], and St. Joseph's wanted to build a playground for each ward, as well as including an indoor playground for children whose medication makes them sensitive to the sun."

"It is a huge project, but now with this amazing donation from Toronto, it will be able to come into effect."

Although she has plans to work in Toronto for the summer, she plans to return to Cape Town and is looking into the option of completing her English degree there.

But no amount of schooling would have provided Zipursky with the life lesson she learned while abroad.

"Above everything else, I have learned that there is no reason to be scared of the unknown," she said. "Especially as a young woman, there are always so many reasons not to do something, and unless you actually go out and do it, you will never know what amazing experiences you are missing out on."

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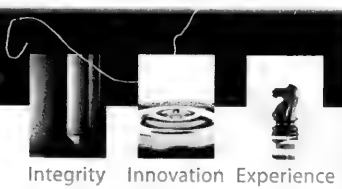

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Man pleads guilty to firebombings

MONTRÉAL — One of two men accused in the firebombings of two Montreal Jewish institutions last year has pleaded guilty to those crimes.

Azim Ibragimov, 24, pleaded guilty to three counts of using fire or an explosive to cause damage to property and one count of uttering threats to damage property.

Ibragimov and Omar Bulphred were arrested on April 12, 2007, in connection with the throwing of a Molotov cocktail on Sept. 2, 2006, at the chassidic Skver community's Toldos Yakov Yosef school in the borough of Outremont, and the setting off of a small explosive device on the sidewalk outside the Snowdon YM-YWHA Ben Weider Jewish Community Centre on April 3, 2007.

The chassidic school suffered significant damage to its entrance, while the detonation outside the Y did not touch its property.

Ibragimov has also pleaded guilty to setting fire to a car on Sept. 12, 2006, parked in the east-end borough of Mercier, an incident which is apparently not connected to the attacks on the Jewish institutions.

Ibragimov, who was born in Kazakhstan, and the Algerian-born Bulphred, 22, have been detained since their arrest.

Both originally had nine charges each laid against them related to the same incidents. In October, some of the charges against Ibragimov were dropped, including one of conspiracy to commit kidnapping and forcible confinement.

Sentencing arguments for Ibragimov are scheduled to take place May 6, said his lawyer Sal Mascia.

The trial of Bulphred, who has pleaded not guilty, is set to begin in October.

Thornhill MPP among conference speakers

Continued from page 27

The conference will feature keynote speakers Progressive Conservative MPP for Thornhill Peter Shurman, who will talk about eliminating racism, and Avrum Rosenzweig of Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee. Other speakers include law student Yoni Levitan, executive director of STAND Canada, a Darfur advocacy and awareness group.

Also, Melanie Simons, national social policy co-ordinator of Canadian Jewish Congress, will present material from the Choose Your Voice anti-racism education program, which is sponsored by FAST (Fighting Antisemitism Together). An estimated 400,000-plus students in Canada have been exposed to the program.

SAVING THE EARTH: Emma Kivenko, left, and Haylee Muroff, junior kindergarten students at Temple Sinai Nursery School, help clean up last week for Earth Day.

Rabbi to train at CFB Borden

Continued from page 6

The rabbi is excited to start his first two-week session of the four-week training course on May 5 at the Canadian Forces Base Borden, just outside Barrie, one of the main training bases for the Canadian Forces.

He will complete the other two-week session next May.

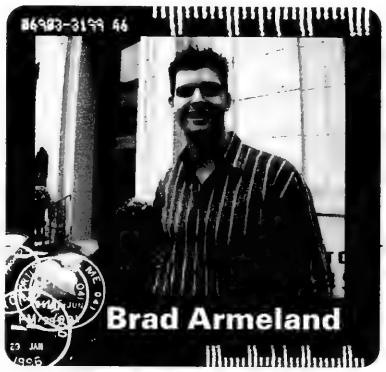
"They teach you survival skills and basic military skills, taking us out into the wilderness and teach us compass reading, map reading, how to read army-type maps and those types of elementary skills," he said, adding that he won't receive weapons training, because chaplains don't carry firearms.

Another rabbi based in Ottawa, Rabbi Chaim Mendelsohn, who last year became the first rabbi in the Canadian Forces since World War II, will join Rabbi Danzinger in the training course in Borden.

Rabbi Danziger said he'll have the opportunity to travel abroad as a chaplain, but he won't be forced to serve outside Canada.

"During the interview process, I was asked if I'd be willing to go to Afghanistan. I said, 'Sure, I just have to convince my wife,'" he said with a laugh. Personally, this is an exciting milestone in my life. I find it very rewarding work helping people. I'm engaged now, really, in a wide spectrum. Usually people specialize in a particular area, but now, I have my foot in hospital care, in prisons and in the Canadian Forces, so I'm really excited about broadening my experience," the rabbi said. "I take pride in the fact that I am Toronto-born and raised. I hope the Jewish community feels like their boy is in the army… It is something I hope the Jewish community will take pride in as well."

MASA Israel Representative in Canada



Now that Brad has returned to Windsor, Ontario from a year of volunteering on a post-college MASA program in Israel, he is getting involved with both Jewish youth and adult groups. He enjoys speaking about "how important it is to support and visit Israel and learn about its history and culture." Brad believes that "all of our efforts towards the upkeep of Israel as a safe and vibrant country demonstrate that we are truly one people."

Brad is just one of thousands of MASA participants. MASA offers over 150 programs, including a year in Israel after high school, a semester abroad during college, and post-college community service and resume building internships.

At a time when many Jewish young adults are alienated from Israel, it's encouraging to know that MASA participants like Brad return to their campuses and communities with a vibrant, enduring connection to Israel and a strong desire to serve as Israel ambassadors to Canada.

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Gray Academy shines at debating meets

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Gray Academy high school students continue to shine in national debating competitions.

Following up on their third-place finishes in a University of British Columbia debate competition for high school students in November and the third annual Asper Cup International High School Debate in early December, the team of Gray Academy Grade 11 students Josh Fineblit and Jonathon Ripstein placed 11th out of 62 Teams at the National Debating Championships in Calgary, held April 10 to 14.

In individual competition, Fineblit placed 14th out of 124 debaters in the best speaker category. He also placed 13th overall at the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, in March, and he qualified for three finals out of four competitive events. There were 14 countries and 122 competitors involved in this international event.

"I was pleased by how well I did both at Stuttgart and at Calgary," said Fineblit whose father, Allan, is the CEO of the Law Society of Manitoba.

The topics at the world championships, he says, were more theoretical, with issues such as whether the concept of the nation state is dead and whether or not the pace of technological change should be slowed.

In Calgary, the debating subjects were more current. One example Fineblit cited was a debate on whether or not Iraq should be partitioned.

Fineblit and Ripstein are carrying on the winning tradition established by other top Gray Academy debaters, such as Shira Lerner and Susan Schipper.

In 2005, Schipper competed as a senior student in the World Individual Debating and Public Speaking Championships in Cyprus, where she placed seventh overall, followed by a second-place finish at the 2006 Worlds in Connecticut.

In April 2007, Shira Lerner, then in Grade 12 at Gray Academy, qualified for the Worlds in Cape Town, South Africa, where she competed in four events – debate, persuasive speaking, impromptu speaking and interpretive reading – and placed 15th overall in the combined areas.

The Gray Academy is Winnipeg's only Jewish school with students from junior kindergarten to Grade 12. Its debating program was initiated four years ago by Winnipeg Jewish businessman Raymond Kives, whose son, Michael, was a world champion debater while attending St. John's-Ravenscourt School, Winnipeg's top-ranked private school. Kives felt that the Gray Academy should also have a debating program.

"Our growth in debating as a participating school in the last three years has been phenomenal," said Rory Paul, Gray Academy's head of school.

Debating teacher Linda Martin said a new group of top flight Gray Academy debaters are already showing their stuff. She noted that debating is a compulsory course at the school for students in grades 7 and 8, and an option thereafter.

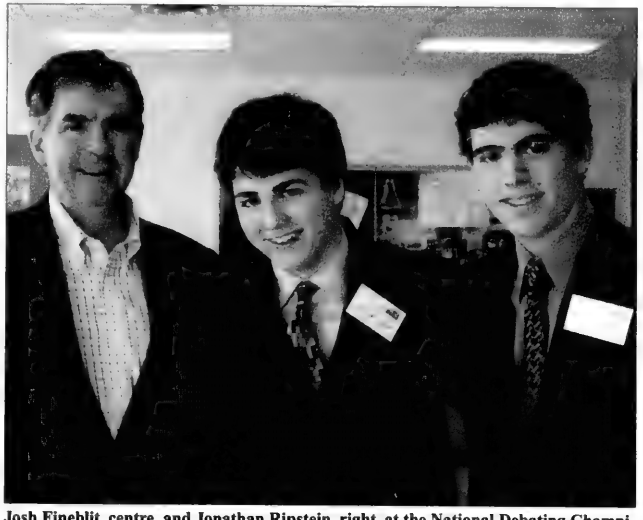
At the junior level, the team of Sarah Levy and Asher Billinkoff finished eighth while Levy was second among individual entrants at the UBC competition in November, which had about 1,000 participants.

At the Manitoba Junior Provincial Championships, held March 19 at Winnipeg's Balmoral Hall (another top-ranked private school), Levy was named "Top Manitoba Speaker."

As well, the team of Max Erenberg and Jonah Brown were the top team, while the team of Blake Lerner and Zev Ripstein finished second.

Levy, Brown and Erenberg will travel to Newfoundland to compete in the Junior National Debate Championships from May 8 to 14.

"Sarah is very good," Martin said of Levy, who is in Grade 9.



Josh Fineblit, centre, and Jonathan Ripstein, right, at the National Debating Championships in Calgary from April 10 to 14. They are seen here with Jim Prentice, minister of industry.

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Winnipeg's last kosher butcher closes — again

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The owner of Omnitsky Kosher Foods, Winnipeg's last surviving kosher butcher shop, sold his business and closed his store at the end of April in a move that has left north Winnipeg Jews without easy access to kosher meat.

It may well be the final chapter in an ongoing saga that has angered many area kosher consumers, who must now head to stores in south Winnipeg to buy meat there.

Some, such as businessman Gerry Kaplan, blame the Vaad Ha'ir, the city's kashrut certification agency, for the closure, citing Omnitsky's clashes with the Vaad over the last few years as the Vaad sought to raise local kashrut standards.

"The Vaad has done a real disservice to our community," he said. "Instead of being an advocate for Omnitsky, they made life miserable for Sasha [owner Sam Gekht]."

Others, such as Rose Margovski, who caters out of the Aleph-Bet Day Care in north Winnipeg, aren't sure who to blame.

"Somebody has to be responsible," she says. "Where are organizations such as Camp Massad and Margaret Park School [which houses a Hebrew bilingual program] going to get their kosher hot dogs and hamburger now."

North Winnipeg senior Ruth Katz considers the closure "a travesty"

"Where are seniors in the north end expected to buy kosher meat now?" she asked. "There are many seniors in this area without cars. We can't get to south Winnipeg to buy kosher meat."

> ***'Where are seniors in the north end expected to buy kosher meat now?'***

The Omnitsky story goes back to the summer of 2006. For many years, the Vaad had been concerned that its WK hechsher was not being accepted by many observant Jews, not only in Winnipeg but throughout North America.

The matter stems from a dispute in the mid-1980s between Orthodox teaching rabbis in the community and Orthodox congregational rabbis. It began as a disagreement over the creation of an eruv and led to the congregational rabbis declaring that the WK hechsher was no longer valid, after one of the teaching rabbis was invited to sit on the Vaad's rabbinical board overseeing kashrut.

Vaad president Don Aronovitch said Winnipeg kashrut standards have become higher in recent years.

After becoming Vaad president in the early years of this decade, Aronovitch first tried to change the brand by introducing a new hechsher, MBK, in collaboration with Orthodox and Chabad rabbis in the city. That effort fell apart when the major licensees refused to go along with it.

Two years ago, in the summer of 2006, after several months of talks with Gekht aimed at persuading him to raise Omnitsky's kashrut standards, the Vaad pulled the shop's hechsher.

Gekht had bought the more-than-80-year-old business a couple of years earlier.

After accusations and counter-accusations, the two sides came to terms after a couple of months.

That fall, the Odwak family attempted to open a second kosher butcher shop – this one in south Winnipeg – in a corner of their longstanding non-kosher butcher shop. The experiment ended after a few months.

In the meantime, the temporary loss of its hechsher cost Omnitsky some important institutional business.

At the same time as the Vaad cancelled Omnitsky's hechsher, it also decided to retire its own two shoichets, both elderly men, even though at least one of them is still hale and hearty. As a result, all kosher meat available in Winnipeg is now imported from Toronto.

Since Omnitsky regained its certification, Gekht has suffered some serious health problems: he has had both a heart attack and a stroke.

Several months ago, he put the shop up for sale, and he found a buyer last month. The new owner had actually wanted to buy Gekht's house in south Winnipeg but, said the buyer – who wants to remain anonymous – Gekht insisted that he had to sell the butcher shop before he sold his house. Therefore, the buyer bought both. He said he has listed the shop with a realtor.

"Hopefully, somebody will want to buy it and continue to operate it as a kosher butcher shop," he said.

Gekht has declined to comment on the situation.

Aronovitch said he's not surprised by the sale. "It is unfortunate that it turned out this way," he said. "It is a real inconvenience for people in the north end. I know that many people shopped there."

In south Winnipeg, kosher meat is available at Desserts Plus, an independent Jewish-owned store, and at Sobeys, which is consolidating kosher meat sales in one expanded location after having had kosher departments in two stores.

Both Desserts Plus and Sobeys sell packaged frozen meat and chicken from Toronto. (Omnitsky also sold deli products.)

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Husband, wife share secrets of 'perfect parenting'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Syd and Ellen Kessler say that the secret to perfect parenting is really no secret at all.

As authors of *The Perfect System of Parenting*, the Kesslers, parents of two adult sons, believe that imperfect parents can raise their children on the foundation of a perfect system – the laws of nature.

"Every action causes an equal and opposite reaction, and we show parents practical ways to teach their kids of all ages that negative reactions cause negative results; and positive actions cause positive results," Syd Kessler said in a telephone interview.

Kessler, a former advertising executive, is an investor in and mentor for new businesses, and his wife is a science teacher at the Toronto Heschel School, which she co-founded.

He said that "the principle of causality, that every action causes an equal and opposite reaction, is really a perfect law. It never changes, and by understanding that, you're on the road to becoming a better parent."

We need "weaponry" in our tool kit in order to remain in control of a situation, he said.

"If you walk in from work tired and hungry, and your kids demand attention, tell them you're glad to see them, but you need five minutes. You can do it with love and kindness, and you've created a positive outcome.

"If you scream and barricade yourself, you will be an effect, for this is a reaction to the kids' behaviour. You will feel like the victim who walked through the door, and your children's behaviour is going to get worse. You have set in motion the proverbial downward spiral."

The greatest gift humans were given was the ability to have free choice. "That is our majesty. We do not have to be an effect. We can can be in control of a situation."

He advises parents, as well, to stay clear of the "love ambush – the 'you don't love me anymore' line used by children, by letting them know [that a parent's] role is not to receive love from [their children] but to keep them safe. Giving love and getting love from our children should not be our primary intent."

Always giving in to a child's demands is not the way to produce a positive effect, Kessler said.

"When you're seeking our child's love for your own fulfilment, only bad stuff can happen to you, and eventually to your child. This can [also] produce a negative spiral," he said.

"Always ask the question: 'What good will my next action do for my child?' If it will do no good for your child, then that's what you'll eventually get back – no good."

The Kesslers' list of parenting rules consists mostly of common sense, he said.

Among other things, they tell parents to be consistent, remain united, be at the top of the family hierarchy, and make children understand that everything has a consequence.

"Parents have to make sure, however, that the rules, the reason for the rules, and the consequences for breaking the rules, are clear and understood," Kessler said.

"Children need to know what behaviour is expected of them, and what is not acceptable."

Kessler gives parenting seminars, he said, "because I am on a mission to share my information. It can be a dangerous world out there, because if you do bad, bad comes back."

LOONIE FOR LIMUD: Members of Netivot HaTorah Day School's Student Activity Leadership Opportunities group – from left, Jordana, Yaakov and Racheli – recently helped launch a "Loonie for Limud" program. It aims to raise money to help replenish the library of Jerusalem's Mercaz HaRav Cook yeshiva with new books to replace the ones destroyed in a March 8 terror attack in which a lone gunman killed eight students. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Technology writer/broadcaster turns 'geek-speak to street-speak'

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

"Find something that you're incredibly passionate about. It doesn't feel like work," advises consumer technology expert Marc Saltzman.

Since quitting his day job as a bill collector in the summer of 1996, Saltzman has written 14 books and contributed to more than 50 publications, including the *Toronto Star, Montreal Gazette, Playboy* and Sympatico MSN.

Despite an impressive resumé as a journalist, the 37-year-old north Toronto native is not limited to a single medium and his technological know-how has overflowed into both TV and radio, each of which challenges him in a unique way, he said.

As the host of *Gadgets and Gizmos* and *Super Software*, Saltzman appears on morning news shows in Canada, in addition to sitting in as a high-tech expert on such networks as CBS, NBC, CNN, Discovery Channel and The Sports Network.

His radio shows *Tech Talk with Marc Saltzman* and *Plugged in with Marc Saltzman* round out the triple-threat and contribute to the growing recognition of Saltzman as today's go-to guy of consumer technology.

Although Saltzman has carved his dynamic niche within the convergence of media and technology, his education in both fields evolved on the job and he studied neither formally.

After attending A.Y. Jackson Secondary School, Saltzman went on to receive a degree in psychology from the University of Toronto in 1993.

"In other words, I didn't know what I wanted to do," admitted a grinning Saltzman.

He grew up playing video games, but his first love was music and throughout university he was the drummer for an alternative rock band.

It wasn't until the end of high school, however, that Saltzman was introduced to computers, and only in the mid-90's did he become intrigued by the Internet.

He recognized the void technology was creating between producers and consumers through incomprehensible terminology and an overwhelming range of products, and sought to bridge the gap.

Now widely regarded for his role in the industry, he began as an unpaid video game reviewer for *Toronto Computes*, a technology-focused local newspaper. He enjoyed the perks of getting complimentary products to review.

As an ambitious university graduate, Saltzman pushed the boundaries, broadening the scope of his burgeoning career by approaching top publications despite his inexperience. He broke into the world of radio on the air of his favourite station 102.1 FM as the host of *Marc's Web Watch*, for which he discussed new websites.

The publication of his first book, *Internet Games Directory*, at the age of 26, gave him the impetus necessary to quit his day job and to truly immerse himself in the launch of his new career.

"I haven't looked back since," Saltzman said.

"It's refreshing that every day is different."

As a specialist in consumer technology, Saltzman must be in a perpetual state of development in order to remain on the cutting edge of the field.

In addition to the research required for individual articles, Saltzman's daily blog, Sync (www.sync-blog.com), requires him to be constantly up-to-date.

"[Technology] is organic. It changes on the fly."

"It's refreshing that every day is different."

However, the fluid and dynamic nature of his specialty does not deter him from his ultimate goal of serving as a translator from "geek-speak to street-speak," thereby empowering people to make better decisions and to learn more about the products they have already invested in.

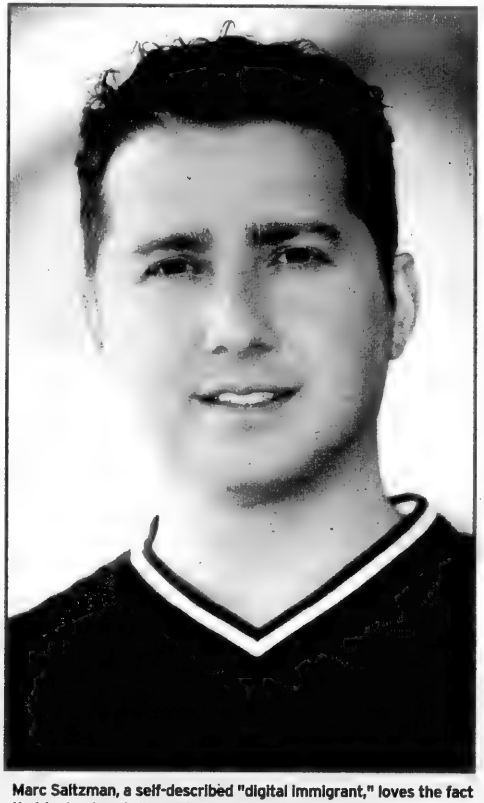
Saltzman was one of the few to correctly predict the revolutionary effects MP3s would have on the music industry, and he has exciting predictions for the second wave of the Internet.

He said that the continued development of digital distribution, the convergence of TV and the Internet, and radio frequency identification tags for products are all looming on the technological horizon.

Despite science's enormous potential to increase quality of living, Saltzman cautions against the transformation of devices into vices.

In fact, his most recent book and personal favourite to research, *White Collar Slacker's Handbook: Ten Tech Tips to Fool Your Boss*, is a satirical social commentary on today's 24/7 work culture.

In it, Saltzman exposes how to turn the tables and "stick it to the man," by using those products intended to tie employees to the office to create the illusion of being hard at work. He stresses the importance of unplugging and acknowledges that it is becoming increasingly difficult to do so in a society stricken with such hardships as Blackberry separation anxiety and IM (instant message) reliant social skills.



Marc Saltzman, a self-described "digital immigrant," loves the fact that technology is "organic" and "changes on the fly."

Though he himself is a "digital immigrant" – a term he coined to refer to those who have learned and adapted to technology – his five-year-old twins, Jacob and Maya, and his 3-year-old son, Ethan, are what he refers to as "digital natives" and are already completing songs on a video game called Guitar Hero.

Although Saltzman's ambitions keep him busy, instilling Jewish family values into his children's lives is important to him.

"We want them to be proud to be Jewish and to understand what that means," he said, adding that his children are enrolled in Leo Baeck Day School.

A driven and self-motivated man, Saltzman values family and the ability to work from home as of the utmost importance, and has managed to maintain perspective and balance despite his success.

"It could be overwhelming and tiring, but I love it," he said. "I still wake up with a smile on my face... It's a lot to keep up with, but it doesn't feel like work."

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Toronto writer's screenplay becomes a major motion picture

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

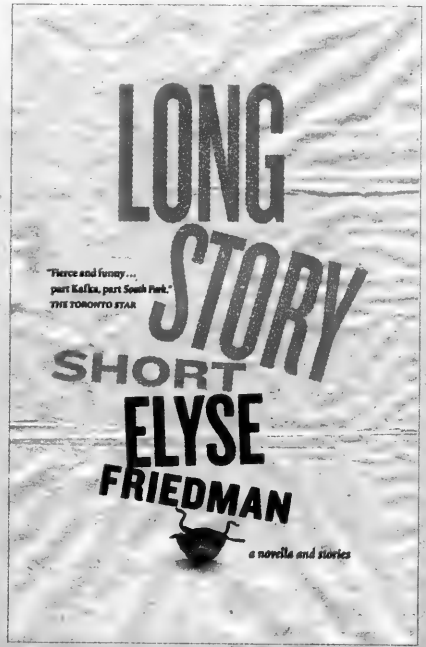
Writer Elyse Friedman is nonchalant when discussing her accomplishments and successes.

Most recently, the Toronto native's screen-play, *Birds of America*, became a major motion picture. Starring actors Matthew Perry and Hilary Swank, the movie was shown at the Sundance Film Festival in January. Yet Friedman comes across as unaffected.

"It's not going to change my life. I don't think it's going to make any difference in my life," she said.

"Once the script is paid for, your vision doesn't matter and what you see on the screen doesn't have any bearing on what you've written."

Friedman isn't bitter or anti-Hollywood; she's realistic and acknowledges the differences between the film industry and the publishing world.



Throughout her 44 years, she's published two novels, one book of short stories, a compilation of poems and has written several screenplays.

She's won the Gold National Magazine Award for fiction, and her works have appeared in McClelland's *Journey Prize Stories* and *Best Canadian Stories*, in addition to literary journals and anthologies across Canada and the United States.

Friedman attended film school, but writing, for both film and print, determined her career path.

"When I got out of film school [at Sheridan College], I planned to be a writer-director, but there was no real film industry at the time, and there were no jobs available. I didn't know where to get a film made," she said.

"I went into another line of work for 10 years, and by the time I was done, it was easier to be a writer than a filmmaker. [It's] because you just do it on your own – you don't rely on anyone else."

One of Friedman's successful screenplays was 2001's *Suddenly Naked*, a comedy about a famous novelist on the verge of 40 struggling with writer's block until she meets and falls in love with a talented writer half her age.

Shot over 23 days on a low budget, *Suddenly Naked* was projected onto the film festival screens of Berlin, Toronto, Vancouver and Maui, Hawaii.

Furthermore, it earned six Genie Award nominations and won the award for best editing.

When she was 18, having graduated from college, Friedman worked at corporate jobs before moving to Winnipeg for a stint as a comedy writer for the CBC radio shows *Brand X* and *Definitely Not the Opera*.

In 1998, she set her sights on penning her first novel, the 1999 Trillium Award nominee *Then Again*, a witty, dark comedy that chronicles the history of the Schafer family's three children, Michelle, Maria and their delinquent brother, Joel.

The book's eerie beginnings kick off when Michelle receives an invitation to a "Blast from the Past" party to be held in her childhood suburban home.

Knowing the warped ways of her twisted, millionaire screenwriter brother, she pinpoints Joel as the mastermind behind the gathering.

Along with her sister Maria, the two girls arrive at their old home, only to discover it has been restored to resembled its 1970s décor, and that Joel has hired two actors to play the roles of their deceased parents.

"If I had to sum up [my characters] in one word, I'd say 'outsiders,'" Friedman said. "There's not one particular source from where I get my inspiration. It comes from different places. I get it from life, and ideas pop into my head. I file them away and sooner or later it's time to deal with them, whether in a screenplay, book or poem or whatever it happens to be."

Friedman's witty collection of short stories, *Long Story Short*, documents the lives of six perverse and eccentric protagonists who share one common characteristic: living lives that have somehow gone off kilter.

In *Wonderful*, a suicidal man meets an angel who shows him how much happier the people in his life would be if he didn't exist, while *The Soother* profiles a hard-working family man who wants to be cared for in the same way as an infant: nursed by a mother, petted and cooed at, and diapered. And he gets it for $200 an hour.

Elyse Friedman

Friedman appears to purposely misplace her characters into lives they were never meant to lead, forcing them to face challenges they have difficulty overcoming, or do not want to overcome at all.

Right through her accomplished career in the film and print industries, Friedman has explored a variety of writing styles and themes in her works.

"With a novel, you have more control over your work. They're great because you can take the time to digress, which you can't do in other forms, and you can wander around a bit because you've got a longer stretch of time," she explained.

"The short story is nice because it's not a big commitment of time, so you can take chances with ideas and be a little [more] free than if you were writing a novel, which you have to make sure is the right idea because you spend a year on it. Poems are pure, a very distilled way of writing."

Friedman's upcoming projects include a new novel and several screen plays.

For now, she's busy working on a project that raises her enthusiasm: her four-year-old son, Max.

"He seems to be [a bit like me]," she revelled. "He's brilliant, very smart and very funny."

For more on Friedman's work, and to read the screenplay for *Birds of America*, visit elysefriedman.com.

Cooking contest winner brings back childhood memories

By JUDY BART KANCIGOR
Special to The CJN

My Grandma Ruchel was very religious. When I was a child, I would watch her pray facing the cabinet where she kept the Tam Tams – those addictive, "bet you can't eat one" crackers from Manischewitz – swaying back and forth as her arthritic fingers turned the pages of her prayer book. I had no idea she was facing east. I thought Tam Tam crackers were holy!

So it was with amusement and instant recognition that I read that Joy Devor, grand prize winner of the Second Annual Simply Manischewitz Cook-Off, used Tam Tams, her favourite cracker, for her winning recipe.

"I have been eating Manischewitz Tam Tams my whole life, and that's why it's so meaningful to me that they are the key ingredient in my winning recipe," Devor said. "Somehow I feel that my memories will be passed on through my dish."

Devor, who now lives in Far Rockaway, N.Y., (coincidentally where I went to high school), grew up in Los Angeles in an Orthodox Jewish home. "That section of L.A. is a beautiful Jewish community that has become a lot more religious now," she said. "When I was growing up, there was one kosher pizza shop and one burger place. You go up and down Pico today, and the variety of kosher restaurants is amazing."

Her mom worked full time, was president of her synagogue's sisterhood and was involved in study groups and bridge clubs.

"I didn't realize back then that my mom was a gourmet cook. I thought it was normal," she recalled. "I would go to my friend's house every week, and they'd have gefilte fish and matzah ball soup, and my mom was cooking beef stroganoff. She even made her own egg rolls and wontons."

Devor experienced her cooking revelation at 14, when her mom was asked to edit the local synagogue cookbook. "That's when I ended up right next to her in the kitchen. The two of us tested the recipes. We had tons of fun with it. I look at this cookbook today and realize that she was way ahead of her time."

A part-time teacher, Devor has six children, ranging in age from 19 to six, and she created her winning recipe years ago for them. "I wanted to figure out a new way to make fish that my kids would actually eat, because there's just so much gefilte fish that you can serve them," she explained.

As the grand prize-winner, Devor took home a state-of-the-art GE Profile Stainless Steel Kitchen, a $5,000 check, plus other goodies. "It was my dream to do a kitchen remodel," she said. "Now I've got a whole new kitchen – cooktop, double oven, big refrigerator, dishwasher, everything!"

As you might expect from Manischewitz, the contest was conducted under strict rabbinical supervision. "I've never entered a cooking contest before," Devor revealed, "and this was run very, very well. Some of the contestants didn't even know how to keep kosher. The rabbis turned on the stoves and checked the vegetables. The judges were served the dairy dishes first, then the pareve and then the meat."

All the equipment requested by the contestants was provided. "They were very accommodating," said Devor. "They gave you any special knives or whatever you needed. On the day of the semi-finals, one woman had brought her own potato masher. The rabbi said, 'Sorry, you can't use that,' and he ran out and bought her a new one."

Devor has had lots of support from her neighbours and friends. "All of Far Rockaway is totally into this," she said. "They feel like the whole town won this contest. When I meet people in the street they say, 'Go Far Rockaway!'"

She had little time to get nervous about the cook-off, however, which was held Feb. 27, just two days after her daughter's wedding, a catered affair for 500 people.

In her "spare" time, Devor tested recipes for cookbook author Jamie Geller, whose new cookbook, *The Bride Who Knew Nothing*, was recently released. "It's no secret that Jamie couldn't cook," she noted. "She had six weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's to test 300 recipes. Some of them were only ideas of recipes. I did 10 a day and we got it done."

Devor said she would love to work on another book – she's had plenty of practice cooking for her family. "I'm a mommy, and cooking is how I've kept myself busy between babies," she said. "With six kids, I do nothing but cook!"

Judy Bart Kancigor is the author of Cooking Jewish: 532 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family" *(Workman) and can be found on the Web at www.cookingjewish.com.*

FANTASTIC FLOUNDER ROLLS

From Joy Devor, winner of the Second Annual Simply Manischewitz Cook-Off

2 lb. fresh flounder or sole fillets
1 container (10 oz.) fresh sliced button mushrooms
2 medium Spanish onions, chopped
2 to 3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
1 box Manischewitz everything Tam Tams
1/3 cup cornflake crumbs
1 to 2 bottles (8 oz. each) Thousand Island dressing
salt
pepper
curly parsley, red pepper for garnish

Preheat oven to 350. Sauté onions in oil over medium heat until soft and translucent. Add mushrooms and continue to sauté until mushrooms are nicely browned and liquid is reduced. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Crush Tam Tams lightly and add to mushroom onion mixture. Continue to crush mixture until mushrooms and Tam Tams are in very small pieces.

Spread Tam Tam mixture in centre of each fillet and roll like a jellyroll. Place in greased baking sheet seam side down. Liberally pour Thousand Island dressing over fish. Sprinkle with cornflake crumbs. Bake 20 to 25 minutes or until cooked through. Garnish with curly parsley and red pepper. Serve warm or cold. Serves 8.

Eat healthy, eat chocolate

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

I was talking to a friend and joked that these days there are problems with meat because of mad cow disease, problems with chicken because of bird flu and problems with vegetables because of bug infestations. So the only healthy food left to us is chocolate!

Her response was, "You should write a column about that… and include some good chocolate recipes."

Now that we are being told by doctors that chocolate is healthy for us, we just have to remember moderation. I'm afraid however, that moderation will fly out the window when you are faced with these desserts.

CHOCOLATE LAVA CAKE

I have been making this cake for more than 30 years and it's an all-time favourite with anyone who has ever tasted it. It's simple to make and absolutely fabulous.

2 cups all-purpose flour
4 tsp. baking powder
1/2 tsp. salt
1 1/2 cups sugar
1/3 cup cocoa
1 cup water
4 tbsp. margarine, melted
2 cups chopped nuts, optional
2 cups brown sugar
1/2 cup cocoa
3 1/2 cups boiling water

Preheat oven to 350. Sift flour, baking powder, salt, white sugar and 1/3 cup cocoa. Stir in water, margarine and nuts. Mixture will be stiff. Spread in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish.

Combine brown sugar and 1/2 cup cocoa. Sprinkle over batter. Place baking dish in oven on a sheet of aluminum foil or a cooking sheet in case of spillover. Pour boiling water over batter. Bake in preheated oven for 45 minutes. Bubbles will appear around edges. Top will be firm, but will float. Serve warm with a serving spoon and spoon sauce over cake. Makes 16 servings.

Continued on page 45

Popcorn, the original snack

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

As you settle down to watch the your favorite sports team on television, or a movie on your DVD, the most appropriate snack has to be a bowl of hot, fluffy popcorn.

Believe it or not, popcorn has been around for thousands of years. Popcorn cobs were found by archeologists in caves in New Mexico that proved to be several thousand years old, making it probably the original snack food.

Making popcorn from scratch is not difficult. You want as many kernels as possible to pop, but you also want to keep the kernels from burning at the bottom of the pan. The best method of making popcorn not only pops almost every kernel, it also prevents the kernels from burning. Some true popcorn lovers (like me!) keep a special pot that is used only for making popcorn. Here's how it goes:

3 tbsp. oil, preferably canola oil (high smoke point oil)
1/3 cup of high quality popcorn kernels
1 3-quart covered saucepan
2 tbsp. or more (to taste) of butter or margarine
salt to taste

Heat the oil in a 3-quart saucepan on medium high heat. Put 3 or 4 popcorn kernels into the oil and cover the pan. When the kernels pop, add the rest of the 1/3 cup of popcorn kernels in an even layer. Cover, remove from heat and count 30 seconds. (Count out loud; it's fun to do with kids.) This method first heats the oil to the right temperature, then waiting 30 seconds brings all of the other kernels to a near-popping temperature so that when they are put back on the heat, they all pop at about the same time.

Return the pan to the heat. The popcorn should begin popping soon, and all at once. Once the popping starts in earnest, gently shake the pan by moving it back and forth over the burner. Try to keep the lid slightly ajar to let the steam from the popcorn release (the popcorn will be drier and crisper). Once the popping slows to several seconds between pops, remove the pan from the heat, remove the lid, and dump the popcorn immediately into a wide bowl.

With this technique, nearly all of the kernels pop. I rarely have more than two or three unpopped kernels and nothing burns. If you are adding butter, you can easily melt it by placing the butter in the now empty, but hot pan. Salt to taste. Temperatures should be hot enough so the kernels pop within one to three minutes. For the best yield, all the kernels should burst within two minutes of the first pop. This makes about two quarts of popcorn.

Additional tips: If you add salt to the oil in the pan before popping, when the popcorn pops, the salt will be well distributed throughout the popcorn. You can also top your popcorn with smoky paprika, cayenne or chili pepper, curry powder, cumin or grated Parmesan or cheddar cheese, garlic powder or garlic salt.

Why not top your soup or salads with popped popcorn; season the popping oil with spices to create a lightly flavored savory treat; combine popcorn with dried fruit and nuts to create your own custom snack mix. Small bags of popcorn are also an excellent addition to school lunch bags.

The jars that hold popcorn these days are especially designed to help hold the moisture in the kernels. You've likely noticed that high quality popcorn is often tightly sealed or the kernels are enclosed in an airtight package. Once the package is open, popping corn is best stored in a sealed container so it loses as little moisture as possible. I like to store mine in the freezer. I find it pops into much larger kernels.

Cooking with chocolate

Continued from page 44

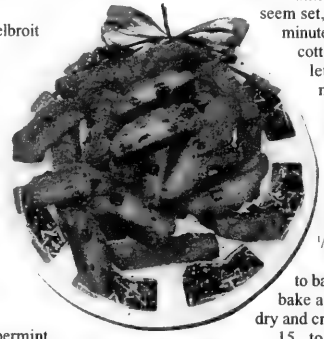
FRENCH CHOCOLATE MINT BISCOTTI

From A Passion for Baking *by Marcy Goldman*

Your grandmother's mandelbroit was never like this!

1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted and still warm
1/2 cup cocoa powder, measured and then sifted
1 1/2 cups sugar
4 large eggs
2 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1 tbsp. double-strength brewed coffee or espresso
3 to 4 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. baking soda
1/4 tsp. salt
1 cup chocolate-covered peppermint patties, minced
1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate, cut into coarse chunks

Finishing touches:
6 oz. white chocolate, melted
1/2 to 1 tsp. pure mint extract



Chocolate biscotti

Preheat oven to 350. Line two small baking sheets or one large baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a mixer bowl, stir together melted butter and cocoa. Blend in sugar and then add eggs, vanilla and coffee.

In a separate bowl, blend flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir into wet batter and then fold in minced peppermint patties and semi-sweet chocolate.

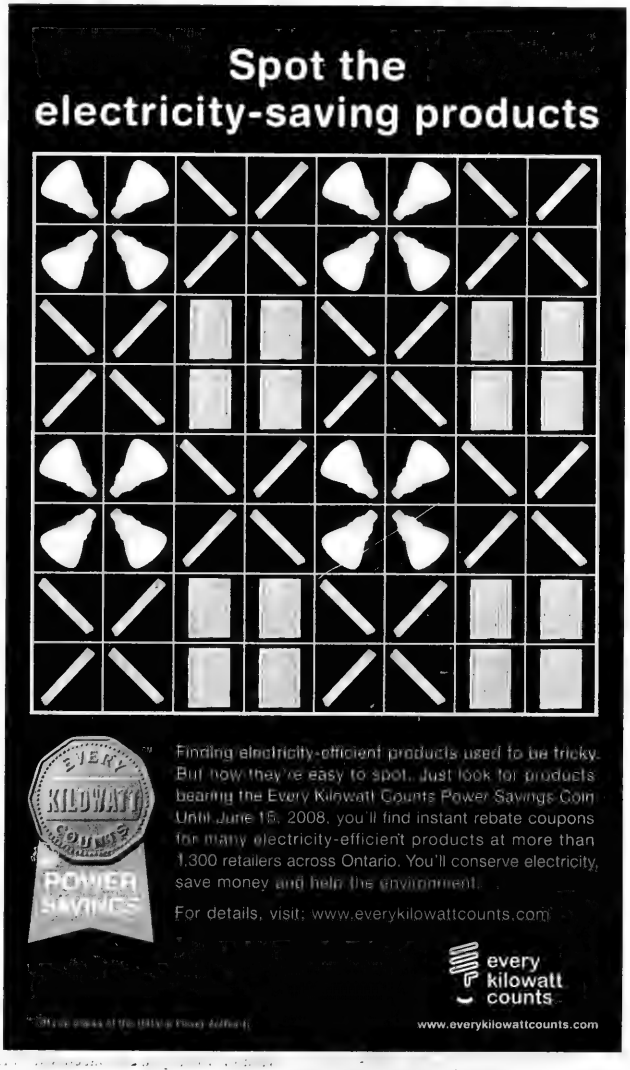
Form dough into two logs and place on prepared baking sheets. For larger biscotti, use one large sheet and make one large log of dough.

Bake until biscotti logs seem set, about 30 to 40 minutes. Remove biscotti from oven and let cool 15 to 20 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325. Using a long serrated knife, slice logs on the diagonal into slices about 1/2 inch thick.

Return biscotti to baking sheets and bake a second time to dry and crisp them, about 15 to 20 minutes, turning once midway to ensure even baking. Since cookies are dark, it is difficult to judge when they are done. They should seem almost dry to the touch when ready. Let cool completely on baking sheets.

For coating, melt white chocolate slowly and then briskly whisk in mint extract very quickly so as to blend and flavour white chocolate without chocolate seizing up. You can spread or drizzle melted white chocolate onto one side of these baked cookies for a gourmet look.

Sue's note: The second time I made this I added white chocolate chips to the batter before baking instead of coating them. Makes 24 to 36 depending on size.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- **Better Employment Opportunities:** Matching skills with our economic needs.
- **Complete Processing:** All applications currently in the backlog will be processed.

These measures are currently before Parliament.

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Or visit our website at **www.cic.gc.ca/backlog**

Réduire le nombre de demandes d'immigration en attente au Canada

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- **réduire les délais de traitement :** la capacité d'accélérer le traitement des nouvelles demandes;
- **améliorer les possibilités d'emploi :** sélectionner des travailleurs qualifiés dont les compétences répondent à nos besoins économiques;
- **traiter toutes les demandes :** toutes les demandes déjà en attente seront traitées.

Le Parlement s'emploie actuellement à examiner ces mesures.

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Le Canada a besoin d'un système d'immigration souple, rapide et équitable pour tous — c'est pour cette raison que nous **réduisons le nombre de demandes d'immigration en attente.**

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Turkish mediation promotes Syrian-Israeli talks

By BARAK RAVID
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — While much remains to be done before any peace agreement could be reached between Israel and Syria, Turkey will continue to act as a go-between to encourage the two sides to restart direct negotiations, Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan said Monday.

Babacan told reporters that an agreement between the longtime enemies requires strong political determination on both sides.

"We are still at the very beginning of the process," Babacan said in a news conference with New Zealand's foreign minister. His comments were in response to a question on Turkey's mediation efforts.

Turkey, which has close ties to both Israel and Syria, has disclosed that it is trying to restart low-level talks between the two countries as a prelude to bringing the leaders of Syria and Israel together.

The last round of direct peace talks between the two countries broke down in 2000 over the details of Israel's proposed withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"Talks will continue to take place through Turkey for awhile," Babacan said. "When the issue is a little more mature, then I hope that the sides will meet each other.

"It is a very promising development," he added. "There has been diplomatic traffic for the past year, which has intensified in the past few months."

Meanwhile, a source in Jerusalem said Sunday that Turkey is trying to find a compromise that would allow peace talks between Israel and Syria to begin.

Recent proposals to begin negotiations between Syria and Israel stalled after Syrian President Bashar Assad demanded assurance from Israel that it will withdraw from the Golan Heights as a prerequisite for peace talks to begin.

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan plans to send an emissary to Jerusalem to brief Prime Minister Ehud Olmert on his recent talks with Assad in Damascus. Erdogan will reportedly send his foreign policy advisor, who is also in charge of talks with Syria and has in the past met with Olmert adviser Yoram Turbowicz in Ankara.

Olmert decided to pursue talks with Syria using Turkish mediation after he realized that the United States would not object. If the mediation is successful, the talks between Syria and Israel could begin while President George W. Bush is still in the White House.

"The U.S. has never vetoed talks between Israel and Syria, which is why there is nothing to stop talks from going ahead during this U.S. administration, if the conditions are ripe," the government source said.

The source added that Israel has not yet received an update on Erdogan's talks in Damascus. "The goal of Turkey's activity is to allow talks to start. That's how we view it. So far, no real negotiations are taking place."

There are substantial disagreements in the two sides' opening positions, the source said. Olmert has called for direct and discreet talks to begin immediately, without arbiters or preconditions. Assad, however, has called for open talks, arbitrated by the United States. In addition, he wants Israel to announce that it would be willing to hand over the Golan Heights territory it seized in the Six Day War, in accordance with an alleged similar commitment agreed to by prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in 1995.

The Turks are taking both sides' stances into consideration and trying to come up with a formula that would bring them to the negotiating table, the government source said. "The key issue now is to find a solution that would satisfy Syria's demand that Israel commit to a withdrawal from the Golan Heights, which at the moment is impeding progress."

The source said Israel is considering an alternative, in the form of a public announcement indicating that Israel is "well aware of the price it would have to pay at the end of talks."

Israeli officials believe Turkey's involvement in the issue will increase. "Erdogan has decided to go all the way on the issue of Israel and Syrian," the Israeli governmental source said.

File photo of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Erdogan

Syria denounces U.S. statement

Continued from page 1

A statement was issued last Thursday by the Syrian Embassy in Washington rejecting the Bush administration's claims: "The government of the Syrian Arab Republic regrets and denounces the campaign of false allegations that the current United States administration continually launches against Syria claiming the presence of nuclear activity," the statement said.

"And while Syria utterly denies these allegations, it also stresses that this campaign aims primarily to misguide the U.S. Congress and international public opinion in order to justify the Israeli raid in September of 2007, which the current U.S. administration may have helped execute. It has become obvious that this manoeuvre on the part of this administration comes within the framework of the North Korean nuclear negotiations."

Senior U.S. intelligence officials later told reporters the United States did not have advance knowledge of the strike.

The revelations came after months of behind the scenes wrangling between hawks in Congress and the Bush administration, who both want to further isolate Syria and North Korea, and Israeli officials, who want to keep peace-talk possibilities with Syria open and who bridle at revelations of Israeli military operations.

Elsewhere, citing South Korean intelligence officials, the Japanese public broadcaster NHK said on Monday that 10 North Koreans helping build the suspected nuclear reactor in Syria may have died in the Israeli air strike last September.

NHK said the dead included officials of North Korea's Communist party unit that exports weapons and military technology, as well as members of the North Korean military unit that made nuclear facilities in the country.

Two or three North Koreans survived the air strike, but it is not clear what happened to them afterward, NHK reported.

Pyongyang has been reluctant to discuss any transfer of nuclear technology to other countries, notably Syria, as well as to account for its suspected pursuit of uranium enrichment.

With files from Ha'aretz.

ON CHEMO?

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Jews leaving Bolivia as Morales favours socialism

By DANIEL BUSH
JTA

LA PAZ, Bolivia — More than any other single event in recent years, the future of Bolivian Jewry may be determined by the outcome of the country's upcoming national referendum on a new constitution.

The proposed constitution calling for increased state control of private-sector enterprise is being fiercely opposed by many middle- and upper-class Bolivians, including the country's Jews. Four of Bolivia's wealthiest provinces have launched autonomous movements in response to the proposal.

The referendum is scheduled for May 4.

Bolivia's Jewish community has shrunk considerably in the past decade. Young Jews are seeking larger Jewish communities, and both old and young have left to find professional opportunities unrestricted by the policies of Evo Morales, the socialist who became Bolivia's president in 2005.

Morales, Bolivia's first indigenous president, is staunchly anti-American and has endorsed Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's call for an anti-American "axis of good" comprising Bolivia, Venezuela and Cuba.

Ricardo Udler, the president of the Israeli Circle of La Paz, the country's main Jewish organization, says Bolivian Jews are increasingly uncomfortable about the direction the country of nine million is taking under Morales.

"Since Evo was elected there's been a radical change," Udler said.

Though there is no overt anti-Semitism in Bolivia, he said, Bolivia's approximately 350 Jews feel threatened by Morales' close ties with Chavez and his growing relationship with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"Things could get worse for Jews in Bolivia," Udler warned.

Since Morales took office, the Jewish population of La Paz, Bolivia's capital and the home of its largest Jewish community, has fallen by some 10 per cent. That has a significant impact on a community of approximately 189.

Bolivia's Jews find themselves in a predicament not unlike Jews in South America's socialist leader, Venezuela, which has lost approximately half its Jews since Chavez took power. As in Venezuela, Jews in Bolivia fear increased state control of their businesses and lives.

Morales' increasingly close relationship with Iran hasn't helped. Last September, Ahmadinejad on a visit to Bolivia pledged to invest $5 billion in the country over the next five years, including in the natural gas and oil industries. Those industries already receive support from Chavez.

Bolivian President Evo Morales

The Morales administration also has announced the possibility of Iran opening an embassy in La Paz.

Due to these developments, said Bolivian Jewish businessman Joe Epelbaum, "a lot of Jews are planning to leave."

"This is a fast-shrinking community," he said.

The upturn in Jewish emigration from Bolivia represents a surprising reversal for a country that during World War II was among the few in South America that offered visas to Jews fleeing Europe. Jewish immigrants settled in La Paz as well as the cities of Cochabamba and Santa Cruz, establishing communities that thrived in the postwar years.

During the 1950s, La Paz had between 12,000 and 15,000 Jews, according to Udler.

Harald Schoengut, the president of the Israeli Association of Cochabamba, said his city's Jewish population reached 2,000 half a century ago. About 110 Jews now live there.

In La Paz, some two dozen Jews recently attended Shabbat services at the Israeli Circle of La Paz building on a Friday evening. At a dinner later that night attended by about the same number of people, the host noted with chagrin that one-10th of La Paz's once-booming Jewish community could fit under a single roof.

Most of those leaving the country are third-generation Bolivian Jews seeking better educational and professional opportunities in the United States, Israel and Europe.

"We're trying to avoid this by enticing the younger generations to study here in Cochabamba," Schoengut told JTA. Despite this effort, most young Jewish high school and university graduates continue to leave the country. "The future is very uncertain." he said.

Udler said a similar exodus is taking place among young Jews in La Paz.

"We have a big problem that our children go to study abroad and they don't come back," he said. "My sons, for example, won't come back to Bolivia," from Israel, where they have moved, "because there isn't a Jewish community here. In Bolivia, they don't have a Jewish future."

Since Morales came to power, older Jews also have been leaving in greater numbers than ever, according to Epelbaum, who owns a large textile factory here with two brothers-in-law.

"Families with bigger, more profitable businesses that are harder to leave behind are staying," said Epelbaum, 57, who was born in Poland and immigrated to Bolivia with his parents when he was seven. "But there's no future as a Jew in Bolivia even if you have a business that's doing well."

Jews in the country's textile industry have been hurt by Morales' unpredictable labour and trade policies, Epelbaum said. Morales has limited exporters' access to international markets and restricted foreign investment in Bolivia.

Epelbaum's textile store, on a busy commercial street in the centre of La Paz, is crowded with rolls of coloured fabrics. A photograph of Epelbaum's three daughters hangs on the wall behind the counter at the back of the store. All of them have left the country.

"I'm basically still here for economic reasons," he said. "Eventually, though, I don't see myself staying here."

The professionally and socially driven emigration of Bolivia's younger Jews coupled with the politically driven emigration of its more established members means the days of Bolivian Jewry are numbered, Udler said.

"In the next 10 to 20 years," he said, "there will be no more Jews in Bolivia."

What's behind U.S. spy arrest? Speculation abounds

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

Is it connected to the classified-information case against two former AIPAC staffers? Is it a bid to pressure Israel to concede more to the Palestinians ahead of a new round of peace talks? Is it connected to the murky circumstances of Israel's mysterious air strike in Syria last September?

For now, the main question surrounding the case of Ben-Ami Kadish, the octogenarian New Jersey man arrested last week for allegedly sharing classified information with Israel decades ago is: why now?

The four charges of conspiracy against Kadish are serious. He is accused of having shared with his Israeli handler U.S. nuclear secrets, plans for combat aircraft improvements and missile defense information.

From 1979 to 1985, Kadish allegedly "borrowed" 30 to 100 documents from the library of the U.S. Army facility in Dover, N.J., where he was employed and shared them with the science affairs consul at the Israeli consulate in New York, who has not been charged.

Kadish, a Connecticut native who grew up in pre-state Palestine, served in the Haganah, Israel's pre-state defence force. He also served in the U.S. military during World War II.

He allegedly told FBI agents that he shared the documents to help Israel. He was not paid by Israel for his services.

Some observers noted that the charges against him should be way past their due date: the statute of limitations on the charges is 10 years, unless they incur the death penalty. Prosecutors have yet to say whether or not they intend to pursue the death penalty against Kadish, who has not been indicted.

Some Jewish community leaders are asking whether his arrest is part of an attempt by federal agents to influence the outcome of the classified-information case against two former senior staffers for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman.

Analysis

Rosen and Weissman were indicted nearly three years ago for allegedly sharing classified information on Iran and terrorism with journalists, colleagues and Israeli diplomats. But the case against the pair has yet to come to trial, in large part because the judge has limited its scope to proving the defendants harmed U.S. interests with their alleged actions.

Assisting Israel in and of itself is not a crime, the judge said. He is also allowing defendants to call senior Bush administration officials, including U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, to testify. Those obstacles have led the government to file a rare pre-trial appeal with the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals in Richmond, Va.

One Jewish communal leader who requested anonymity told JTA the Kadish arrest is an attempt "to taint the objectivity of jurors ahead of the trial" by creating an impression that spying for Israel has been pervasive.

Other U.S. Jewish leaders speculated whether the motive for the Kadish arrest was political, to give President George W. Bush more leverage in pressing Israel in peace talks. Bush will be travelling to the Middle East this month for Israel's 60th anniversary, and Israel has yet to agree to attend a summit in the Egyptian coastal city Sharm el-Sheik in the third week of May.

Bush's lame-duck status has hobbled his effectiveness, and he is eager for progress in Israeli-Palestinian peace talks that he helped relaunch last fall in Annapolis, Md.

"It's not easy trying to conduct policy in Washington when you know that there is a powerful pro-Israel constituency out there that says otherwise," said Lenny ben-David, a former Israeli diplomat and a former AIPAC staffer. "One re-occurring tactic is to try to whittle support for Israel. So we get the occasional story of a spy, of weaponry sales to China, and it serves to whittle away the U.S.-Israel relationship."

Another theory suggests that Israel might have leaked the information implicating Kadish in a bid to head off congressional inquiries into its Sept. 6, 2007 air strike on Syria.

According to this theory, espoused last week in the *American Conservative* by former CIA agent Philip Giraldi, conservative Republicans in Congress and in the Bush administration want to use information implicating Syria and North Korea in nuclear weapons co-operation to tamp down outreach to both countries.

Anonymous sources in the U.S. State Department told the *New York Times* last week that this was why the administration decided to release video evidence last Thursday of North Koreans working at the Syrian site just before it was destroyed by Israel's air strike.

Giraldi suggested that Israeli doves who support Israel-Syria talks leaked the information on Kadish to create a distraction and scuttle efforts to further isolate the Assad regime.

"The leak of the information at the present time is believed to be linked to proposed closed congressional hearings at the end of [April] in which the White House had planned to use several Israeli intelligence officers to provide evidence on the alleged Syrian nuclear program that was bombed on September 6, 2007," he wrote. "It is now unlikely that Israeli intelligence officers will allow themselves to be questioned because they would almost certainly be asked about Israeli spying on the U.S."

As for Kadish, if the complaint sheet filed by FBI agents is true, he may have set his own trap by accepting a phone call on March 20 from his alleged former Israeli handler, Yosef Yagur.

According to the complaint, Yagur called just hours after Kadish apparently had been truthful with investigators in a first interview, and he urged Kadish to lie in subsequent interviews. The call was recorded.

Kadish allegedly lied in the March 21 interview, saying he had not spoken with Yagur – extending a conspiracy that otherwise ostensibly had ended in November 1985 to the March 20 phone call.

Israel to join OECD

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel has taken the first step in joining the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, an alliance of countries promoting democracy and economic well-being.

Recently, the Paris-based OECD approved Israel's membership in its Development Center, whose mandate is to forge links between developed and developing nations.

Membership in the centre is considered a step toward membership in the OECD.

If Israel is accepted as a full member of the OECD, it will be only the second country in the Middle East after Turkey to be one.

By all accounts, Israel's membership in the Development Center was in part made possible by the work of the Jewish National Fund in the Third World.

Founded in 1901, the JNF, a non-governmental organization, has played a significant role in developing land and reclaiming water in Israel.

The JNF has been in the forefront of managing open spaces and forests, halting desertification, reclaiming rivers and streams and conserving soil and water.

In recent years, the JNF has been involved in a wide range of international projects in East Timor, Indonesia, Mexico, Niger, Jordan and Kenya, among other nations, said Michal Marmary, a JNF foreign media adviser in Israel.

In an interview, Marmary said that JNF experts have been active in East Timor in establishing tree nurseries for the purpose of reclaiming forests that were damaged during East Timor's secession from Indonesia.

The JNF has also worked with the International Arid Land Consortium on projects designed to prevent desertification in such countries as Mexico, Chile, Paraguay, Niger, Burkina Faso, Turkey, Jordan and El Salvador. As well, the JNF made a stellar contribution by finding a tiny but powerful predator to control gall wasps, which have ravaged eucalyptus groves in Israel the Mediterranean basin, Africa and the Far East, Marmary said.

"These wasps have expanded their range, causing damage to eucalyptus trees," she added.

Eucalypus groves in Israel and Africa are important for a number of reasons. she explained.

They provide shade in recreational areas, are a source of timber for domestic consumption and are a major source of nectar and pollen for honeybees.

In July, JNF experts plan to visit Rwanda to provide instruction and training in agro forestry.

At around the same time, Israeli scientists will go to Kenya to ascertain why certain trees have not taken root.

Marmary suggested that all these efforts have helped Israel become a member of the OECD's Development Center.

Gordimer may pull out of writers' fest

By DAVID B. GREEN
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — South African writer Nadine Gordimer may pull out of her scheduled appearance next month at Jerusalem's International Writers Festival in the face of a widespread campaign pressuring her to cancel.

The 84-year-old Gordimer, winner of the 1991 Nobel Prize in literature, is scheduled to make three appearances at the festival, which runs at Mishkenot Sha'ananim May 11 to 15.

Other writers slated to attend include Americans Nathan Englander, Jonathan Safran Foer and Russell Banks, as well as Israelis David Grossman and Amos Oz, the latter of whom is scheduled to share the stage with Gordimer on May 12.

"I am dealing with the issue now," Gordimer told *Ha'aretz* in a telephone conversation from her home in Johannesburg on Friday. She refused to comment further on the controversy, except to say she would soon make a public statement on her decision.

Gordimer has received dozens of appeals, many of them posted online, calling on her to join a cultural boycott of Israel.

Gordimer, who is Jewish, has long been identified with left-wing causes, including her longtime backing of the African National Congress dating back to the apartheid period, when the black liberation movement was outlawed. In 2001, she publicly urged her friend Susan Sontag not to come to Jerusalem, where the late American writer was to be honoured with the Jerusalem Prize at the capital's biennial international book fair. Sontag did come in the end, and received the literary award in person.

Now it is Gordimer who is being pressed to stay away from Israel. For example, an open letter earlier this month signed by British professors Hilary and Steven Rose, who have led the Jewish lobby in the U.K. campaigning for a boycott of Israeli academia, implored her not to "give the Israeli establishment, the Israeli press, the whole Israeli PR machine, the prize they want – your apparent condoning of their policies."

Yael Nahari, the director of the Jerusalem's International Writers Festival, told *Ha'aretz* that, following a request from Gordimer, she is trying to arrange for the South African writer to "meet the other side [Palestinians]," including students at al-Quds University in Jerusalem. Nahari was optimistic that Gordimer will go ahead with her planned appearance at the five-day festival. "I think she'll come," she said

In related developments, South Africa reportedly dropped its bid to host a second UN anti-racism conference in Durban.

The 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism in Durban became a fury of anti-Israel and anti-Jewish hatred. South Africa had indicated interest in hosting the anti-racism conference again, but Jewish activists said last-Thursday they were optimistic the 2009 World Conference Against Racism would be held at the United Nations in Geneva.

The Geneva-based UN Watch, a watchdog group that monitors UN bodies for bias, said South Africa had backed off its request to handle the 2009 conference.

Jewish groups in Geneva monitoring preparations for the 2009 parley said some UN officials and western countries want to avoid a repeat of the 2001 conference and believe that holding the 2009 event on UN turf will help guarantee certain protocols and security.

With files from JTA

Israel Briefs

IDF foils Hamas attack

Israeli forces foiled a massive Palestinian assault on a key Gaza Strip border crossing last week. Using armoured cars and two explosives-laden jeeps painted as Israeli military vehicles, Hamas terrorists rammed into the Kerem Shalom border terminal before dawn last Saturday. Israeli soldiers at first responded with small-arms fire, but took cover as the jeeps were blown up by their drivers. In parallel, another Hamas armoured car tried to smash through the Gaza-Israel border fence north of Kerem Shalom, but was destroyed by tank fire. Thirteen soldiers were wounded in the Kerem Shalom incident, and four Hamas gunmen were killed. Six Hamas gunmen and another Palestinian were killed in later Israeli air strikes in Gaza.

Israelis split on Golan

About half of Israelis would support ceding all or some of the Golan Heights under a peace deal with Syria, a poll found. According to a survey in last Friday's *Yediot Achronot*, 32 per cent would agree to Syria's demand for a full return of the Golan in exchange for a comprehensive peace deal, while 17 per cent would support only a partial handover of the strategic plateau. Fifty-one per cent of Israelis want to keep all of the Golan, which Israel captured in the 1967 Six Day War and later annexed, even if this comes at the cost of peace with Syria. The poll, of 500 respondents, which has a 4.5 per cent margin of error, found that Israeli distrust of Syrian President Bashar Assad runs deep despite his recent offers to revive peace talks. Seventy-four per cent of Israelis believe Assad is "not serious" about seeking peace.

Jerusalemite elected in Italy

Italy's new parliament includes a resident of Jerusalem. Florence-born journalist Fiamma Nirenstein, who has lived in Jerusalem's Gilo neighbourhood for the past decade, was elected to the Italian Chamber of Deputies as a member of Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi's centre-right People of Liberty party. The first session of the new parliament was to begin April 29. Nirenstein directed the Italian Cultural Institute in Tel Aviv in the 1990s. The author of many books, she has been a correspondent for several newspapers and has written widely on the Mideast, Israel, anti-Semitism and the rise of militant Islam.

Guards killed

A Palestinian killed two Israeli security guards at the Netzanei Oz industrial zone on the West Bank boundary. Two Israelis in their 50s who were checking Palestinian labourers as they entered the zone last Friday were shot dead by an assailant who fled the scene. Hamas and Islamic Jihad claimed joint responsibility for the attack.

Fighting erupts in Gaza

Palestinians fired three Qassam rockets at southern Israel on Sunday. Two exploded in Sderot and a third hit Kibbutz Zikim, south of Ashkelon. On Monday, Islamic Jihad and two other Palestinian groups launched rockets at Sderot from Beit Hanoun. One exploded near a housing complex. There were no injuries. In response, Israeli troops shelled a house in Beit Hanoun from which they saw fire being directed at soldiers. Palestinian sources said seven people were killed, including four young siblings and their mother. Nine more rockets and nine mortar shells were also launched at the western Negev Monday. In a separate incident, IDF soldiers killed a terrorist from Islamic Jihad during fighting in the area.

– from JTA and Ha'aretz

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who, with her late husband Max, was a Guardian of YU and provided scholarships for deserving students of the University and its Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Anne Tanenbaum was a revered leader of Toronto Jewry who inspired her children , who have distinguished themselves as one of Canada's foremost philanthropic families.

Heartfeld condolences are extended to her children: **Joey (and Toby) Tanenbaum, Minda (and Les) Feldman, Tauba (and Sol) Spiro, Howard (and Carole) Tanenbaum, Lawrence (and Judy) Tanenbaum, Carol Tanenbaum, and Jeannie Tanenbaum; to her brother Bill (and Noah) Wolf; and to her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.**

May the entire family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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CJN Profile

Eugene Levy receives lifetime achievement award

By BENJAMIN GLEISSER
Special to The CJN

He's got Groucho Marx's eyebrows and a sense of humour that's as subtle as a whoopee cushion on the rabbi's chair – but the jokes only flow when Eugene Levy is writing films or performing onstage. Offstage, Levy is soft-spoken, grateful for every laugh he earns and modest about the accolades he receives.

Levy, 62, is one of six artists who will receive the Governor General's Performing Arts Award for lifetime achievement, an honour that will be presented May 2 in Ottawa by Gov.-Gen. Michaëlle Jean. The award consists of a commemorative medallion struck by the Royal Canadian Mint and a $25,000 prize.

"Eugene Levy's unique contribution to sketch comedy put Canadian comedy on the map, and the quality of his work in television and film, as an actor, writer and comedian leaves no question of his mastery of his craft," said Debbie Henning, executive director of the Governor General's Performing Arts Awards Foundation. "He has also chosen to remain Canadian and support Canadian artists – a fact that he proudly promotes."

Levy said he was thrilled and surprised to win the award. And what makes the honour extra sweet, he said, is that acting awards such as Junos, Oscars and Tonys are almost always won by "serious" actors, and not by comic actors like himself.

"There's the idea that comedy doesn't take a lot of work, or comics aren't credible actors, so it's always a kick when we get recognized for our hard work," he said in a telephone interview from his California home.

"The ironic thing about the world of comedy is the perception that comedians are people who need to stand up in front of people and get the approval of a crowd, and can't wait to get a laugh. But I've always been more on the shy side. I'm not an introvert, but I'd rather stand in the back of the room and watch those performers to see what's funny.

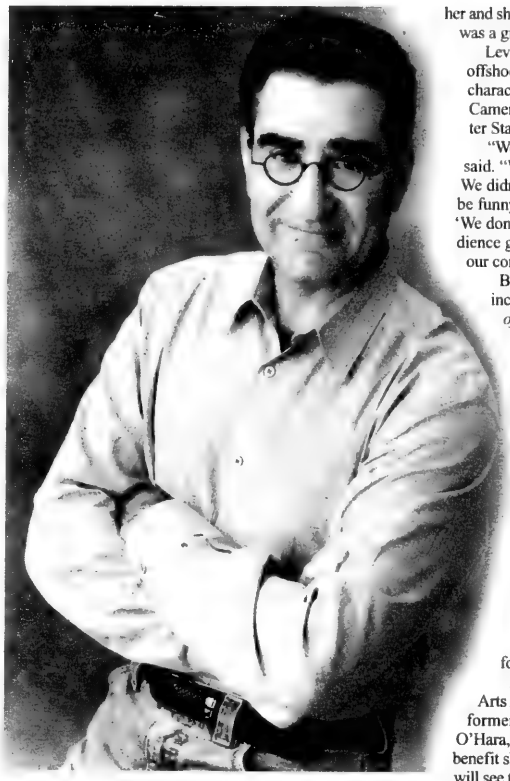
"Jews make good storytellers, but I'm not sure I can tell a good story. But I always find it a delight to listen to great storytellers. I'm not an innately funny person. Instead, I get laughs through the characters I play."

One character he didn't get to play was Toby Ziegler, the U.S. president's communications director on the TV show *The West Wing*.

"I read for the part several times," Levy said. "The show's creators kept finding my readings amusing, so I thought I didn't have much chance, but they kept calling me back for another audition. The part ended up going to Richard Schiff, and he was amazing in the series."

Born in Hamilton in 1946, Levy began acting in school plays, where he was comfortable being part of an ensemble.

"I wasn't funny as a kid," he said. "My memory of my bar mitzvah is kind of vague, but I remember feeling a little awkward up at the bimah in front of everyone. I was pretty self-conscious, but I wasn't nervous and I didn't flub anything."



Eugene Levy

He began writing comedy in high school, jotting "odd life bits" into a journal. After graduating from McMaster University with a theatre degree, he was cast in the Toronto production of the musical *Godspell* with Martin Short, Andrea Martin and blossoming comedian Gilda Radner, who went on to star in *Saturday Night Live*. Her death in 1989 of ovarian cancer helped increase public awareness for earlier detection of the disease.

"Right from the start, you knew Gilda had an amazing personality," he remembered. "She went to the *Godspell* audition with *Zippity Do Da*, and you felt sorry for this poor, sweet girl who had no idea what song to audition with. But everyone loved her and she got the part, and we all saw how funny she was. She was a great kid."

Levy joined Second City in 1973, and later, the television offshoot *SCTV*, where, from 1976 through 1984, he created characters that fans still remember: nerdy newscaster Earl Camembert, Las Vegas comic Bobby Bittman, polkameister Stan Schmenge and a comatose Perry Como.

"We really started out doing that show for ourselves," he said. "We didn't even know if anyone would be watching. We didn't even know if what we were writing was going to be funny. Our producers used to read our material and say, 'We don't get this.' And we said, 'It doesn't matter if the audience gets it, we get it.' After the show became successful, our confidence level went way up."

Besides television, Levy has appeared in about 50 films, including *National Lampoon's Vacation*, *Splash*, *Father of the Bride* and *American Pie*. He also co-wrote and starred in the satirical "mockumentaries" *For Your Consideration*, *A Mighty Wind* (for which he won a Grammy Award and was named best supporting actor by the New York Film Critics Circle), *Best in Show* and *Waiting for Guffman*. Other awards and honours include five Canadian Comedy Awards (two for best writing and three for best male performer), two Emmy Awards and a star on Canada's Walk of Fame.

Levy is also known in Canada for his volunteer work with charities like The Clinton Foundation, which raises money for causes in Africa; Families for Early Autism Treatment; Sick Kids Hospital; and Shalom Village, a nursing home in Hamilton.

"My philosophy is if you've been blessed in life, then you give back whatever you can," he said. "I have some relations in Shalom Village, so doing work for them was a no-brainer for me."

After picking up the Governor General's Performing Arts Award, Levy will head to Toronto to reunite with his former Second City cohorts Andrea Martin, Catherine O'Hara, Martin Short, Dave Thomas and others for a May 5 benefit show for the Second City alumni fund. Later this year will see the release of his next film, *Gooby*, in which he plays the villainous Mr. Nerdlinger.

And after that – more comic acting. Which means, despite winning the prestigious artistic honour, he does not plan to show off by doing *King Lear* at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival.

"If I tried Lear, it would probably still turn out funny," he said.

* * *

Looking for some Levy levity? Check out these Eugene Levy fan websites on the Internet: Bubi Made a Kishka at http://shoeonthe.nightstand.org/kishka and the G-rated Eugene Levy is Sexy at http://www.geocities.com/eugenelevy_fan24. To see Levy in the 1972 version of *Godspell*, go to http://home.cogeco.ca/~elemeno/godspell.

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Books & Authors

An analysis of events and trends in the Middle East

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Robin Wright, a well-known American journalist, has reported from Middle East capitals for years. Her latest book, *Dreams and Shadows: The Future of the Middle East* (Penguin Press), will be of interest to readers who seek more than just a cursory understanding of a complex region in constant turmoil and flux.

Robin Wright

Wright, who has been on the staff of the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*, ranges far and wide as she analyzes developments and trends in Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Morocco and Iraq, and among the Palestinians.

Although she deals with Israel in passing, as she must, she does not, strangely enough, devote a complete chapter to the Jewish state. This is quite an omission for a writer striving to get to the bottom of things.

As befits any good journalist, Wright is a realist and a pragmatist. But sometimes, as at the beginning of her tour d'horizon, her judgments are questionable.

She acknowledges that Islamic extremism has progressively grown into a major force, but claims it is no longer "the most important, interesting or dynamic" force in the Mideast. Instead, she says, "a budding culture of change" challenging the status quo should be regarded as "the preferred means of making political decisions and producing change" today.

In this connection, Wright observes that "a major engine of change is youth." Given the fact that the Mideast has witnessed a seven-fold explosion in population over only three generations, Arab regimes that fail to provide sufficient jobs and housing may well face threats to their legitimacy.

And while there is an element of truth in this argument, Wright herself admits that nascent reform movements throughout the Arab world, particularly in Syria and Egypt, have been pushed aside or simply crushed.

In Egypt, the first Arab country to sign a peace treaty with Israel, emergency law has been in effect since then-president Anwar Sadat was assassinated by Islamic radicals in 1981. And in Syria, the deeply entrenched Baathist regime, headed by Bashar Assad, has arrested reformers and warned them that Syria's stability is of paramount importance.

Amid all these currents, Islamic fundamentalists, though harassed by authoritarian Arab governments, prosper.

Wright admits that free and fair elections, a laudable goal in an area blighted by autocracy, have not produced the desired results.

The example that immediately comes to mind is the 2006 election in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, during which Hamas defeated Fatah, with all its sombre and still unfolding consequences. If this is democracy, who needs it?

Another example is Iraq, still occupied by the United States and its allies following the 2003 invasion to oust that arch-dictator, Saddam Hussein.

Democracy has indeed begun to stir in Iraq, but the disintegration of Iraq since the allied invasion has evoked fond memories of the previous dictatorship and emboldened Arab strongmen who prefer the stick to the carrot.

I agree with Wright's thesis that the three pivotal events that redefined the region in the 20th century were the fall of the Ottoman Empire in 1918, the creation of Israel in 1948 and the Iranian revolution in 1979.

Regrettably, Wright does not flesh out these themes, but in her discussion of Lebanon, she elaborates at length on the two forces, identity and youth, that will be at the heart of change in the Mideast for decades to come.

In a reference to the so-called Cedar Revolution, which compelled Syria to withdraw its army from Lebanon, Wright describes it as "the first broad popular movement to demand sweeping change and get it." But as she rightly points out, it was merely the "opening round" of a much longer political battle.

The same sectarian system that spawned the 1975 civil war is still firmly in place, and Syria – which has yet to officially recognize Lebanon as an independent and sovereign nation – continues to pull the strings.

Wright's analysis of Lebanon's most charismatic political figure, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, is instructive. Though she credits him with being a shrewd and formidable politician, she exposes him as an intractable individual who cannot come to terms with Israel's existence, who naively believes that Israel is "weaker than a spider web," and who once described the Israelis as "the descendants of apes and pigs."

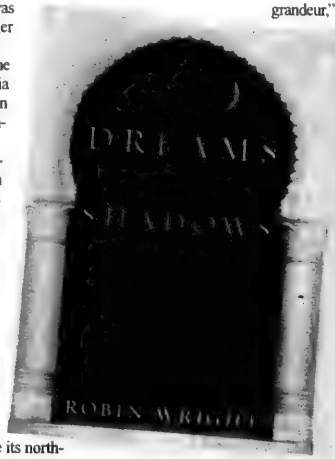
In accordance with other observers, Wright blames Hezbollah for having exposed Lebanon to ruin by forcing a war on it in the summer of 2006.

By taunting Israel with a cross-border raid that prompted Israel to bomb and invade its northern neighbour, Hezbollah not only needlessly sacrificed Lebanese lives, but lost its operational base close to the Israeli border and its element of tactical surprise.

Yet Nasrallah won some points, too. Having fired almost 4,000 rockets into Israel and thereby paralyzed the Galilee, Hezbollah produced what ordinary Arabs have yearned for: military effectiveness. Yet Wright neglects to mention that Egypt set this precedent when the Egyptian army stormed the Bar-Lev Line in the 1973 Yom Kippur War.

Not surprisingly, Wright respects Egypt's status in the Arab world. As she puts it, "Egypt has the clout to bestow legitimacy on any idea, and to change the direction of the region."

Her view of Syria is less generous. "Syria still has illusions of grandeur," she writes, adding that the Syrians are hobbled by a sense of self-importance.



In her opinion, Syria faces serious problems because dissatisfaction with the status quo is growing, spurred by a confluence of demographics, economic realities, international pressure, the rise of the Internet and the collapse of Iraq's Baathist regime.

Wright is hard on that Palestinian icon, the late Yasser Arafat, accusing him of masterminding a series of terrorist incidents, ruling autocratically and turning a blind eye to rampant corruption within the ranks of the Palestinian Authority.

She states that the downfall of Iran's pro-western Pahlavi monarchy was "the only original revolution" in the past century in the Mideast. "It introduced a genuinely new political ideology [and] a unique and aggressive form of political Islam."

She thinks, not without good reason, that the strategic balance of power has begun to shift toward Iran as its allies have grown stronger.

Hamas has reinforced its grip on the Gaza Strip, while Hezbollah held Israel to a draw in the Second Lebanon War. And in Iraq, Shiite militias, apparently armed and trained by Iran, challenge the Americans.

Clearly, the Middle East is in a state of ferment, and in *Dreams and Shadows*, Wright analyzes events and trends that should be watched carefully in the future.

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Toronto Jewish Film Festival offers eclectic choices

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

***Steal a Pencil For Me*, which switches between past and present is a testament to the power of romance.**

Steal a Pencil For Me

An improbable love story is the theme of *Steal a Pencil For Me*, one of the movies scheduled to be shown at this year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival, which runs from May 3-11.

Michele Onayon's unusual, touching documentary takes place against the backdrop of the Holocaust in Holland.

In 1943, three years after Holland was occupied by the German army, a married Jewish accountant named Jaap (Jack) Polak met Ina Soep, a young, eligible woman 10 years his junior. Polak, unhappily married, was smitten, while Ina was less than impressed.

Like many Dutch Jews, Polak and his wife, Manja, were transported to Westerbork, a concentration camp in northeastern Holland that had originally been built for Jewish refugees fleeing fascist oppression. Shortly afterward, Ina arrived in Westerbork, and Polak began to woo her. "He won my heart by sheer persistence," says Ina.

When Manja discovered that they were having an affair, she forbade her husband from seeing Ina. So the pair wrote love letters to each other. "I have the feeling that we completely understand each other," Polak wrote in a letter. These letters, some of which were preserved, form the heart of *Steal a Pencil For Me*.

The film, which switches back and forth between the past and the present, is a testament to the power of romance and the ties that bind. Even after Polak and Ina were temporarily separated, they never stopped thinking of and yearning for each other. "They lived on their love," says Polak's sister, a resident of Israel today. Having been liberated from Bergen-Belsen, Polak divorced Manja and married Ina. "That was the beginning of my life," he says with some ardour. And this film fleshes out their enduring love match.

In Dutch, English and Hebrew. May 5, noon, Al Green Theatre and May 6, 1 p.m., Sheppard Grande.

* * *

Skate to Survive

This documentary, partially set in wartime Holland as well, is about the mother-daughter figure skating dynasty of Ellen and Petra Burka, both of whom were champions.

Directed by Astra Burka, it opens in Holland and ends in Canada, their adopted homeland. Ellen, the focus of *Skate to Survive*, was born in 1921 in Amsterdam and was brought up in an assimilated household where Christmas and Easter were celebrated. Only by chance did she discover that her parents, originally from Germany, were Jewish.

Burka's documentary charts Ellen's development as a first-rate figure skater, the anti-Semitic restrictions that marginalized Dutch Jews after Germany's invasion, the deportation of her 83-year-old grandmother, Ellen's confinement in Westerbork and Theresienstadt, the kitchen duties that made life a little easier for her, Ellen's ascent in her chosen sport, and her immigration to Canada in the wake of World War II.

What may strike some viewers as jarring is that Ellen and her husband raised their two daughters in the Anglican church. They did so because Toronto was pervasively anti-Semitic in the 1950s and figure-skating clubs seemed allergic to Jewish instructors. After Ellen's marriage broke up, she became a full-time figure-skating coach, shepherding her daughter and another star pupil, Toller Cranston, to Canadian and world titles in the 1960s. Strangely enough, Petra never makes an appearance in the film.

May 6, 5 p.m., Al Green Theatre

* * *

Arthur Szyk – Illuminator

This documentary by Pietr Zarebski is a serious portrait of an outstanding illustrator. Szyk, a Polish Jew from Lodz, was simply the greatest 20th-century illuminator working in the style of 16th-century miniaturist painters. Today, 57 years after his untimely passing, he is best remembered for his Passover haggadah, the Statute of Kalisz (which granted Jews in Poland civil and religious privileges), anti-Nazi illustrations, drawings of Israel's struggle for statehood and the U.S. Declaration of Independence.

A child prodigy, Szyk was influenced by Middle Eastern art. A Polish patriot who fought for Poland's freedom and lived in the United States during Germany's occupation of Poland, he produced the Statute of Kalisz to promote tolerance. But Zarebski says not a word about Szyk's reaction to the mounting tide of anti-Semitism in prewar Poland.

May 6, 6 p.m., Bloor Cinema; May 8, 1 p.m, Sheppard Grande.

* * *

Ernst Lubitsch in Berlin

Ernst Lubitsch, the renowned Hollywood director known for his sophisticated comedies, (*Ninotchka* and *The Shop Around the Corner*, to name but two), started his career in his birthplace, Germany. Robert Fischer's intriguing film, *Ernst Lubitsch in Berlin*, rounds out his German period, when he was an actor and a comedian in Paul Davidson's silent films and Max Reinhardt's Deutsche Theatre.

Although he was thoroughly secular, Lubitsch, the son of a Lithuanian immigrant tailor, infused his acting with a Jewish sensibility. By the time he arrived in Hollywood in 1922, Lubitsch was a formidable figure, ready for stardom in the United States.

May 5, 2 p.m., Al Green Theatre.

* * *

Nichols and May: Take Two

At the height of their powers in the late 1950s and early 1960s, Mike Nichols and Elaine May were a compelling comedy team whose cutting satire presaged social change in America. *Nichols and May: Take Two*, by Phillip Schopper, examines their ascendancy as comedians through hilarious skits and interviews with a variety of observers, including their manager. The film, unfortunately, omits vital biographical data about them.

May 4, 3:30 p.m., Al Green Theatre

* * *

Operation Mural – Casablanca 1961

This interesting film by Yehuda Kaveh hinges on a clandestine plot hatched by Israel to smuggle 530 Jewish children out of Morocco under the nose of the Moroccan government. It revolves around David Littman, a British Jew who volunteered his services for the operation. Unknown to him and his wife, they were actually working under cover for the Mossad. A Moroccan official threatened to expose them as Zionist spies, but he was overruled.

May 6, 3:30 p.m., Bloor Cinema

* * *

Arab Labor

This feature is taken from a popular Israeli sitcom, written by Sayed Kashua, about an obsessive Israeli Arab who will do virtually anything to assimilate. The episodes, turning on a shady garage mechanic, a Passover seder and a tense encounter between a Jewish suitor and an Arab woman, are satirical and zero in on problems that bedevil Israel's sometimes uneasy relationship with its large Arab minority.

May 7, 7:30 p.m., Al Green Theatre.

* * *

Between Two Notes

This meditative film by Amit Breuer, documents how Jews and Arabs in the Middle East have influenced their respective musical traditions. Flitting from Israel and Egypt to Syria and Lebanon, *Between Two Notes* unreels through grainy file footage, rousing concerts and thoughtful interviews.

May 6, noon, Al Green Theatre.

For tickets and other information, visit www.tjff.com.

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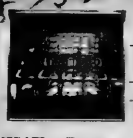

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Ralph Benmergui's edgy TV series about Israel

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Ralph Benmergui, the host of *Benmergui in the Morning* on Jazz.FM91 radio, segues to the Middle East in his five-part Vision TV series, *Ralph Benmergui: My Israel*, due to be launched on May 5 at 9 p.m. and repeated at midnight.

It can also be seen in a sneak preview on May 4 at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre at 11:45 a.m., and at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival at 6 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre.

The first episode, which turns on Jerusalem as a microcosm of Israel, sets the tone.

Born in Morocco and raised in Canada, Benmergui is a curious, passionate, restless and edgy observer. But let's be clear. He is not an "objective" reporter in the traditional sense of the word.

Although he acknowledges that Israel courses through his veins, he adds the caveat that he is not a "typical" Jew. He thus questions some of Israel's "actions" and "direction" and the hold Orthodox Jews exert on the Jewish state.

His mission, he declares in boldface, is to find "my Israel."

Prior to embarking on his trip to Israel, a day before Christmas last year, Benmergui, a seasoned broadcaster who was previously with the CBC, visits his mother in her kitchen.

As she blithely rolls meatballs, she advises him to use his judgment and refrain from taking sides.

Since Israel is not just another country in the Middle East for Benmergui, the question that arises is whether he is really impartial. Judging by the first episode, he is critical, but his heart is with Israel.

On a visit to the Western Wall, he equates it with the "indestructibility of my people," but is troubled by the intensity and "idol worship" it evokes.

As he further reflects, Benmergui observes that sorrow seems central to Jewish identity.

Visiting Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in the foothills of Jerusalem, he muses that "the unthinkable becomes real" here and that its existence is reason enough for Israel to exist.

Paying a visit to Elaine Tal El, an old Toronto friend living in Jerusalem, he discusses the cold reality of life in Israel and the prospect of peace with Tal El, her husband, their daughter and Tal El's sister.

He then meets a secular Palestinian filmmaker, Mohammed El Attar, who guides him through the labyrinthine Old City.

Noting that Jerusalem has become "holier than thou," El Attar says that "bricks" should not be worshipped.

In passing, he admits he first heard about the Holocaust when he was 28 years old. Is his admission an implicit rebuke of Palestinian society?

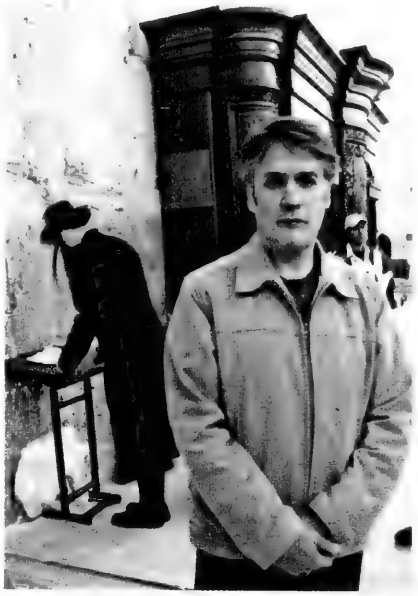
In closing, Benmergui travels to Bethlehem, where he confronts "the bleak reality" of the wall, Israel's security barrier.

"To be in the West Bank as a Jew feels odd," he confesses. Yet he is not sure whether he feels more Jewish or Canadian in Bethlehem.

His honesty is refreshing.

In future episodes, scheduled to be broadcast until May 7, Benmergui will deal with race and class in Israel through the eyes of Moroccan and Ethiopian Jews and Israeli Arabs, Orthodox and Reform Jews, and Israel's future.

Benmergui being Benmergui, these segments are bound to be quirky, unconventional and never less than interesting.



Ralph Benmergui at the Western Wall

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The prince and the bat mitzvah girl

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

The following three movies, from Germany, Israel and France respectively, show the international diversity of films at this year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival. In all, 12 countries are represented at the festival.

* * *

Max Minsky and Me

In this German movie, Nellie Edelmeister is a 13-year-old girl in Berlin preparing for her bat mitzvah. But the Hebrew lessons bore her to death.

Nellie is interested only in astronomy and outer space, and her crush on Prince Edouard of Luxembourg, a handsome teenager who is also interested in astronomy.

Nellie is studious and clever, but typically, she's a klutz in sports. When her school announces that the basketball team will be playing a tournament in Luxembourg hosted by the charming prince, Nellie is determined to make the team at all costs.

Enter the new kid in school, Max Minsky, who happens to be good at basketball. Nellie talks him into giving her basketball lessons in exchange for doing his homework and gives him the fees his mother is paying her to tutor him.

Much to her mother's chagrin, Nellie starts skipping Hebrew lessons to practise basketball to achieve her only shot at meeting the prince.

Along the way, she learns about herself and her faith.

Max Minsky and Me is a delightful and charming coming-of-age movie that will please adults and teens. Highly recommended.

In German with subtitles. May 4, 1 p.m. Al Green Theatre and May 6, 6 p.m. Sheppard Grande.

* * *

No Exit

This Israeli feature is a commentary on the recent popularity of reality TV shows and asks the question, just how far would a TV show go to boost its ratings?

The show in question is called *Choice of Heart*, a mixture of *Big Brother* and *The Bachelor*. Ten young women and one man live in a house, their every action captured on camera. The women vie for the heart of the man, who eliminates one of them each week, and at the end the winner gets a cash prize and marries him.

What the women don't know is that the man is blind. A conscientious objector who served in Lebanon, Eitan comes out of the war psychosomatically blind. The producers of the show outfit him with a special set of glasses with a camera

Nellie Edelmeister dreams of meeting the prince of Luxembourg in the German film *Max Minsky and Me*.

that allows them to see what he "sees." Backstage, his rehabilitation therapist, Yael, directs his movement through a special prosthetic in his ear, telling him what he "sees" and directs his actions around the house.

Conceptually, this is intriguing, and actually would have made quite an interesting TV show. But after the setup, the first half of this movie moves with the pace of a soap opera. It's only toward the last half hour that the movie picks up, when some suspense is thrown in and the twists and turns start happening.

When the police are called in to deal with an accident in the house, the cop is also part of another reality show. When one of the girls is taken to hospital, there is a camera in the ambulance, presumably for yet another reality show, and you realize just how much of our culture TV reality shows have penetrated. This is really not far from the truth is it?

In the studio itself, security cameras capture the crew's every move, and nothing is secret from the glaring viewpoint of the camera.

The ending makes you realize that there is nothing these so-called reality shows wouldn't do to prop up their slagging ratings.

Though it could have been better, *No Exit* is an interesting satire and commentary on reality TV shows and our fascination with voyeurism.

In Hebrew with subtitles. May 6, 8:30 p.m. Sheppard Grande.

* * *

Bad Faith

Can intermarriage work?

In this French film, Clara and Ismael have been dating for four years. Clara is Jewish and Ismael is Muslim, and they're very much in love.

Then Clara tells Ismael that she's pregnant. They're both happy about it. But it's time to tell their parents about each other, and it all goes downhill from there.

Clara goes to her family home to tell her parents about Ismael.

"Is he one of us?" her mother asks.

"French? Yes."

"OK, but is he…"

"No. He isn't."

"That's OK," her mother says. "We like the Sephardim, too."

Meanwhile, Ismael can't bring himself to tell his mother about Clara and complications begin.

Clara even begins to wonder just what being Jewish means. It's all about guilt, her friend tells her. "Maybe being Jewish is like eating Italian panini on Pesach and losing sleep over it."

Clara and Ismael begin to quarrel with each other over the mezuzah she insists on hanging outside their door and what to name the baby. Ismael begins to quarrel with his friends about Mideast politics.

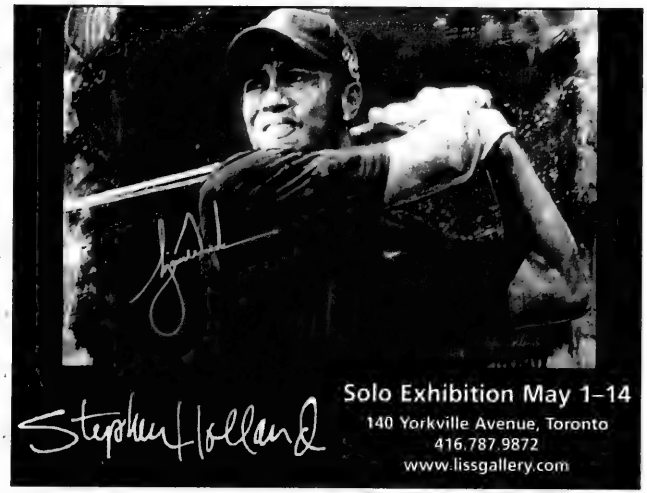
No matter how much they love each other, it becomes obvious that the cultural differences hang like albatrosses around their necks.

Filled with misunderstandings and miscommunications, this modern-day *Romeo and Juliet* is a wonderful, moving movie.The ending is a nail-biting thriller as Ismael races across Paris to prevent a horrible tragedy.

Bad Faith is a warm, moving and at times funny movie about mixed race relationships and goes a long way to show the cultural similarities that such seemingly opposing ethnicities have. Well worth watching.

In French with subtitles. May 5, 8:30 p.m. Bloor Cinema, and May 7, 3:30 p.m. Sheppard Grande.

For tickets and other information, visit www.tjff.com.



Documentary recounts the plight of Sudanese refugees in Israel

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Two documentaries at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival tell stories about families torn apart – one during the Holocaust, the other during what has been called the first genocide of the 21st century. Themes of courage and bravery are common to both films, as are a desire on the part of the films' subjects to educate the public.

* * *

Shield of Solomon

The first documentary, directed by Igal Hecht and Lior Cohen (also written and produced by Hecht), is a visually and emotionally stunning recounting of the plight of Sudanese refugees in Israel.

The world has taken little notice as black Christians from southern Sudan have been attacked, raped and murdered by Arab groups called Janjaweed. Some would-be victims decided to act, by setting out on foot across the Sinai desert towards the nearest democratic country, Israel.

More than 2,000 refugees arrived in Israel during 2006 and 2007, some of whom were deported back to Egypt, some were sent to jail, and many others were left to fend for themselves on the street.

The film spends equal time examining Israeli volunteers who work to find food, shelter, medical assistance and jobs for the refugees, and the history and life stories of the refugees themselves.

Included are bleak scenes of men displaying their scars, both physical and emotional, that they received both at the hands of the Janjaweed and from Egyptian police. Equally heart-wrenching is the sight of women and children playing together in the yard of an Israeli prison, their only offence being that they crossed illegally into the country.

Interspersed are interviews and scenes taken from rallies and demonstrations, as the Sudanese and Israeli activists try to spread information about their plight, and pressure the government to stop deportations.

Continued on page 55

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

TEATRON SEEKS ACTORS FOR *A GLIMPSE OF THE LIGHT* AND *THE DYBBUK*

Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre is seeking actors for two upcoming productions at the Leah Posluns Theatre, both directed by **Ari Weisberg**. *A Glimpse of the Light*, a musical by **Ben Finn**, is a love story in the era just before the birth of the State of Israel; it is to be staged in November. The second play is *The Dybbuk*, by **Sholom Anski**, the famous romantic drama set in a simple village in eastern Europe, slated for performance next February.

Auditions for these non-union, non-paying positions are scheduled for May 27 and 29. Please send your resumé and photo by e-mail to teatron@ sympatico.ca; or by mail to Ari Weisberg, artistic director, Teatron Theatre, 41 Warwick Ave., Toronto M6C 1T7. For further information, phone 416-781-5527 or visit the website www.teatrontheatre.com.

* * *

Names in the News: Toronto writer **Jonathan Garfinkel**'s book *Ambivalence*, about his experiences in Israel and the Palestinian territories, is "a melodious choral work" that artfully weaves together "many disparate voices from the two cultures," according to a review in the *Jewish Chronicle* of London, England, where a British edition of the book is on sale. Garfinkel "spins superb scenes and displays a patient listening ear" but is even-handed to a fault, the reviewer concludes, noting that twice in the book people call him a "self-hating Jew."

* * *

Schwartz Children's Book Awards: Winners of the Ruth and Sylvia Schwartz Children's Book Awards are to be announced at Ryerson Community School on May 6. Eleven authors from across Canada are in the running for the two awards, which are each worth $6,000. Two juries of young readers from Ryerson Community School will choose the recipients.

* * *

Names in the News II: For the second year, **Stephen Cera** has been appointed artistic director of the Music at Sharon concert series, which presents four concerts this June in the Sharon Temple, a short distance north of Toronto. A former CBC producer, Cera is best known for the concert seasons he staged at the George Weston Recital Hall while head of music programming at the now-defunct Livent Inc. www.sharontemple.ca/

* * *

Dance & Drama

• Theatre Columbus presents *Dance of the Red Skirts*, a new comedy inspired by **Paul Klee** and created by **Leah Cherniak**, **Martha Ross** and others. Tarragon Extra Space, 30 Bridgeman Ave. May 3 to 25. 416-531-1827. www.theatrecolumbus.ca

• International dance superstars from around the world grace the stage for the seventh annual Stars of the 21st Century, proceeds of which support programs at the Koffler Centre of the Arts. $60 to $165. Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Sunday, May 4, 8 p.m. 416-872-1111, www.ticketmaster.ca

• Dancap Productions presents Cameron Mackintosh and the National Theatre of Great Britain's award-winning production of **Lerner & Loewe**'s *My Fair Lady*, as re-invented by **Trevor Nunn** and choreographed by **Matthew Bourne**. $60 to $100. Toronto Centre for the Arts, Main Stage, 5040 Yonge St. May 8 to 31. 416-872-8111.

• **The Oriana Women's Choir** presents Puttin' On The Ritz, a selection of songs by **Irving Berlin** including *Blue Skies*, *Top Hat, White Tie and Tails*, *Cheek to Cheek*, *Alexander's Ragtime Band* and *There's No Business Like Show Business*. $25, $20, $10. Jane Mallett Theatre, St. Lawrence Centre. May 10, 8 p.m. 416-538-1650

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** opens up the Book of Leviticus for a series of readings, discussion and assorted related musical pieces, with CBC radio announcer **Judy Maddren**. Church of the Redeemer, 162 Bloor St. W., Tuesday, May 6, 7 to 9 p.m. Admission is free, but participants must register by Friday, May 2. 416-922-4948, www. theredeemer.ca

• Montreal jazz duo **OneUpOneDown**, consisting of **Cameron Wallis** on saxophones and **Paul Shrofel** on piano, perform a concert at the Toronto launch of their new CD. The duo, who are an integral part of the **Sophie Milman** "sound," are at the Rex Hotel, 194 Queen St. W. on Wednesday, May 7, 9:30 p.m. Cover $5. 416-598-2475. (And speaking of Milman, she's performing at the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga on May 2.)

• 55+ Forward…For Seniors invites you to join them for the Toronto Jewish Film Festival screening of the film *The Goldbergs* ($7), followed by discussion with bagels and coffee ($2). Friday, May 9, 12 p.m. Please pre-register by May 7. Phyllis Fien, 416-924-6211, ext. 155. E-mail, phyllisf@mnjcc.org

• **The Toronto Symphony Orchestra** has announced that **Itzhak Perlman** will not appear with the TSO as scheduled on May 21 and 22 due to upcoming surgery for a shoulder injury.

• The music of singer-songwriter **Dana Mase** has been featured in films and TV shows, and her last CD contained the hit single, *Tear Streaks*; her newest CD is *Café Nights Tour*. Known for interweaving her inspiring voyage of Jewish spiritual rediscovery into her performances, Mase is seeking venues for a national tour. barry@afikimfoundation.org

TJFF documentaries feature themes of courage and bravery

Continued from page 54

One social activist, Elisheva, reports that as the grandchild of Holocaust survivors, she feels bound to help people who have no other safe haven. Without government funding, Elisheva and other volunteers scrounge for basic necessities for refugee families, but admit that even Israeli jails and cramped apartments are better than what these men and women left behind.

No government responses to criticism over the handling of the crisis are included in the film. The only official statement included is two excerpts from speeches Prime Minister Ehud Olmert gave in the Knesset, in which he says that the refugees are not Israel's responsibility. It would give the film more balance to have included an interview with a government official.

May 6, 2:30 p.m. and May 8, 3:30 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre.

* * *

My Opposition: The diaries of Friedrich Kellner

This documentary, directed by Fern Levitt and Arnie Zipursky, also focuses on themes of courage in the face of deadly risk.

Friedrich Kellner, a World War I veteran, was a mid-level official in a small district courthouse in Nazi Germany. He had read *Mein Kampf*, Hitler's book detailing his dangerous views, and tried to warn others against the Nazis, to no avail.

While resisting joining the Nazi party, at risk to his life, Friedrich wrote diaries documenting events and the dangers of totalitarianism, as a warning to future generations. He was unable to fight the Nazis in the present, so worked to oppose them in the future. Some of his diaries were destroyed out of fear that they would be discovered when he was called before a tribunal to explain his opposition to the Nazis.

Kellner's only child, Fred, became influenced by the Hitler ideology, and the family decided to send him to America. There, Fred married a Jewish woman, and they had three children together. The marriage was shaky and soon Fred returned to Germany. Their mother left the children at a Jewish orphanage.

After being raised in the orphanage, Friedrich's youngest grandson, Robert Scott Kellner, joined the U.S. Navy. After two years of being stationed in Virginia, he was sent to Saudi Arabia, with a stopover in Frankfurt, Germany. He wanted to learn more about his grandparents, so he went AWOL to visit his grandparents' town.

He eventually found their town and then met his grandparents for the first time. He was given the diaries and was relieved to learn that his grandparents had not been Nazis and had in fact resisted the regime. Thirty-five years after their deaths, Kellner seeks to publicize the work of his grandparents and document their lives.

The film mixes interviews with Kellner and historians, footage and photographs that illustrate the lives of the Kellner family in Germany and in the United States and startling footage of the events of World War II. Some of the explanation of historical events in the film, for example Kristallnacht and Hitler's rise to power, are unnecessary for most audiences and distract from the unique story being told.

May 6, 7:30 p.m. Al Green Theatre. Robert Scott Kellner will be in attendance. For tickets and other information, visit www.tjff.com.

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Novel's poetic sensibility is preserved in movie

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

We are all prisoners of memory, for better or worse.

In *Fugitive Pieces*, adapted from Anne Michaels' eponymous novel, Jakob Beer, the main protagonist, is inextricably enmeshed in the past, which to him remains a source of unspeakable pain and anguish.

As portrayed in Jeremy Podeswa's contemplative and shattering movie – which premiered at the Toronto International Film Festival and starts in local theatres on May 2 – Jakob is burdened and immobilized by the Holocaust, the defining event of his life.

Torn by guilt as a survivor, and unable to jettison the horrific images that haunt and torment him, Jakob is a victim. The fragility and complexity of Jakob's emotional state, burned into his consciousness by the cold-blooded murder of his parents and the abduction and disappearance of his sister in Poland in 1942, is ably transferred to the screen by Podeswa, the screenwriter and director.

His task is to preserve Michaels' poetic sensibility and connect interlocking themes of loss and love, and in this respect, he succeeds admirably.

Moving seamlessly in flashbacks between war-torn Poland, the idyllic Greek islands and Toronto of the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, *Fugitive Pieces* opens in kinetic fashion as nine-year-old Jakob witnesses an act of untrammelled Nazi brutality. Running into the forest after his parents are killed and his sister is dragged away by anonymous thugs, Jakob (Robbie Kay) finds shelter in a clearing, covering himself with leaves.

Athos Roussos (Rade Sherbedgia), a compassionate Greek archeologist working on an excavation, stumbles upon the frightened Jewish boy and resolves to save him from the tender mercies of the Nazis. Smuggling him out of Poland, he takes him to his home on the island of Zakynthos, which is also occupied by Germany. There, in fear of the Germans, Jakob keeps a low profile.

At this point, the film fast forwards to Toronto, where Jakob (Stephen Dillane), now a writer, falls in love with the beautiful, outgoing Alex (Rosamund Pike), his polar opposite temperamentally. They marry, but it is an uneasy relationship. Alex, a social butterfly, lives for the moment. Jakob, a loner who savours solitude, wallows in his fleeting Holocaust experience. She is insensitive to his deep-seated feelings, while he cannot tolerate her "shameless vitality."

Stephen Dillane and Ayelet Zurer in *Fugitive Pieces*

It is a prescription for marital breakdown.

These scenes, directed with panache, establish Jakob's inability to shake off his obsession with the murder of his parents and the disappearance of his sister, a promising pianist.

Returning to Greece, Podeswa fleshes out Jakob's growing dependence on Athos, a generous, open-hearted person who is also tormented by demons.

Wracked by nightmares, Jakob sleeps fitfully. As the Nazi reign of terror unfolds on Athos' bucolic island, he shelters a young couple and their infant child whom the Germans want to arrest and deport. The wife is Christian and the husband is Jewish.

Greece's liberation from the yoke of Nazi tyranny is heralded by a scene in which a convoy of trucks with fighters and fluttering Greek flags rolls by. With the war having ended, Athos accepts a university teaching position in Canada, and Jakob accompanies him to Toronto.

Maturing into a poised, intelligent young man, Jakob is a solitary though not asocial individual. He forms lasting friendships with neighbours and fellow survivors with whom he can converse in Latvian-inflected Yiddish. And while he dreams of his lost, beloved sister, he longs for the day when his bitter memories of her will no longer distract him.

In terms of emotional resonance, *Fugitive Pieces*, whose ending has been altered since its world premiere last summer, gathers power in heart-felt scenes during which Jakob romances the new woman in his life, the museum curator Michaela, played sensitively by Israeli actress Ayelet Zurer.

For Jakob, Michaela is a miracle. Unlike Alex, she completely understands and empathizes with his obsessions, and can probably give him a normal and perhaps blissful future.

Relentlessly sombre in tone and substance, *Fugitive Pieces*, produced by Robert Lantos, is a showcase for the talents of a fine cast.

Kay is preternaturally mature, and Dillane, brooding and intellectual, is a steady and reliable presence. Zurer bonds with him in a few brief and affecting scenes. Pike is convincing, while Sherbedgia, shaggy and warm, may remind a viewer of Anthony Quinn in *Zorba the Greek*.

The horror of the Holocaust often eludes comprehension, but in *Fugitive Pieces*, Podeswa leaves viewers with an understanding that unbridled terror and a yearning for normality are not necessarily opposing forces.

Yael Naim: 'Far Far' from ordinary

Yael Naim
Yael Naim and David Donatien
Warner Music

Reviewed by By Adam Menceles

Gifted with a soothing voice and a pair of talented ivory-tickling fingers, French-born and Israeli-raised Yael Naim has put together a collection of relaxing yet uplifting tunes.

Singing in English, Hebrew and French, she freely floats between all three languages – giving her music an eclectic language blending quality. It's safe to say that Naim's accent is somewhat alluring, maybe even sensual at times.

Now, Naim is in no way a behind-the-scenes songstress. Her hit *New Soul* is featured in Apple's new Macbook Air television commercial, which is what did it for her in terms of popularity.

The result is that she is the first Israeli solo artist ever to have a top 10 hit in America. Her tunes are subdued yet catchy, emitting an old-world vibe similar to that of a Parisian jazz club.

Her musical background as a singing soloist in the Israeli Air Force Orchestra is out of the ordinary and probably quite different from that of most of today's hit makers.

Naim's self-titled album (recorded in Paris over a period of two years and released in 2007) is a collaboration with percussionist David Donatien and continues to stay at the top of the charts.

Notable songs include the obvious *New Soul*, as well as the short but sweet *Paris* and the hook-driven sleeper hit *Far Far*.

If you're a fan of Israeli music, French music, relaxing ditties or musically talented Israelis, Naim is where it's at. If you think you don't like those qualities in your songs, listen to her anyway and within one week you'll be patting yourself on the back saying, "You know what, Yael is a little bit of all right."

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Koffler Centre to support future programs

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Eighteen months ago, Lori Starr packed her bags and moved her family from Los Angeles to Toronto to take the helm at the Koffler Centre of the Arts.

Starr is Koffler Centre's executive director and the vice-president of culture, a new position, for the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Established by Murray and Marvelle Koffler in 1977, the Koffler Centre of the Arts was created to enrich the people of Toronto through arts education and exhibitions.

This year, Starr and Tiana Koffler Boyman, the centre's president, are steering it in new directions. "The institution is being rebirthed with a new mission statement – to create a more civil and global society by fostering mutual understanding through the exploration of arts and culture," Starr said.

To support their efforts, the Koffler Centre of the Arts will host a gala on May 4, presenting an evening of international ballet stars at the Toronto Centre for the Performing Arts.

The seventh annual Stars of the 21st Century, under the artistic direction of Nadia and Solomon Tencer, features classical and contemporary ballet dancers from Germany, Lithuania, Russia, Spain and Vienna. The show includes principal dancers from the National Ballet of Canada and a world première by the Israel Ballet company to commemorate Israel @ 60, featuring dancers Nina Gershman and Alexander Utkin.

No stranger to the arts, Starr was former senior vice-president of the Skirball Cultural Center and director of the Skirball Museum in Los Angeles, as well as having held senior management positions at the J. Paul Getty Museum and at the J. Paul Getty Trust for more than 15 years.

Programs at the Koffler Centre of the Arts are based on a multi-disciplinary approach with an emphasis on Jewish themes in a Canadian context and feature filmmakers, writers, comedians, musicians, dancers and painters.

"Here within our curving spaces," an installation by Montreal artist Karilee Fuglem, opens at the Koffler Gallery on May 15.

The exhibit "Makom: Seeking Sacred Space," more than 30 photographs of Jewish sacred sites from Montreal to Morocco by David Cowles and David Kaufman, begins at the gallery on June 1.

An Israeli film festival, presented by iToronto, is on at the centre this fall and, coming next spring, a celebration of Russian culture through film and art, music and food.

"I am indebted to Tiana Koffler Boyman's efforts to create the Koffler Centre of the Arts as an independent agency of the UJA Federation and to her parents for their generosity in envisioning an arts centre as a key component of Jewish life in Toronto," Starr said. Toronto has a "unique Jewish community that's a model for other cities, with the most progressive, robust and visionary federation – the United Jewish Appeal – that's ahead of its time."

To reach out to people in the community, the Koffler Centre "embraces" everyone, building on the notion of welcoming the stranger, she said. Through the recognition of differences, "people are valued as individuals and become part of something greater."

With Starr's belief that the "essence of an institution can be taken anywhere," the Koffler Centre recently celebrated the release of Chana Rothman's CD *We Can Rise* at the Gladstone Hotel, to attract the under 40 crowd. Plans for more off-site concerts include the Italian-Czech Connection Mother's Day Concert with the Koffler Chamber Orchestra at the Toronto Centre for the Arts on May 11.

Lori Starr

"We create a sense of community through the notion of culture – it's the lens through which we examine what people value," Starr said. "Culture is the soul of who we are. Once we do this, great things happen."

For Stars of the 21st Century tickets, visit www.ticketmaster.ca. Call 416-872-1111 for gala patron tickets; to be a gala sponsor, contact Tobi Liederman at 416-636-1880, ext. 271, or e-mail events@kofflerarts.org. Gala sponsors attend private functions before and after the performance at 8:00 pm. For more information about the Koffler Centre, visit www.kofflercentre.com.

One member's brush with horror changes Montreal family dynamic

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Colleen Murphy's play *The December Man (L'homme de décembre)*, inspired by the 1989 massacre of 14 women at the École Polytechnique in Montreal, examines the devastating effect the attack had on a working-class family.

Multi-award winning actress Nicola Lipman plays Kathleen Fournier, whose son, Jean, witnessed the cold-blooded killings.

Lipman says the play is not about the massacre itself, but about one family and how the parents thought that because their child wasn't killed, everything would be okay.

"The event was the massacre, but there were indeed 40 students and two professors who left the room and left the women with a man who was going to kill them, and they have to live with that," she says.

The critically acclaimed play won the 2006 Enbridge playRites Award and the 2007 Governor General's Literary Award for English-Language Drama.

"It's about the trauma that this has on the survivors and [the people] close to those individuals," Lipman says. "Like for Holocaust survivors – it is still... a horror, but what still remains and will remain forever are the reverberations from the survivors, the children of the survivors and the stories. That will keep it in the eye of history, and in a sense, that is what this play is doing."

She says of her character Kathleen Fournier that because she and her husband had this child late in life, they looked at him as a blessing – a gift from God.

"She is someone who has invested everything in this child without realizing how much it is incumbent on the poor child to fulfil the dreams and go beyond. He would be the first in her family since coming to Quebec to graduate," she says. "This is something people everywhere can relate to – they want their children to have a better life than they did. She represents that kind of a person, and those feelings go beyond class, religion or nationality. She doesn't expect anything to go wrong."

The British Columbian-born Jewish actress spent her early years in Brazil, where she attended Catholic school. Her British-born father Arthur Lipman, is a financial consultant whose work took the family there. Her late mother, Lucille Kaminer, was from Toronto. She was an actress and singer who performed as Lucille Cameron.

She attended the University of British Columbia before going to the National Theatre School in Montreal, and then devoted much of her life to the theatre. More recently, she has expanded into film and television. Although she owns a home in Kingsport, N.S., she's rarely there, living most of her life out of a suitcase and gracing stages across the country.

Her life in the theatre affords her many opportunities to socialize; so when she's alone, she enjoys some solitude and pastimes including gardening. Never married and with no children, she enjoys spending time with her 94-year-old father in Vancouver when her schedule allows. Although he is not religious, she says she believes he is quite a Jewish scholar.

She herself is not religious either, but says she has a strong cultural affinity to Judaism.

Upcoming projects for Lipman include a national tour of *Scorched* and a new play by Joan McLeod, *Another Home Invasion*.

Canstage's *The December Man* is at the Berkeley Street Theatre until May 17. The play also stars Brian Dooley as Kathleen's husband, Benoit, and newcomer Jeff Irving as their son, Jean. It is directed by Micheline Chevrier.

For tickets to *The December Man* at the Berkeley Street Theatre, 26 Berkeley St., call 416-368-3110, Ticketmaster at 416-872-1111 or go to www.canstage.com.

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122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. AVAIL.
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT-OF-TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT-OF-COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH /SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND/LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND/LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
246 VOLUNTEERS
247 DAY CARE AVAILABLE
248 DAY CARE WANTED
250 DOMESTIC HELP AVAILABLE
255 DOMESTIC HELP WANTED
257 HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE
258 HEALTHCARE WANTED
259 SENIORS
260 BUSINESS PERSONALS
265 PEOPLE SEARCH
270 PERSONALS
273 INTRODUCTION SERVICES
275 PERSONAL COMPANIONS WANTED
279 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY
280 ANNOUNCEMENTS
290 LOST & FOUND
295 PETS
300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY

345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
379 CLOCKS/WATCHES
380 CLOTHING
382 COUNSELLING
385 COMPUTER
386 DANCING
387 DECORATING
390 DRIVING
392 DRY CLEANING/LAUNDRY
394 EDUCATION
395 ELECTRICAL
398 ELECTRONICS
400 ENTERTAINMENT
402 FINANCIAL
404 FITNESS & WEIGHT LOSS
405 FURNITURE
406 GARAGE DOORS
407 GIFTS
410 HEALTH & BEAUTY
412 HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING
415 HOME IMPROVEMENTS
416 HOME INSPECTION
419 INTERNET SERVICE
420 INVITATIONS/PRINTING/CALLIG.
425 JEWELLERY
427 JUDAICA
430 LEASING
431 LANDSCAPING/LAWNCARE
432 LAWYERS
433 LESSONS
434 LIMOUSINE/TAXI
435 LIQUIDATION
438 LOCKSMITH
439 MAKE-UP
440 MISCELLANEOUS
442 MUSICAL SERVICES
443 MORTGAGES
445 MOVING
449 PEST CONTROL
450 PAINTING/WALLPAPERING
452 PARTY SERVICES
455 PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO
460 PLUMBING
465 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
470 RENOVATIONS
472 RETIREMENT HOMES
475 ROOFING
476 SATELITE & EQUIPMENT
480 SECURITY SYSTEMS
481 SEWING
485 SNOW REMOVAL
490 TABLE COVERING
493 TAILORING/ALTERATIONS
495 TILING
496 TRAINING
498 TRAVEL & TOURISM
500 TUTORING
510 UPHOLSTERY
512 WAITERING SERVICES
515 WATERPROOFING
520 WINDOW SERVICES
550 WORKSHOPS

REAL ESTATE Section

5 HOUSES FOR SALE

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416-633-7373

BATHURST-SHEPPARD
1st time offered. Spacious 3 bdrm, 1x4 pc bath ensuite, liv/din combined, eat-in kitchen, fin bsmt, private entr, gar, lg lot. Don't miss!

STEELES-PETROLIA
1100 sq. ft. office space for rent. Ideal for professional use.

WILMINGTON-OVERBROOK
3 bdrm, update kit, all good sized rms, fin bsmnt, double drive gar.

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ESSIE SHER

York Mills/Leslie
$1,039,000
Executive 5 bedroom home with many upgrades on child safe street. Demand area, Reno kitchen, huge family room, large lr/dr combo. 70x106 lot. Close to excellent schools & amenities +++.

Bathurst/Clark
$429,000
3 bdrm in demand area, close to shuls & all conveniences. Combo Lr/Dr with hardwood flooring. Large eat-in kitchen w/fam rm. Finished basement.

Bathurst/Elgin Mills
$389,900
"Double car garage" Amazing value!! One of a kind, Acorn built, 3bdrm, 4 w/r upgraded townhouse. Amazing kitchen/fam room. Fin basement. Lr/dr combo w/hardwood. Sun filled, close to park. A winner!

Bathurst/Sheppard
$315,000
Motivated seller!! Spacious two storey townhouse, approx. 1700 sq. ft., 3 bdrm, 3 washrooms, open plan. Large kitchen, executive complex. Call **Essie** 416-464-5261

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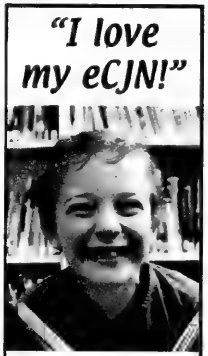

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HOUSES FOR SALE

BRIDLE PATH/LAWRENCE $4,480,000
Exceptional 7000 sq. ft. residence of dignity situated on 1 acre of wooded ravine with a stream. A spa area with pool, exercise room billiards room and media room and walk out lower level are accessed by elevator. Privacy enhanced by circular drive with electric gate.York Mills Area. Fabulous ranch bungalow with indoor pool on .82 acre of wooded ravine. Call for details. Cheryl Graff* 416-441-3778

HOGGS HOLLOW $4,750,000
For those who dream of enchanting delights this home is a dream come true! 7000 sq. ft. of distinctive design beyond your expectations. Enjoy the quiet relaxing ravine setting. Samantha Graff* Ext. 606

REDUCED! GLENORCHY/THE BRIDLE PATH $3,550,000
Designed with distinction! Elegant approach to traditional style backing to Sunnybrook Park. Master and guest bedroom on main floor, 5 bedrooms on 2nd level with own suites. 4 car garage and circular drive. Cheryl Graff* 416-441-3778

NEW LISTING! ARMOUR HEIGHTS $949,000
Fabulous rare find 4+1 bedroom with open concept main floor with main floor family rm and powder rm. Reno/updated 2002, new flrs on main flr, new family rm, powder rm, roof Sept.'07, Furnace Feb.'08, 50x125 lot. Cheryl Graff* 416-441-3778

THORNHILL WOODS BEST BUY $569,900
Fabulous open concept, 4 bdrms, 3 upstairs bathrooms, 2 car garage, Premium lot, hrdwd & flooring, main laundry & gar entry, upgraded kit, 2 tier deck++. Maxine Povering** Ext 308

THORNHILL WOODS ELEGANCE $689,000
This fabulous 4 bdrm Greenpark is in a class of its own, stunning maple kitchen, 2 storey family Rm w/limestone etched FP, angled maple & ceramic flooring, comp. finished bsmt w/sep Entry & authentic wine cellar. Maxine Povering** Ext 308

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"Primrose". 2 bdrm, solarium, 2 washrooms, eat-in kitchen with window. $259,000.
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FEATURE HOME OF THE WEEK

NEW LISTING

BATHURST / SULTANA

Incredible opportunity! Magnificent custom home on rare 65 x 132 ft. lot. Large principal rms., master bdrm. on main floor, 2 bedrooms on upper level, huge basement includes self-contained in-law suite, rec. room & 5th bedroom. Luscious garden & fruit trees. A must see! Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

BATHURST / GLENGROVE — NEW LISTING

ATTENTION BUILDERS & RENOVATORS. Fabulous 41 x 139 ft. building lot in prime central location near many luxury homes & close to shopping, TTC, schools. $629,000. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

*BROKER OF RECORD

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PRINCE CHARLES PARK

Spacious 3 bdrm. brick bung. on generous 53 x 120 ft lot, picturesque setting facing Prince Charles Park, gorgeous location, ideal for renovation, addition or build your new dream home. Close to Lawrence Plaza, TTC library++. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

BATHURST / SHELBORNE — NEW PRICE

Exquisite 4 + 1 bdrm, 4 baths, surrounded by luxury homes, custom total renovation & addition, designer finishes throughout, modern kit. w/granite counters. **$999,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

* * *

PRIME RETAIL SPACE AT A PRICE THAT SPELLS P-R-O-F-I-T

Prestigious Bathurst / Glencairn, great opportunity for startup or existing business. **Priced for immediate rental at only $1,200 / MONTH — ACT NOW!** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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CENTRAL PROPERTIES

BRAND NEW CUSTOM PROPERTY EXC. CRICKET CLUB ENCLAVE $2,395,000

4+1 Bedroom, 5 Bath, Custom Design Finishes + Built-ins, Top of the Line Appliances. Cathy Himelfarb* 416-488-2875

1ST AD EXCEPTIONAL FOREST HILL FAMILY HOME $1,599,000

4 Bdrm, 4 Bath, Spac'us LR, Formal Dr, Huge Eat-In Kit, W/O to Sunporch, Grdn frm Lib, Prv Dr Dbl Gar. M. Merrick* 416-488-2875

EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY HOME IN CASA LOMA AREA $1,198,000

Spac'us 4 Bdrm, 4 Bath, fp in LR, Formal DR, Eat-In Kit, Mn Flr Fam + Pwdr Rm, Sep Ent to Bsmt, Rec Rm. Marilyn Merrick* 416-488-2875

SPECTACULAR PRIME YONGE/SHEPPARD CUSTOM BUILT

$1,178,000. New, next to park! 50' x 120' Lot, 4 bdrm, 6 bath, high ceilings, finished W/O basement. Boris Abramov* 905-881-7653

649 BRIAR HILL AVENUE! S/E CORNER CHAPLIN CRES!

$1,150,000! AMAZING 4+1br, 4bth exec res! Mn fam+2pce! Nanny ste! Fab 47x125'! Walk to Shul! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

CUSTOM BUILT HOME - FAYWOOD/SHEPPARD $919,999

Near Completion, 3600 Sq. Ft., 50 x 150 ft, Top Quality Finishes Thruout, 4 Bdrms, 4 Baths. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

NORTH/BAYVIEW PROPERTIES

ARJAY ON THE RAVINE – OVERLOOKS GOLF COURSE $6,680,000

Fab New Chateau Insp. Masterpiece! Gate Ent. Heated Flr, Hid Ceilings, Walnut Library, His + Her Ensuite, L/L Wine Cellar, Theatre + Spa. Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

HOGGS HOLLOW NEW PRICE $3,595,000

Breathtaking New Home on Secluded Lot with Walk-Up Lower Level, Theatre Room, Wine Cellar, Exquisite European Finishings. Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

171 HOLLYWOOD AVENUE! NOW $1,199,900!

Bayview N/Sheppard! Unbelievable find! Lux 4+1, 5bth! Mn fam+lib+lau+2pce! Motivated! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

5 FAIRLEA AVENUE! THORNHILL UPLANDS GOLF COURSE!

$1,150,000! Most sought after local! Sensational 100x160' lot! Build your dream home! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

BUY NOW AND BUILD LATER

Great Investment Potential!! Currently generating over $4,000per/mth. Great location on a 51x242 ft. lot. L. Reznik* 905-881-7653

MARKHAM GEM!!

Fabulous Monarch built home with Many Upgrades including a Gourmet Kit & Hrdwd Flrs throughout. M. Atkins** 905-881-7653

NORTH/BAYVIEW PROPERTIES CONT'D.

A MUST SEE IN HIGH DEMAND AREA

3150 sq. ft. 9 ft. ceilings, Chefs kit., dbl ovens, eat-in kit with W/O to deck, Master w/sitting rm, lrg ensuite. L Reznik* 905-881-7653

CLARK/WESTMINSTER - $589,000

Fab Bright + Spac'us, 5 Bdrm, 3400' + Fin Lower Lvl w/Scarlett O'Hara Staircase, Hrdwd Flrs, Great Mstr Suite. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

$548,900! BATHURST & STEELES!

Stunning spacious 4 bedroom & sitting room, main floor family rm & library. Finished lower level. Leon Soberano** 416-226-1987

DETATCHED IN THORNHILL

4 bdrm/4bath, 2 kitchens, fin. bsmnt w/separate entr, 9 ft. ceilings, hardwood on main flr, neutral décor. N. Sarova* 905-881-7653

LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION!!!!

Detatched 3 bdrm/4bath, large family room, new windows, central air, great street, deck. J. Engel* 905-881-7653

BEAUTIFUL 7 YEARS OLD HOME ON 41FT WIDE LOT

Large rooms, upgraded kitchen, family rm, oak stairs & parquet on both flrs, 9ft ceiling, entrance to grge. B. Abramov* 905-881-7653

BRIGHT RENOVATED HOME BACKS ONTO OPEN SPACE

Prime R. Hill, on court, 2 car garage, newer windows, furnace, CAC(04), Roof(03), fin basement. Boris Abramov* 905-881-7653

WEST PROPERTIES

EXCLUSIVE TOWNHOME

Overlooking the Credit River. Professionally Decorated, and Landscaped. Marc Atkins** 905-881-7653

CONDOMINIUM PROPERTIES

EXCLUSIVE HILLHURST AND BATHURST CONDO! $999,000

Only One Unit Per Floor, Elevator to suite, 3 Bdrm, 2 Bath, Approx, 2400 sq. ft. Balconies From Every Rm. Irma Weisz* 416-488-2875

10 DELISLE – RARELY OFFERED CORNER SUITE $$$ UPGRADES SOLD

1464 Sq. Ft. + 750 Sq. Ft., Terrace Fab View of the City, 2 Bdrms, 2 Baths, Many Built-Ins, Frplce. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

$600K! SKYMARK LUX 2534 S.F. CONDO 'CLASSIC' GREAT VIEW!

2 Bdrms, 2 balc, 2 prkg, 2 lckrs. Lrg Fam rm, loads cupboards. Must be seen! Concierge. 24 hr security. $$ Rec ctr. P. Mack* 416-226-1987

1ST AD! 253 MERTON STREET! YONGE S/DAVISVILLE!

$469,000! Spectacular 2br, 2bth, s/e corner ste w/balcony+panoramic views! Prkg+lckr! 10++ Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

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Come see this spectacular boutique condo in the heart of North York, too many upgrades to list. Call today, Lahav Reznik* 905-881-7653

RENTAL PROPERTIES

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REAL ESTATE Scene

5 HOUSES FOR SALE

Bathurst Manor/One Of A Kind

Open House • Sunday, May 4, 1-4 pm • 5 Purdon Dr.

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★Bathurst/Eglinton..Professional Office★

For Sale.. 740 Eglinton Ave West..975 sq.ft of ground level office space with own entrance & great street visibility..Within the vibrant Forest Hill neighbourhood..A Co-op Building that is making application for Condo Conversion..A walk to public transit & parking... Why rent when you can own..Asking $219,900...Please call for all particulars & viewings.

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Sutton Group-Bayview Rlty Inc. Brokerage
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10 PRIVATE HOUSES FOR SALE

OPEN HOUSE Sun. May 4th 1-5 pm - Bathurst/Clark - 38 Jenstar Way - $453,500.00 3 bed., 2.5 bth., 5 appl., reno'd. kitch., many up-grades. Move-in cond., unfin. bsmnt. 905-731-3129 NO AGENTS.

15 HOUSES FOR RENT

Milner Gate/Mullen Dr. Newly reno'd. 3 bdrm. house w/fin. bsmnt. $1850/mo. + utils. Avail. immed. 416-885-1826.

30 CONDOMINIUMS FOR SALE

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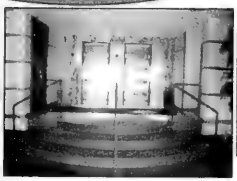

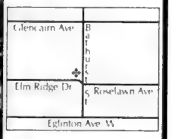

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Story has left the Schalit family hopeful

Continued from page 1

Subsequently, in January 2008, the Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature (ITHL) compiled the professional illustrations and published Schalit's work as a children's picture book.

According to Miri Golan, an editorial assistant with the institute, the book has sold briskly in Israel and has been on Israeli "best-seller lists" since its publication.

She said all profits from the sale of the story are "dedicated to help release the three Israeli kidnapped soldiers," and that the ITHL and all the other organizations involved are volunteering their work and efforts for the cause.

Golan added that the publishers of the book are donating the profits from its sale to the Keren Maor Foundation. The foundation was set up to "co-ordinate resources to assist and advance the funding of activities and efforts made by the [kidnapped soldiers'] families in Israel" and worldwide, according to the Habanim.org website.

So far, the book has been published only in Hebrew, but Golan said it will be translated into Italian this month and that the ITHL is now "negotiating with several publishers" to translate it into English.

The emergence of the story came as a complete surprise to the Schalit family, a soft-spoken Noam Schalit said.

"We didn't remember he wrote it. We didn't recognize this side of Gilad. He was always interested in science and mathematics," he said. "We were also surprised how relevant it is for his status now. We're not sure who is the shark and who is the fish, but obviously Gilad was a peace searcher."

When asked if he has received any new information from Hamas or the Israeli government about his missing son, Schalit gave a resigned sigh and said, "Up to now there is no real progress, unfortunately. Only talking and conversations. I don't feel any real relevant details regarding progress."

Schalit said he'd held out hope that the recent visit to Israel by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter might help pry loose some communication from his son's captors, but in the end it proved a fruitless endeavour.

He specified that Carter met with him in Jerusalem last month and told the Schalits that he'd "pleaded with Hamas" to allow Gilad Schalit to release a letter to his family.

Carter told him that Hamas leaders had promised the former president they would allow a letter, but so far there has been no correspondence, he said.

Turning to the question of what the Diaspora communities could do to help his son's cause and those of the other kidnapped soldiers' families, Schalit was unsure how to respond.

"I'm not sure what the Canadian Jewish community can contribute to our struggle," he said. "But if there are any contacts of Canadians with Palestinians... especially with Hamas leaders in the Gaza Strip or Hamas' leader in Damascus [Khaled Meshal], if there is any [influence], they [should] raise this issue and exert pressure on these persons."

Still, Gilad's story has left the Schalit family hopeful that the ordeal they've been through will end happily, much like *When the Shark and the Fish First Met*.

Gilad Schalit begins his tale with the line, "A small and gentle fish was swimming in the middle of a peaceful ocean" when a shark appears and chases him, as sharks are wont to do.

But the fish stops mid-flight, turns to the shark and asks, "Why do you want to devour me? We can play together!"

To which the shark replies, "Okay, fine. Let's play hide and seek!" The two sea creatures swim off playfully and eventually cement their friendship over the objections of their families through sheer force of will.

Schalit concludes his story this way: "The shark said, 'You are my enemy, but maybe we can make peace?' The little fish said, 'OK.' They played secretly for days, weeks and months, until one day the shark and fish went to the fish's mother and spoke together with her... they did the same thing with the shark's mother. And from that same day, the sharks and the fish live in peace. The End."

For more information, visit www.habanim.org.

Bahrain to name Jewish envoy

JTA

WASHINGTON — Bahrain will name a Jewish ambassador to the United States, a report said.

Huda Azar Nunu, a Jewish woman who is a lawmaker in Bahrain's upper house, will be named to the Washington position, according to a report this week in *A Sharq al-Awsat*, a Saudi-owned pan-Arab daily published in London.

"The sources denied that the appointment of Nunu as a woman and a Jew is a public relations campaign by Bahrain in the West, emphasizing that Huda Nunu has proven her qualifications, whether through her membership in the Consultative Council or through her work in human rights associations, of which she is an active participant in Bahrain," the newspaper said.

Bahrain, a Persian Gulf state sandwiched between Iran and Saudi Arabia, has a tiny Jewish population dating back to talmudic times. Nunu is descended from Iraqi Jews who migrated to the port of Manama in the late 19th century. Jews in Bahrain have kept a low profile but generally have been treated well.

The nation is considered among the more progressive in the region and was among the first to allow women to run for public office.

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Miami shul honours Israeli tennis stars

By MARVIN GLASSMAN
Special to the CJN

MIAMI — Despite all the good wishes, phone calls and handshakes that Israeli tennis players Jonathan Erlich, Shahar Peer and Andy Ram have received for their political and athletic achievements over the past year, there was one thing missing: there has been no formal presentation to honour the trio at the same time by the fans who adore them.

That changed in early April when the trio came to Miami to compete at the Sony Ericsson Open.

On the eve of the event, Erlich, Peer and Ram were all honoured at Miami's 600-member Conservative Beth David Congregation. They were also greeted by Israel's consul general in Miami, Ofer Bavly.

It has been quite a year for the three tennis stars: this past February, Peer became the first Israeli ever to play in an Arab nation, while Erlich and Ram became first Israeli tennis team to win a Grand Slam when they won the Australian Open in January.

"This is thrilling, because the ceremony is in a synagogue, and here we are all Jews – American, Israeli, South American – we all feel so together and as one," Erlich said.

"I feel so at home in Miami, because there are so many Israelis and Jewish people here to root for us. I feel good to be honoured and want to do my best for the fans," Peer said.

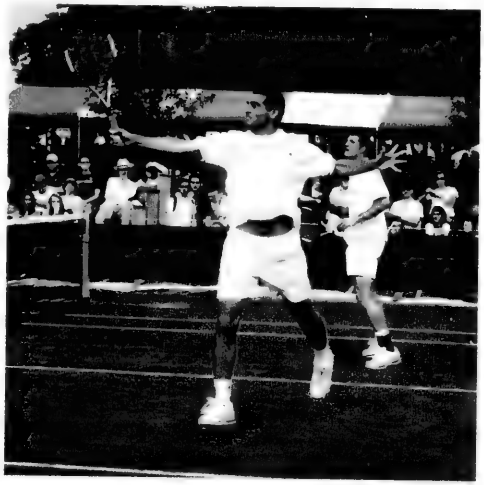
Peer competed in Doha, Qatar, last February, which was a significant milestone, as Israeli citizens normally can't enter an Arab nation. But tennis rules state that no tournament can discriminate against any player from entering a tournament if the player is highly ranked.

Peer's is currently rated 19th in the world.

"Without a doubt, this is the biggest breakthrough in tennis since Althea Gibson [the late black American tennis champion] broke the colour barrier in the 1950s. If Althea were here, she would be very proud of what Shahar did," said Angela Buxton, Gibson's doubles partner. Buxton, the first and only Jewish woman to be a Wimbledon finalist, won the Wimbledon doubles championship with Gibson in 1956.

"I was thinking about playing in Qatar for a few years, but could not go there up until now, because I was a corporal in the Israeli armed forces. My dad really wanted me to go, as did my agent, and I felt welcome in Qatar. I had a bodyguard with me always, but felt relaxed and went out to eat with the tournament director there," Peer said.

By winning the Australian Open and the Indian Wells doubles titles since the beginning of the 2008 season, Erlich and Ram have made Israel the number one doubles team in the world, at least for now.



File photo of Andy Ram, left, and Jonathan Erlich at Wimbledon [David Granovsky photo]

Other Israelis have won recognition and pride for excellence in basketball and soccer in Israel, but tennis gives Israel a global presence and glamour that no other Israeli athlete has attained. The ATP and WTA tennis tours give the three tennis pros the opportunity to be seen in large Jewish communities around the world, particularly in Canada and the United States.

"The reason to celebrate is to honour our athletes for their achievements and show the world that there is more to Israel than the conflicts and violence that we see in the news. Shahar has opened the door for more Israelis to come to Arab nations, and Andy and Jonathan's excellence in tennis means so much to everyone," Bavly said.

The trio were also honoured for leading Israel's Davis Cup and Fed Cup teams to the elite World Group this year. By contrast, Canada has never achieved this feat and lost to Israel in Fed Cup play last year.

In appreciation for being honoured, the three athletes donated tennis items to be used to raise funds for the synagogue. Erlich and Ram also set up the Jewish Sports Foundation to fund outstanding Jewish athletes and students to further their goals in sport.

"A lot of people think Jews are all rich, all doctors and lawyers, but that is not true, and it is also not true that Jews can't do well in sports," Ram said.

"For years, Americans have raised money for the Israel Tennis Centers, and now Jonathan and I created the foundation for the benefit of American kids to persue their dreams as well."

At the Sony Ericsson Open, Peer, Erlich and Ram drew many fans and Israeli flags to their matches.

Although Peer lived up to her billing as a top player, finishing as a semi-finalist in doubles and in the top 16 in singles, Erlich and Ram lost in the opening match of the doubles tournament.

Erlich and Ram are expected to compete at the Rogers Cup men's tournament in Toronto from July 19 to 27, and Peer is scheduled to play in the Rogers Cup women's tournament in Montreal from July 26 to Aug. 3.

For details, visit www.rogerscup.com or www.tenniscanada.com.

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Inside Back

Close some other school

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

She'arim is closing. That, it seems, is just the way it is – no amount of complaints, no gathering of signatures, no last-second financial infusions will save Toronto's school for Jewish children with learning disabilities from shutting its doors at the end of this academic year. It's a tragedy for those students who would have benefited from the kind of special education that only She'arim offered in Toronto. And it's an embarrassment for Toronto's Jewish community.

Over the last few weeks, I have heard both sides of the She'arim shutdown story: A former employee of the school and an administrator at a Jewish high school in Toronto both claimed that "politics" was behind UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's decision to close She'arim (although neither gave me a particularly convincing explanation as to what those "politics" were). And I've heard, or more correctly, read, federation's point of view – specifically, in this paper.

"Despite significant community financial, educational and moral support, the board of She'arim faced mounting debts and continual dramatically dropping enrolment, and it approached federation for assistance in the fall of last year," wrote federation chair David Koschitzky in the April 10 issue of *The CJN*.

He went on to explain that after a joint federation-She'arim management committee was established to consider the school's future, "the clear recommendation [was] that She'arim, as it currently exists, even with continued federation financial grants, could not function financially."

"Now it's time to move forward," Koschitzky continued. "Federation's primary priority always was and always will be to help provide a sensitive, quality education for the student population served by She'arim, regardless of the higher costs involved, precisely because we consider them so important to our community."

I'll set aside the politics argument – not because I don't imagine that it might be true, but because I simply don't have any insider information – which leaves us with the federation's financial argument for closing She'arim. I don't doubt that She'arim is a financial burden on its primary funder – a school that caters to such a small demographic and that, by its very nature, must provide more comprehensive educational services than the average day or high school could never be anything but that.

And yet I question how valid the economic argument is: most, if not all, Jewish schools, we are told over and over again, bleed money every year. And if that's the case, I have to wonder, what's the harm in having one more fiscally unjustifiable school in Toronto?

Besides, if money is the issue here, I have a solution: Toronto Jews should get together and collectively decide to close one other federation-funded school, just to keep She'arim afloat. There are so many Jewish schools in this city now that finding one to close – one whose values are closely enough mimicked at another school so as to not cause too much of a problem for picky parents – shouldn't be that hard.

I personally know two former She'arim students who have gone on to complete high school and university and are currently in the middle of graduate studies – one is completing a master's degree, the other is in the middle of a PhD in clinical and forensic psychology at a U.S. school. The latter wrote to me a few weeks back, saying simply that "She'arim taught me how to learn."

That is, of course, what *all* schools are supposed to do – not only offer knowledge, but also help students to learn how to teach themselves.

Toronto Jews long ago came to the recognition that some children need a specialized, time- and money-consuming environment in which to learn. How pathetic that we are now willing to drop this noble cause.

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- 1/2 c honey
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- 1 c apple cider
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BBQ Sauce

- 3/4 c ketchup
- 1/4 c apple cider vinegar
- 2 tbls Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 c packed brown sugar
- seasoned salt to taste
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder

Preheat oven to 300°. Season brisket with seasoned salt; place in roasting pan. Pour over apple cider; cover tightly with aluminum foil. Roast for 3 hrs.

Prepare grill for low heat. In a small bowl, stir together honey, soy sauce and more seasoned salt. When roast comes out of the oven, place it on the preheated grill for 30 min. turning frequently and basting with honey sauce. When brisket comes off the grill, let it rest for 10 min.

In a saucepan over low heat, make barbeque sauce - combine ketchup, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, cider vinegar, seasoned salt, and garlic powder. Cook over low heat for 15 min. without allowing sauce to boil.

Slice brisket and serve with barbeque sauce.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

EITZ CHAIM TALMUD TORAH was planning its move from D'arcy Street to Viewmount Avenue at Bathurst Street about 1943, when a group of core supporters posed for this photograph. They are, from left, J. Goldwasser, Rabbi Jacob Wohlgelernter (principal), Sam Wortsman, Itshe Mayer Korolnek, Harry Korolnek, Rabbi Dr. David Ochs, A. Tanenbaum, unknown person, K. Goldwasser, Mrs. Sarah Salsberg and Dr. J. Kuhl. Eitz Chaim was founded in 1918, and a 90th anniversary commemoration is being planned for June.

The sixth pillar

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

I watch our community and I see changes.

For decades, it has stood upon four pillars – Torah, Holocaust, Israel and fighting anti-Semitism – which have determined and shaped our decision making and programming. While the four are still the backbone of our lives, tikkun olam was added a while back as a fifth. A sixth pillar is slowly being added to our community agenda – the environment.

While Orthodox shuls are the slowest to adjust environmentally, Conservative, Reform and Reconstructionist synagogues/temples are going green at a respectable pace.

Torat Ha Teva is an organization promoting ecological awareness and is chaired by community activist Shai Spetgang. The organization notes, on its website, www.torathateva.org, that it has created an "inclusive and responsible" kosher food program in partnership with the First Narayever and Beth Radom congregations.

The food program includes seasonal fruit, vegetables, kosher organic meat, fish and fowl. It is a "shared option" co-op program, a way that people can buy in bulk together and save money.

The Danforth Jewish Circle, a non-denominational liberal congregation that holds its services at the Eastminster United Church, has taken the environmental challenge to the next level. Although the Danforth Jewish Circle and the church have had little interaction in the past, they are now coming together for the first-ever Danforth/Riverdale Multi-Faith Earth Day on May 4.

The event itself will be eclectic in nature, with the participation of a variety of shuls and churches. Some pretty funky stuff – artistic interpretations based on environmental and climate-change concerns – will take place. They include choir singing, dancing, storytelling, poetry readings, theatrical demonstrations and a performance by a youth group.

According to Danforth Jewish Circle member and event planner Sheila Goldgrub, the idea behind the Danforth/Riverdale Multi-Faith Earth Day event is to encourage places of worship to highlight the many concerns, challenges and creative solutions available in reference to the environment. "Our vision is to bring together the faith communities of the Danforth to explore our common humanity and role in caring for the Earth," she says.

It's interesting how the idea was born. Members of the Danforth Jewish Circle were asked, "What things keep you up at night?" The response, different from "the five pillars," was diversity, youth, aging and the environment.

In response to this call, Goldgrub and a group of congregants developed the "Green *Bayit*" ("house" in Hebrew) campaign, which has included selling and giving away energy-efficient light bulbs and sharing conservation tips in the shul's newsletter, as well as researching alternatives to Styrofoam cups.

The genesis of the Danforth/Riverdale Multi-Faith Earth Day came from the Green *Bayit* group. Group members felt the two houses of worship – Danforth Jewish Circle and Eastminster United Church – could bring their congregants together, give their membership a sense of empowerment about fixing the environment and ultimately work toward saving the environment through the arts and through their respective history and traditions.

The members of both congregations "have high hopes for this small, fragile world of ours and encourage the hopeful to join up and give Mother Earth a collective kiss," says event literature. "Protecting human health and the diversity of life is a Jewish value emphasized in the Torah, Talmud and Jewish teachings."

I led High Holy Day services at the Danforth Jewish Circle and am proud of the membership's work and character.

I encourage you to attend this event at the Eastminster United Church, 310 Danforth Ave. at Jackman Avenue, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. All are welcome.

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This Week

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National

Israel advocacy group blocked from Durban II.
Page 6

Inventions make it easier to live a more observant lifestyle. *Page 17*

Yom Hashoah

Righteous family honoured at Toronto event.
Page 26

Arts & Travel

Fugitive Pieces' new 'upbeat' ending is disquieting.
Page 47

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 18
On Campus 20
Yom Hashoah 21
Heeebonics 25
Family Moments 27
What's New 28
Obituaries and Notices 30
According to Reports 34
Yiddish Corner 34
Health & Lifestyles 36
Israel & the Jewish World 39
Books & Authors 44
Arts & Travel 45
Sports 54

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Photo: S. Schlesinger, photo courtesy of Shimona Waldston

Standing in the fore of Jewish history

Judging by his appearance in the accompanying archival photo, it does not seem that David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, had much occasion or experience wearing, let alone fashioning, a formal dress tie. However, nor did it appear that the sure-sighted, steely-eyed visionary much cared, either.

His heart, his soul and all his strength had been focused for many years on far weightier matters: securing and building a national homeland for the Jewish people.

Standing beside the prime minister is Chaim Weizmann, the legendary first president of the Jewish state. Beside Weizmann, who was nearly blind at this stage in his life, is the country's first chief of staff, Yigael Yadin, a man who would ultimately become known as much for his eye-opening archeology as for his courage and bravery in battle.

The three men are standing in the fore on the dais for a military review in Jerusalem. Indeed, they are standing in the fore of Jewish history itself, celebrating Israel's second year of free, independent existence as a sovereign Jewish state.

The date was the fifth day of Iyar, 1950. O what a great and glorious day it was! This week on the fifth day of Iyar, we celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary. O what a great and glorious day it is.

Some 18 months prior to that military review in Jerusalem, fighting had stopped in what historians called Israel's War of Independence. The nascent Jewish state had withstood the onslaught of the five armies of the neighbouring Arab states along with, of course, the local irregular Arab forces who fought under the command of various absentee warlords, landowners and tribal chiefs.

Some 600,000 people – among whom were many tortured, starved and abused souls who had not long ago landed on Israel's shores from the death camps of Europe – stood against the military strength of the 45 million people of those five Arab states.

Continued on page 8

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Israel's ties with Europe becoming warmer — see page 40

The News in Brief

Canada

NDP Motion Praised

WINNIPEG — B'nai Brith last week praised Manitoba's NDP government for marking the week of Yom Hashoah by backing a resolution in the legislature that condemns "without reservation" any Holocaust denial. "We look to other provinces to follow Manitoba's example and to engage constructively in educational programs that teach about the Holocaust and the importance of combating racism," said B'nai Brith spokesperson Frank Diamant. The motion passed unanimously.

World

Cemetery Vandalized

BERLIN — Vandals attacked Europe's largest Jewish cemetery twice last week, Berlin police said. Some 20 gravestones and 10 stones from a nearby wall were found overturned April 30 in Berlin's Weissensee Cemetery in what police called a politically motivated crime. Graves in another section of the cemetery were found ravaged the previous day. The graveyard in the former East Berlin was dedicated in 1880 and is still in use. A national historical monument, the 115,000-grave site has been subject to vandalism in recent years.

Student Charged

GRAND FORKS, N.D. — A student was charged in an incident that helped drive a Jewish freshman from his dorm. Spencer Garness, who allegedly wrote "Scott is a Jew" in a residence elevator at the University of North Dakota, was charged April 29 with disorderly conduct, which could lead to 30 days in jail and a $1,000 fine. Freshman Scott Lebovitz said it was one of a series of anti-Semitic acts that led him to leave his dorm this month. Students had taunted him for months, and in February, a swastika was found on a wall by his room.

'Al Nakba' Recalled

NEW YORK — Arab student groups at Columbia University last week marked the 60th anniversary of Israel's founding, which Arabs call "the catastrophe." Events included hanging 2,000 posters, each marked with the name of a destroyed Palestinian village, and a faculty discussion with anthropology professor Nadia Abu El-Haj and Prof. Joseph Massad, whom Jewish students have accused of harassment.

Rabbis Urge Boycott

NEW YORK — Leading Jewish rabbis and lay leaders are urging Jewish tourists not to attend the Beijing Olympics. More than 175 people, including the heads of Reform and Conservative Judaism, signed the April 30 appeal. It was initiated by two New York Orthodox rabbis, Haskell Lookstein and Irving Greenberg, after they learned China set up a kosher kitchen for Jewish tourists. "We are deeply troubled by China's support for the genocidal government of Sudan, its mistreatment of the people of Tibet, its denial of basic rights to its own citizens, and its provision of missiles to Iran and Syria, and friendship for Hamas," the statement said.

Clinton Irks Iran

NEW YORK — Iran lodged a complaint at the United Nations over Democratic presidential hopeful Hillary Clinton's threat to destroy Iran if it attacked Israel with nuclear weapons. Iran's deputy ambassador to the UN blasted Clinton in a letter to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, saying she made a "provocative, unwarranted and irresponsible statement."

Yad Vashem Photo Archive Goes Online

JERUSALEM — Marking Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day on May 1, Yad Vashem last week uploaded its photo archives to www.yadvashem.org.

Some 130,000 images were uploaded from the collection, the largest of its kind in the world. They include photos from ghettos and deportations, as well as images of slave labour, the camps, liberation and more. Many are being made public for the first time.

Users can search the database by topic, name or location. Photos are linked to information on their content, and when users click on an image, a map opens that shows the location of places cited in the photo's caption. Other links enable expanded searches.

"We are hoping that it will increase public awareness of the archives' tremendous importance, and encourage people who have similar photographs and documents to confer them to Yad Vashem for safekeeping," said Avner Shalev, chairman of Yad Vashem.

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'Our joy is always connected to tears'

Consul general reflects on Yom Hazikaron, Yom Ha'atzmaut

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Sitting in his Toronto office last week, Amir Gissin, Israel's consul general to Toronto and Western Canada, was asked to reflect on both his mood and the mood of Israelis as the state approaches its 60th birthday.

What emerged from a 45-minute interview with Gissin – freshly returned from a hectic family Passover in Israel – were the thoughts of a man deeply cognizant of his responsibility as an envoy, a Jew, and an Israeli citizen.

Gissin said Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut are particularly significant to his family, as they are to most Israelis.

His family has lost six members who died defending the state over the years, including a cousin who died last year while serving during his reserve duty in a Gaza military operation, he said.

"It's part of life in Israel," Gissin said, heaviness imparted in his words. "Whoever you are, you know people who were killed as soldiers or civilians in terrorist attacks. Living in Israel, on Yom Hazikaron, that's the time you feel connected to your personal sorrow… and to Israelis in general."

He said it's difficult for Diaspora Jews who have never experienced the holiday in Israel to understand the emotion and respect that emanate from citizens when sirens blow across the country on that day, signalling a moment of silence in honour of the dead.

Amir Gissin

But despite the burdensome air that permeates Yom Hazikaron in the country, Gissin said the decision to place the day immediately prior to the celebratory Yom Ha'atzmaut is one he wouldn't change.

"It's almost impossible to move from great sorrow to great joy," he noted, adding that the swift transition from Yom Hazikaron to Yom Ha'atzmaut "reflects the fact that [Israel's] existence is based on the price others paid and reflects a very fundamental truth about Israel: that our joy is always connected to tears. It's a true reflection of the Israeli psyche."

For Gissin, it's not the same celebrating these holidays in Canada as it is in Israel, because here "the world and society goes on its regular way," he said.

"It demonstrates a cultural difference between Israelis and Canadians, which is very interesting. The sense of paying a price to defend a country is not as strong here."

Still, Gissin said he has "a lot of empathy" for Canadian Jewry because they're in a unique situation.

"They live in both worlds. They are proud Canadians, but they also see Israel [as] dear to their hearts and are saddened as well with our losses," he said. "It gives me great comfort to know that I am among a community which… is able to share the sorrow and strong sense of commitment that we as Israelis have towards our country."

Continued on page 16

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Amit Bar'el had been a systems administrator when he was called to the reserves to join his comrades during the Second Lebanon War. Amit was struck by an anti-tank missile, was severely wounded in the head and lost his eyesight. His greatest regret is that he will no longer be able to see his two daughters.

Guy Prais was on a routine patrol mission in the West Bank in 2002 when terrorists attacked and exploded the vehicle in which he was traveling. He lost his legs in the ambush at 21 years of age. Today, Guy is walking, sailing, swimming and skiing — a true inspiration to us all.

Anna Krakovich was at the Afula central bus station when a terrorist blew himself up, killing many and wounding dozens. She has traveled a difficult road in her new life, struggling with 80% burns over her body. Anna's positive outlook and her young daughter inspire her to walk proudly with her head held high.

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An unforgettable moment

From the editor's desk

Certain moments in life travel to memory in the whispered softnesses of a sad sigh. They catch in the throat. They tear in the eye.

And then they remain forever near our hearts, part of the sum of our private, inner selves, a reminder both of life's bitter evanescence and of the precious infinity of every human life.

Last week in Ottawa on May 1, on the very steps of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, a small group of survivors and members of their families experienced such a moment.

They were invited by the Parliament of Canada and by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem to participate in, now the fifth, annual Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony.

Each survivor, accompanied by a Canadian parliamentarian, and in many cases as well, by one or two generations of members of their respective families, placed a wreath of remembrance upon the steps leading to the high promontory of the peace tower.

Some were hobbled more than others by age or infirmity. They walked more slowly. But all walked to the place of memorial with significant urgency and purpose in their step, especially those who were also in the tight embrace of their children and grandchildren.

Highly charged and closely felt emotions wafted in the crisp air as plainly as the white gray ribbons of constantly moving clouds.

Richard Marceau, the Bloc Québécois member of parliament who was widely credited as being the initiator of the annual parliamentary Holocaust remembrance, was among the first to address the large assembly.

In touching, respectful words that soared as high as the sound of the bells pealing every quarter hour from the Peace Tower behind him, he acknowledged with gentle, touching deference the presence of the survivors at the ceremony. Indeed all the speakers did so. They well understood that profound humility is really the only appropriate personal comportment in the company of the remaining survivor few.

Pointing to the fact of the very holding of the ceremony, Rabbi Reuben Bulka, the co-president of the Canadian Jewish Congress, suggested that "Canada has learned the lesson of the Shoah," namely that we must teach our children and our people and the peoples of the world of the horrors of all forms of racism and genocide.

Israel's ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker, conveyed a stirring, emotional statement of gratitude on behalf of the people and government of Israel.

"We are quite moved that Canada and the Parliament of Canada hold this commemoration each year."

The two survivors who addressed the audience, Joseph Gottdenker and David Azrieli, reiterated this very special message of gratitude and thanks to the Parliament, and thus, too, to the Canadian people.

"This place, Parliament Hill, is the place of freedom," Azrieli eloquently pointed out. "We give special thanks to Canada" he said.

Though the emotions and the tears ran exclusively for the men, women and children murdered in Hitler's Shoah, the linkage to present dangers was unavoidable. If "never again" is to mean anything, many speakers pointed out, it must mean "never again" today and always against every genocide and attempted genocide. And it must certainly be the rallying cry in response to the enemies of Israel who declare their genocidal intentions against the Jewish state.

Thus, Marceau also made a special effort to tie the moment of Holocaust remembrance to one of Holocaust avoidance.

Referring to the threats uttered by the government of Iran, he urged Canada, Canadians and the West to "take the right stand, to take the moral stand" to prevent the Iranians from achieving their desire to "wipe Israel off the map."

As if in response to Marceau's unambiguous challenge to the world, Israeli Baker promised, "We will not allow such a crime to reoccur."

The bells of the tower pealed at that very instant.

As the end of the program approached, with the sun falling farther in the west, the breeze grew stronger. Eighteen official ceremonial flags – 17 Canadian, one Magen David – snapped sharply in the wind.

The Netivot Hatorah Choir from Toronto and Cantor David Aptowitzer of Ottawa sang the tearfully inspiring Partisan's Song, *Zog Nit Keinmol* (*Never Say That We Have Walked Our Last Road*). The effect was chilling to the spine, yet sustaining to the soul. Defiance, hope, sadness and gratitude.

It was one of those rare moments that will never be forgotten.

* * *

Starting with this issue and for a period of several weeks, as part of our celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary, *The CJN* will profile individuals who were in Israel in 1948 at the birth of the Jewish state.

We will also publish archival photos of the history of the Jewish state as our SeeJN photos.

– ***MBD***

SeeJN

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These women soldiers march in full formation on July 27, 1948 a day that was designated *Yom Hamedinah* (The day of the State), the precursor celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut.

[Photo courtesy of Keren Hayesod]

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CIJA blocked from Durban II

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Council on Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) has withdrawn its application for accreditation to the upcoming Durban Review Conference, also known as Durban II.

Hershell Ezrin

CIJA was blocked by the discriminatory treatment of Iran and its supporters at the UN, whose goal was "to marginalize Jewish voices and memory," said Hershell Ezrin, chief executive officer of CIJA.

"The whole process had become so discriminatory to us, we felt that no matter how many times we answered their questions and responded to shorter and shorter deadlines, we were asked the same questions over and over again," he said.

Durban II is the followup to the 2001 UN World Conference Against Racism, held in Durban, South Africa, which critics said degenerated into an anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hatefest.

CIJA applied for accreditation to Durban II in 2007 and was approved by the UN Secretariat. About two months ago, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR) informed CIJA that Iran objected to its inclusion as a recognized NGO, although no reasons were given.

Under the UN's rules, details of the objection were supposed to have been communicated to CIJA for a response, but CIJA was given no concrete reasons for its exclusion before the Durban preparatory committee met on April 21, the second day of Passover.

CIJA's application was discussed that day, and the organization was given 48 hours to provide information to Iran. During a second debate on April 28, Iran demanded further documentation, and CIJA was given 24 hours to reply. In all, CIJA provided more than 100 pages of documentation to support its application.

CIJA withdrew its application when it became clear it could never convince Iran to withdraw its objections. Since the preparatory committee operates by consensus, it was inevitable that CIJA's application would be rejected, Ezrin said.

Iran was supported by Egypt, Algeria and the Palestinian delegation, while Argentina, speaking on behalf of South American nations, as well as Switzerland and Slovenia, representing the European Union, supported CIJA.

"It is unacceptable that the accreditation process be dominated by political considerations. We need to ensure that the process be fair, respectful and transparent," the Slovenian delegate stated on behalf of the EU.

In a letter to the UNHCHR announcing its withdrawal, CIJA said "the continuing and obvious actions by a group of member states led by Iran appear to us to be aimed primarily at marginalizing Jewish voices and memory. They remain at odds with the UN's high ideals."

"Despite the anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist hate that blighted and derailed the initial Durban conference [Durban I], there remained hope that, working together, people of goodwill could identify common ground in the fight against racism, discrimination and xenophobia. However, the events of recent days have put into question again the will, or ability, to fix the broken Durban process. While initially we felt it important to defend our name and reputation, it is now clear that, no matter what evidence we supply to demonstrate our bona fides, or how many times we supply it, under how many shrinking deadlines, it will make no difference in affecting the agenda of Iran or its supporters."

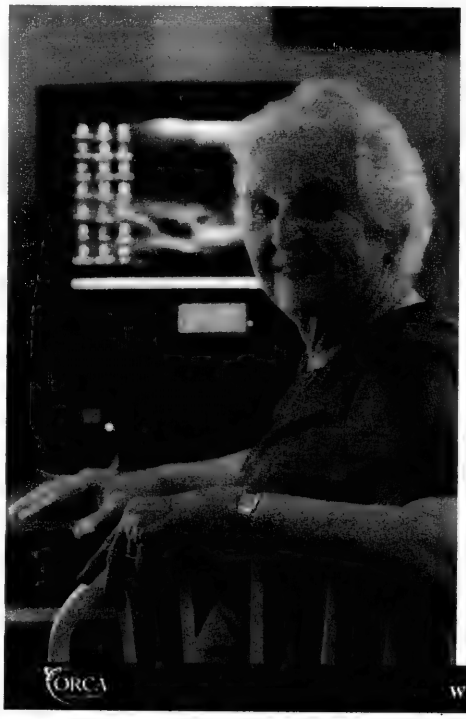
Hillel Neuer

Anne Bayefsky, senior editor of the watchdog Eye On The UN website, said CIJA's treatment "was clearly a case of double standards applied to a Jewish and pro-Israel organization."

Bayefsky, who was in Geneva monitoring the Durban II preparatory conference, said "there is no doubt they [CIJA] were treated differently from all other NGO applications, and the Iranians were given virtually carte blanche to interrupt the accreditation process."

Hillel Neuer, executive director of UN Watch, a human rights monitoring group, said, "It is ironic that a UN gathering to combat racism became a platform for Tehran's fundamentalist regime and its allies to single out and harass a mainstream NGO for no apparent reason other than the inclusion in its name of the words Jewish and Israel. All of this from a Holocaust-denying government that was just censured by the UN General Assembly for its persecution of religious and racial minorities."

Continued on page 15



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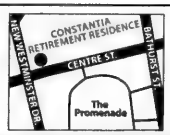

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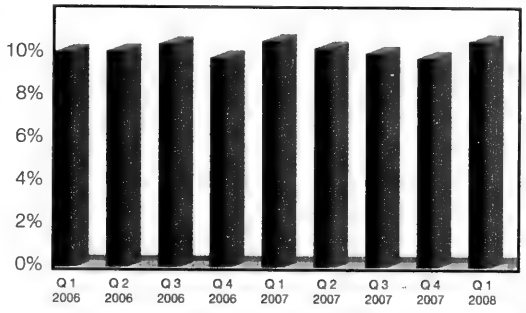

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Let us rejoice

Continued from page 1

In the words of the United Kingdom's chief rabbi, Sir Jonathan Sacks, "after almost 2,000 years of homelessness, the Jewish people had come home."

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And it is a story that deserves to be celebrated loud, clear and proud in the hearts of all humanity. For as Rabbi Sacks also tells us, "Israel's existence and achievements are living testimony to one of Judaism's greatest messages to humankind: the principled defeat of tragedy by the power of hope."

Yet many are the people today with malice in their hearts toward the Jewish state who distort the story, revise it, who try to sever the present and ancient tie between the Jewish people and the land of Israel.

Editors, commentators and reporters of print and television slyly suggest that the Jewish state will not survive into the future. Teachers and academics organize boycotts of their Israeli counterparts. Union leaders line up their membership behind Israel's enemies to join in the calumny against the Jewish state. Even anthropologists cast doubt on the work of Israeli archeologists, accusing them of subordinating science to nationalism. But no amount of distortion and falsification can win out against the truth that is the irreducible centre of a faith, and indeed of a civilization.

As Rabbi Sacks says: "Judaism was born in the hope of a land. Israel is the Jewish land of hope."

There are 82 Christian nations on earth and 56 Muslim ones. Israel occupies less than one-quarter of one per cent of the entire land mass of the Arab world. The Jews are begrudged even this tiny sliver of land, even though time and again, they have shown – as they do even today – the willingness to share it with the Palestinians and even though time and again, they have fought for it and died for it and won the right to call it home.

The Jews in Israel are not colonialists, usurpers or occupiers. They are home in the land of their forebears, in the land that is at the centre of the Jewish faith and the Jewish soul.

As Ben-Gurion, Weizmann and Yadin did on Israel's second anniversary, we too, metaphorically at least, must all stand this week on the dais of celebration. We must sing, dance, laugh, tell stories, recite poetry. We must raise a glass in unabashed happiness. We must remember the generations who could only dream of a sovereign Jewish state. We must hug our children and tell them with unequalled delight and everlasting love that we are privileged to live in a day and an age alongside the Jewish State of Israel.

The 60th anniversary of Israel's independence "is a day that God has made. Let us be glad and rejoice in it."

Am Yisrael Chai.
Od loh avdah tikvateinu.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Rabbi Gilbert Klaperman, president of the Rabbinical Council of America, announced the establishment of a commission to study the "feasibility, desirability and halachic implications" of maintaining a relationship with the Reform movement. The move came after Reform's Central Conference of American Rabbis accepted patrilineal descent as a method for defining who is a Jew.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
NO BRAINER
THE PALESTINIANS ARE EXPANDING ATTACKS ON ISRAEL, FABRICATING ATROCITIES, FAKING A HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN GAZA, TUNNELING INTO EGYPT, ACTING AS AN IRANIAN SURROGATE,
AND CONDI WANTS TO KNOW WHY DONOR COUNTRIES ARE "NOT FULFILLING" THEIR PLEDGES OF SUPPORT FOR THE PALESTINIANS?!
WOULD ANYONE LIKE TO EXPLAIN IT TO HER?
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Editorial Advisory Board: **Michael Brown, Sandra Brown, Donald Carr, Zac Kaye, Igor Korenzvit, Keith Landy, Lou Ronson, Jacques Sayegh, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Reuven Tradburks**

From the Prime Minister

It is with great pleasure that I extend my warmest greetings to the Jewish community in Canada as you celebrate the 60th anniversary of the State of Israel.

Since its formation in 1948, Israel has grown in strength and stature. "The Miracle in the Desert" transformed an arid Mediterranean plain into an abundant and productive landscape. The Jewish people built a nation of freedom and peace with perseverance and enduring faith. Israel's very existence is a testament to the spirit of its people and the power of hope.

As fellow Canadians, we can all take pride in the pivotal role Canada played in crafting the United Nations resolution that led to this defining moment in history. Through six decades of triumph and tragedy, Canada has been a stalwart friend to Israel, and we will continue to stand together to realize the goal of freedom, democracy, human rights and rule of law for all people in the region.

On behalf of the government of Canada, please accept my best wishes for a memorable and enjoyable celebration.

Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada

Withdraw financial support to universities

At the University of Toronto, at York University, at McMaster University and at the University of Western Ontario, there has been a flagrant exercise of anti-Semitic propaganda in the guise of free speech rights ("Students, faculty mobilize on campus," *CJN*, April 17). Specifically, it takes the form of "Israeli Apartheid Week" or "Students against Israeli Apartheid." The use of the "apartheid" term is patently false. It is contrived and knowingly intended to delegitimize the Jewish state. I would remind all that it was the votes of five Arab members of the Knesset that gave former Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin the necessary 61 votes to pass those Oslo accords that rescued former Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, who was in disgrace over his support of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait.

We must act now, in order to make the universities pay attention to our concerns, or more accurately, our revulsion. Here's what I intend to do.

• U of T is in its annual charity campaign. I am telling the caller that I will not donate any amount.
• I make it clear that the reason I reject their request for donation is because I cannot support an institution that permits the blatant practise of anti-Semitism, which undoubtedly is what the "apartheid" campaign signifies.
• I will donate the money that would have gone to U of T to an Israeli charity.
• When I am approached by any of the other universities for money, I will repeat this practice.
• I intend to use the Internet to spread this message, and I invite others to do the same.

If enough small donors act in this way, it is bound to have an impact. I invite all donors, big and small, to protest this unconscionable proliferation of anti-Semitism on university campuses by withdrawing their financial support from these institutions.

Sally Zerker
Toronto

* * *

Germany's motives for friendship

Deservedly, in my opinion, Yoni Goldstein's cynical view of Germany's motives for its expressions of friendship and support of Israel appears on the penultimate page of your April 3 Toronto issue ("Israel's 'special' friend"). At a time when there is no shortage of international animosity toward the country, do we really need to slap our friends in the face? As an 83-year-old former German Jew who had the fortune to escape from Germany in 1937 but who lost a number of family members and friends in the Shoah, I think it is time to accept that the majority of Germans and their government sincerely believe in the justice of Israel's existence (as well as in that of a Palestinian state) and and have the guts to voice their support. Yes, there are anti-Semites in Germany, as elsewhere, but I also know of a number of continuing efforts by individual Germans to ensure that the crimes of 1933 to 1945 perpetrated by the forebears are not forgotten. They do not do this in order to "bolster Germany's place in the world."

Eugene Strauss
Toronto

* * *

B'nai Brith expulsion

I recently learned of Lou Ronson's expulsion from B'nai Brith Canada ("B'nai Brith expels members for 'conduct unbecoming,'" *CJN*, March 6). When an organization expels one of its oldest and most distinguished members, what remains of the organization? It was ironic that he was prohibited from entering the B'nai Brith building when he would have been an honoured guest at other Jewish and social justice institutions. Someone should have had the courage to sign Ronson's expulsion letter, but then again, who would want to tarnish their name by signing such a document – certainly no one at B'nai Brith Canada headquarters.

Rafi Aaron
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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'Their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil'

Since its creation 60 years ago, more than three million people have immigrated to Israel from virtually every part of the globe. This massive movement of humanity to the Jewish state is a fulfilment of the eternal yearning of the Jewish people, as embodied in our age-old prayers, to be "gathered together from the four corners of the earth."

That millennial aspiration was enshrined into Israel's Declaration of Independence.

"Survivors of the Nazi holocaust in Europe, as well as Jews from other parts of the world, continued to migrate to Eretz-Israel, undaunted by difficulties, restrictions and dangers, and never ceased to assert their right to a life of dignity, freedom and honest toil in their national homeland…

"THE STATE OF ISRAEL will be open for Jewish immigration and for the Ingathering of the Exiles; it will foster the development of the country for the benefit of all its inhabitants; it will be based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex; it will guarantee freedom of religion, conscience, language, education and culture; it will safeguard the Holy Places of all religions; and it will be faithful to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

These photos are merely a partial portraiture of the various places from which Jews have sought their sanctuary and their new homes in Israel. Clockwise from top left are immigrants from Yemen, Europe after World War II, Morocco, Ethiopia, the former Soviet Union, North America, Iran, France, Russia and Algeria.

[Photos courtesy of Keren Hayesod]

Opinions

They weren't animals

A mother getting on a train to Treblinka leaves her baby on the ground, hoping a stranger will save her. Franciszek Zabeki writes what happened next:

"In no time, an SS man ran up… seized the child by its feet, and smashed its head against a wheel of the wagon. This took place in full view of the mother, who was howling with pain."

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

How do you describe someone who takes joy in splitting open a baby's head? It would seem natural to call the Nazis "animals." But it would also be wrong.

Animals are instinctive beings that can't be held responsible for their actions. The brutal murderers of the death camps, while inhumane, were still human beings. Unlike animals, the Nazis had free will.

Free will is an intimidating idea. Maimonides sharply opposed astrology (a respectable discipline at the time), because the belief in a future that's already decided negates free will. But astrology is popular precisely because it's much easier to see our destinies as controlled by the stars than to accept responsibility for our own actions.

In the 12th century, astrology could explain our failures. And as science has progressed, excuses have become more sophisticated. Criminals have claimed diminished capacity due to the psychotropic effects of eating Twinkies or MSG. Soon, DNA tests and CAT scans will exonerate criminals from responsibility. A clever defence attorney might craft similar arguments to prove the Nazis were animals and had no free will.

But the Nazis were normal human beings, and we have the pictures to prove it. A photo album compiled by SS officer Karl Hocker shows the leisure activities of the SS at Auschwitz. They kick back at a country resort, socializing and holding sing-alongs. In a moment of holiday spirituality, they painstakingly decorate a Christmas tree.

What struck me about these photos was their utter banality. Here are people enjoying life, eating blueberries and drinking schnapps.

Viewing pictures of Hocker playing with his dog, I felt a twinge of empathy for him. He didn't very seem different from me at all. Of course, had a time machine dropped me into that same photograph, Hocker wouldn't have hesitated to shoot me dead. This regular, dog-loving guy was a genocidal murderer.

Yes, the Nazis were regular guys who cried at funerals and laughed at jokes. However, they made horrific choices. These average Joes chose to be genocidal murderers.

The idea that all of us are only one bad choice away from being as evil as the Nazis is a sobering thought. But the burden of personal responsibility means we must be ever vigilant in our pursuit of virtue and remember that we can't blame our mistakes on the stars, or on Twinkies.

We must focus on people, not buildings

In mid-April, just before Jews celebrated our great moment of national liberation by doing what we do best – learning, reading, arguing, praying, singing and eating – the Montreal Jewish community launched a great effort at communal liberation.

Federation CJA is spearheading "Gen J," an ambitious campaign to invest heavily in education and identity-building. Without such a massive recommitment to creating exciting, meaningful Jewish experiences, we can't guarantee that our children and grandchildren will have the same kinds of seders that our parents and grandparents enjoyed.

Gil Troy in Montreal

North American Jews risk being cursed by our blessings. In two of the freest, richest and most welcoming countries on earth, the United States and Canada, Jews have thrived individually and communally. We have redefined life on this continent with our remarkable successes, meshing some of our core values with essential democratic and capitalist values.

But the embrace can be smothering. The more we mix, and the more American and Canadian we become, the harder it is to retain a distinct, rich Jewish identity.

Rather than surrendering and watching the community wither, we must try harder. We should be Jewishly ambitious, as thirsty for success in our Jewish lives as we are in our careers. We should demand as much excellence from our Jewish institutions as we – and others – expect in our professions and cultural institutions. And we must maintain the creative tension, seeking newer and hipper and savvier approaches that enhance traditional ideas and preserve eternal values, rather than undermining or demeaning them.

The initiative began with some parents (full disclosure: including my wife and me) who were disturbed that every year, approximately 100 Jewish students are choosing not to enter Jewish high schools after graduating from Montreal's Jewish elementary schools, with many parents choosing to double their tuition bills at non-Jewish private schools.

While appreciating our community's strengths, we were dismayed by the constant complaints about many of our educational, cultural and spiritual institutions. We didn't understand why successful programs such as Birthright Israel and March of the Living didn't always have successful follow-up programs. And many of us were frankly bored by some of the mediocre Jewish experiences that were being imposed on us again and again.

We began meeting informally at kitchen tables. We tapped into a conversation among other lay people and professionals that had stopped and started over the last decade. And we found visionary CJA leaders who were ready to push the idea of a communal revolution even further than we had ever imagined.

This ambitious, community-wide approach will need to raise at least $100 million over the next decade. To succeed, it will have to tap into the power and shift the priorities of existing institutions such as the Jewish Community Foundation, as well as mobilize traditional leadership families and uncover a new generation of path-breaking movers, shakers and givers.

Rather than mimicking many Jewish communities with their "edifice complexes" – investing so much money building buildings, then scrambling to fill them – most of this money will be invested in programs and tuition subsidies – into sharpening minds, elevating souls, and stretching us as Jews and as human beings.

The initiative identifies five gateways leading to better Jewish living: formal Jewish education; camps and youth programming; family and adult programming; Israel experiences; and arts and culture. The idea is to focus less on hardware and more on updating communal software, trying to reach Jews at all stages of the life-cycle, but especially Jewish youth.

To be frank, for this to work, the tectonic plates must shift even further. In addition to investing money and generating creative ideas, we must train a new generation of lay leaders, administrators, teachers and informal educators who are nimble, passionate, visionary and cutting-edge.

We will have to treat our educators – and those who are educationally minded – with greater respect, as people with the whole world – our future – in their hands.

In a great example of the role-modelling and personal leadership we need to see, Federation CJA's talented executive vice-president, Danyael Cantor, will become the executive director of Montreal's Bronfman Jewish Education Centre. In taking on this new task, Cantor will be one of the architects responsible for designing a future education and identity-building system that, with everyone's generosity and creativity, will once again be the gold standard for meaningful North American Jewish living.

Special wishes on a special birthday

At a restaurant serving Israeli fare in the northern reaches of the Greater Toronto Area, customers' birthdays are celebrated by dimming the lights and, as a dessert with a candle is brought forward, playing a recording of the Israeli birthday song *Hayom yom huledet (Today is the Birthday)*.

The song, familiar to anyone who has attended a birthday party in an Israeli gan or school, is intended to be personalized for each celebrant. It begins like this: *"Hayom yom huledet, hayom yom huledet, hayom yom huledet le-* _____" (and here one inserts the name of the birthday boy or girl).

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

The recording at the restaurant, of course, can't be varied to incorporate the name of the birthday celebrant. It's fixed on one name – in this case, Itamar. So whenever someone marks a birthday there, no matter what the child's name is – and on some days, there are several birthday children (or children at heart) – the lights go down and patrons are treated to a rousing *"Hayom yom huledet le'Itamar."* After a few renditions, you're not likely to forget the song.

As Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day, approaches, the tune spins maddeningly and inappropriately in my head. Maddeningly, because it's not, after all Mozart, and inappropriately, because Israel, at 60, is no longer a child among the nations.

The task of designing appropriate ways to mark this special year has fallen to those more experienced, qualified and talented than me. Still, it seems to me that each of us who feel specially connected to the country, the place, the dream and the reality of the modern State of Israel need to also find small, personal ways to mark this significant anniversary.

Recently, I was privileged to celebrate my mother-in-law's milestone birthday with her. The delicacy of convention prevents me from citing a specific year number. In honour of the occasion, the Governor General of Canada congratulated her on her "rich life, filled with accomplishments, personal encounters, happiness and challenges."

Taking a page from the Governor General's birthday wishes, I began to think of personal and private ways to mark the 60th birthday of Israel, a country whose childhood enthusiasms have given way to the richness of adult accomplishments, celebrations and challenges.

Our tradition tells us, "*Ben shishim la-ziknah*" – at 60, one enters old age. Of course, *ziknah* – old age – implies something more than chronological status. It's a stage when one commands respect – for experience, wisdom and judgment.

But Israel's 60 is not the 60 of *ziknah*. I don't mean that 60 is the new 50 or 40, or whatever. I mean that country years are not people years. At seven, my Portuguese water dog has entered midlife (although she is as spirited as a puppy). At 60, Israel is still at the peak of its strength (although it has flashes of the enthusiasm of childhood and intimations of the wisdom of *ziknah*).

At 60, Israel's creative energies are flowing, with a plethora of creative writers, poets, filmmakers and artists, and a booming Silicon Wadi that leads the world's high-tech industry. As a spiritual wellspring for different branches of, and approaches to, Judaism, at 60, Israel has been a fertile home for religious development, experiment and fulfilment. At 60, Israel has facilitated the evolution of secular and national forms of Jewishness. And, at 60, Israel has touched profoundly those who open themselves up to its embrace.

At 60, Israel faces difficult challenges – some common to most industrialized countries with diverse populations, and some particular to Israel's special history and geography. We who celebrate this significant milestone birthday must also give serious thoughts to those challenges.

But just as birthday parties for friends and loved ones are not the time to trot out problems to be tackled and issues to be resolved, so, too, Israel is entitled, on its birthday, to revel in our recognition of what it has attained.

In wishing my mother-in-law the fulfilment of her most dearly held dreams, the Governor General concluded her birthday letter with the hope that "all your friends and loved ones revel in your happiness."

In the same spirit, on Israel's 60th, I offer one wish, one dream: Shalom. Peace.

Nowhere are such dreams as pure as in childhood. So why not, then, sing that children's birthday song?

Chag lah samayach/ Vezer lah pore'ach/ Hayom yom huledet/ Le Yisrael.

(Happy celebration to her/ may a wreath of flowers blossom for her/ Today is Israel's birthday.)

The Kirshner File

Israel at 60: rooted in hope, steeled in adversity

Naftali Hertz Imber (1856-1909), a Galician poet who penned the lyrics of what would be Israel's national anthem, *Hatikvah*, wrote the following lines in the late 19th century, when Palestine was an Ottoman backwater inhabited by some 450,000 Arabs and 25,000 Jews: If you long to inherit the land of your birth/ Buckle up the sword and take up the bow.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

It was a call to arms, a clear-eyed recognition that the return of Jews to their ancestral land – which they ruled, on and off, for 13 centuries amid conquests by the Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Crusaders and Arabs – would not be accomplished through fancy flights of rhetoric, much less peaceful accommodation with their suspicious Muslim and Christian neighbours.

Israel, which this week marks its 60th anniversary of statehood, has lived by the sword from the outset, ever since five Arab armies invaded after David Ben-Gurion, the first prime minister, declared independence on May 14, 1948, a day before the British mandate expired.

Israel, which emerged only three years after the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp and the cold-blooded murder of six million European Jews in the Holocaust, fought back ferociously, fending off a concerted attempt by Egypt, Syria, Transjordan, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to throttle it at birth.

But Israel's victory in the War of Independence, expected by few foreign strategists, came at a heavy price. More than 6,000 combatants and civilians, or almost one per cent of Israel's population, were killed. And all but 160,000 Arabs were uprooted from their homes in 400 villages and towns, creating a festering Palestinian refugee problem.

Since then, Israel – the fulfillment of messianic yearnings and Zionist spadework spearheaded by, among others, Theodor Herzl – has been at war. Even after armistice agreements were signed with all but one of the Arab states that tried to destroy it, Israel was again fending off attacks from Syria and Palestinian *fedayeen*.

And so it has gone ever since, notwithstanding peace treaties with Egypt and Jordan and the abortive Oslo peace process with the Palestinians. Still the world's only nation whose existence is challenged and whose survival cannot be taken for granted, Israel has waged a succession of wars since 1949: the 1956 Suez War, the 1967 Six Day War (which gave Israel a false sense of security, launched its settlement building drive, branded it as an occupying power and burdened it with a still unresolved demographic problem), the 1968-70 War of Attrition, the1973 Yom Kippur War, and two wars (1982 and 2006) and countless operations in Lebanon.

In total, more than 20,000 Israelis have been killed fighting for Israel, making it the world's least safe country for Jews in terms of violent deaths.

And now, following its 2005 unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, Israel is at war with Hamas, a radical Palestinian movement whose undisguised goal is to extinguish Israel and create an Islamic state within the historic borders of Palestine. In addition, Israel faces possible threats from Hezbollah, Syria and Iran, whose fiery president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has repeatedly called for its destruction as he pushes ahead with plans to establish a nuclear arsenal. So, although Israel is a regional power with the strongest armed forces in the Middle East, backed up by an undeclared nuclear deterrent and the friendship and support of the United States, Israel cannot rest easily.

Israel remains painfully vulnerable, having been subjected to suicide bombing campaigns and bombarded by nearly 4,000 Hezbollah rockets in the Second Lebanon War, 39 Iraqi Scud missiles in the 1991 Gulf War and approximately 7,000 Qassam rockets and mortars since the eruption of the second Palestinian uprising in 2001. Yet Israel – whose population has reached 7.2 million, of whom 75.8 per cent are Jews – has managed not only to survive in a generally hostile environment, but to thrive as a prosperous Western-style democracy in an area rife with dictatorships and torn by bitter sectarian divisions. Indeed, Israel's parliamentary system is so freewheeling and raucous that an outright majority government has never been formed.

Nevertheless, many Israelis are disillusioned with the conduct of their leaders and speak glumly of a leadership crisis. The current prime minister Ehud Olmert, a slick and canny politician who was tarred by the inconclusive outcome of the last war in Lebanon, faces police and judicial investigations. Several cabinet ministers, from Tzachi Hannegbi to Avraham Hirschon, have had to resign in disgrace. When the deputy prime minister, Haim Ramon, was justice minister, he was forced to take a leave of absence after being accused of sexual harassment. The former president, Moshe Katsav, had to step down in ignominy after several women claimed he had assaulted and raped them.

At 60, Israel's hi-tech, free market economy is booming, despite bouts with recession, hyper-inflation and high unemployment. Until the Six Day War, a turning point in its history, Israel was a socialist bastion characterized by austerity and simplicity. The Histadrut labour union wielded immense influence, the kibbutz was a model of communal living, the Egged bus driver was king, and foreign travel and private cars were prohibitively expensive, far beyond the reach of most Israelis. But those days have vanished under the impact of economic reforms and globalization.

Today, Israel is a mini America with an amazingly vibrant culture whose annual medium household income of $37,000 places it ahead of Britain but behind Australia and Canada. Israelis are avid, sometimes crass consumers, and the expectations of its middle-class are rising.

Israel has a corps of 7,200 millionaires, and the richest 19 families control one-third of the economy. Real estate values have skyrocketed, and recently, a high-flying businessman paid $17.1 million for a flat in Tel Aviv, and two months ago, a triplex of 1,500 square metres, with a 360-degree panoramic view of the city, was put up for sale for $34 million.

Amid such wealth, 1.6 million Israelis, or a quarter of the population, live below the poverty line, while one-third are in such difficult financial straits that they forgo buying essential foods, according to the National Insurance Institute. By all accounts, haredi Jews and Israeli Arabs, both groups that have a high birth rate and are to some degree alienated from mainstream society, account for a disproportionate percentage of Israel's underclass.

Israel's Arab minority, which now constitutes 20 per cent of its population and may rise to 30 per cent within about a generation, is particularly disaffected. The descendants of Palestinians who did not join the mass exodus of Arabs in 1948, Israeli Arabs enjoy equal rights, but in practice, they are subjected to discrimination in employment, housing and budgetary allocations. Although a handful of Israeli Arabs have attained wealth and status, a poll released in March indicated that three-quarters of Israeli Jews believe they should be "transferred" to a future Palestinian state.

Sephardi Jews once felt like outsiders, and this sense of outrage led to the formation of the Black Panthers protest movement in 1971. But the situation has improved, judging by the intermarriage rate between Ashkenazim and Sephardim and the high positions attained by such Sephardim as David Levy, Yitzhak Navon, Shaul Mofaz, Amir Peretz and Yitzhak Mordechai.

Israel is a country of immigration, a haven for the persecuted, and hundreds of thousands of Jews from all corners of the globe, particularly the Soviet Union, the Arab world and Iran, have settled in the Jewish state under the Law of Return. Yet perhaps as many as a million yordim, including highly skilled professionals, have emigrated to destinations in the West.

After six decades of struggle, Israel is a work in progress, a nation that wants to be democratic and Jewish but may not be able to be so, a nation rooted in hope and steeled in adversity, a nation whose achievements are legion, a nation whose shortcomings are clear and a nation whose future cannot possibly be divined in a region convulsed by upheaval, violence and change.

1948... They Were There

For the next several weeks, *The CJN* will feature a story of someone who was in Israel in 1948, at the birth of the Jewish State.

The Canadian Jewish news

On behalf of the

Federation of Teachers in Hebrew Schools

TORONTO

מדינתנו בת 60

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Greater Toronto Area

USY convention to include teens from ex-USCJ shuls

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Ezra Moses is still concerned about the future of the Eastern Canadian Region of United Synagogue Youth (ECRUSY), but the 18-year-old Montrealer is not as worried as he was last fall, when he heard that some shuls with USY chapters might leave the umbrella body of Conservative Judaism.

Moses, ECRUSY's president and a student at Montreal's Dawson College, said he still worries about a potential loss of members from Adath Israel Congregation, Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, and Beth Tzedec Congregation – the three large Toronto shuls that decided this spring to cut ties with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and allocate the money they would have spent on USCJ dues to more local programming.

Ezra Moses and Dov Smiley

But now that Moses knows that four other Toronto shuls are retaining their affiliation with the Conservative umbrella body, "I don't worry about the region disappearing," he said. "The region is strong, and will be resilient against this."

Shuls can't have USY chapters unless they're USCJ members, but high school students from the newly unaffiliated congregations who have paid their annual dues are still USY members until their dues expire, said Rabbi Jennifer Gorman, director of youth activities for ECRUSY, which also includes Kadima, the USCJ's program for middle school students.

Rabbi Jennifer Gorman

Students from the disaffiliated shuls will, therefore, be able to attend this weekend's regional convention of USY and Kadima, being held in St. Catharines, if they want to.

ECRUSY has about 450 members representing eight synagogues in six cities from Montreal to London, Ont., in addition to the three that have left. Other cities represented in ECRUSY are Ottawa, Toronto, St. Catharines and Hamilton.

To attend regional and international conventions or receive program scholarships, USY members must pay regional dues of $22 annually in addition to their USY chapter dues. The regional dues are paid through the chapters, and members must be chapter members in order to be regional members. Chapter members don't have to belong to a particular synagogue to join its USY chapter.

"The only question [was] whether [members from the synagogues that left] would be required to join another chapter," said Paul Kochberg, president of the USCJ's Canadian region and chair of the USCJ's youth commission. "We don't want to penalize the kids, especially at this late date."

But there is another issue. At least one USY member whose shul has left the USCJ is running for a regional board position.

"At this point, [members of synagogues that have left USCJ] are still members," said Rabbi Gorman. "If it becomes an issue next year, we'll have to cross that bridge when we come to it. I will not say, 'Thanks for your time, but because of the decision made by a few adults, this dream you had of running for executive board is not going to happen.'"

The convention will bring together 78 USYers and 36 Kadima members, and applications were still coming in as of last week, said Rabbi Gorman, herself a USY alumna. At least 10 Kadima students from synagogues that have left the USCJ had registered for the convention, she said.

This month's event is one of at least three annual regional conventions and one larger international one that is attended by thousands of teens from across North America. The conventions combine religious, social, social action, Israel-related and leadership activities.

Moses, who has been involved with USY for four years, said he has learned "a lot of leadership skills" during that time.

Also, he added, although he comes from an observant home – his father is Rabbi Lionel Moses of Montreal's Shaare Zion Congregation – he has "definitely learned a lot of Judaism over my four years."

The interaction that students have with their peers from other cities at regional and international meetings is "a huge benefit," Rabbi Gorman said. "You learn so much about how Judaism is expressed in different [geographic] areas... [and] you make friendships during these events that last a lifetime."

Paul Kochberg

When Rabbi Gorman, a native of Long Island, N.Y., and her husband, Rabbi Sean Gorman, moved to Toronto so he could accept a position at Beth Tzedec, they already had friends here, a fact she attributes in part to her USY background.

"Knowing you're part of the greater Jewish community is very significant, and I don't think that without looking beyond your geographic area there's the same connection," she said.

Rabbi Jennifer Gorman currently teaches once a month at Beth Tzedec, one of the disaffiliated shuls, but she said her "dedication to USY certainly doesn't waver."

Dov Smiley, ECRUSY's executive vice-president for Israel affairs, said the Toronto shuls' decisions to leave the organization shows "divides in Toronto that shouldn't exist... Now more than ever, the synagogues need unity to keep the youth interested in Judaism."

Last Wednesday, Smiley implored group members in a posting on ECRUSY's Facebook site to vote in a *CJN* online poll on whether Toronto Conservative synagogues should remain within the USCJ.

"In the wake of this ridiculous secession going on, we are trying to inform the public that the abolisment [sic] of USCJ in Canada will be disastrous for its youth, so show the world that you want to stay by voting. REMEMBER: NO USCJ IN CANADA, THERE WILL BE NO USY," he wrote.

Reena receives $2 million from province

Funds to go towards 60-unit supportive housing complex

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The Ontario Liberal government has made a $2-million capital investment in Reena, a non-profit Jewish support agency for people with special needs in York Region.

The money – part of a greater $7.6- million province-wide investment that includes similar agencies – will go toward Reena's planned 60-unit supportive housing complex on the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan.

Madeleine Meilleur, the province's minister of community and social services, made the announcement last week at Reena's Toby and Henry Battle Developmental Centre in Vaughan in front of delighted staff and clients of the centre.

"It's important for people with a developmental disability to live in their own community in a place that meets their needs," Meilleur said. "This new housing project will provide the right environment… a space tailored to their needs and abilities."

Meilleur added that the government intends to spend more on people with developmental disabilities in the future.

"We know there's more to do, and we will continue to… add it in our [future] budgets," she said.

Among those on hand to share in the congratulations were Richmond Hill city councillor David Cohen; Liberal MPP for Willowdale David Zimmer; UJA Federation of Greater Toronto chair, David Koschitzky; and Reena's founding chair, Rabbi Joseph Kelman.

"We have naches today," Rabbi Kelman announced in an impromptu speech after Meilleur stepped away from the podium. "[Reena] is a model for the world. We've satisfied our motto… integrating the handicapped into our community."

For her part, Reena CEO Sandy Keshen told *The CJN* she believes the new complex, tentatively called the Reena Community Residence, would help encourage her clients to better integrate into society.

Additionally, Keshen said she hopes that the residence's proximity to schools such as the Anne and Max TannenbaumCHAT Kimel Family Education Centre on the Lebovic campus will encourage students to volunteer at Reena.

"The model for us will be one of shared support and affordable housing," Keshen said. "We want to use the campus from an inclusion perspective."

The current Reena building, on Clarke Avenue in Vaughan, will continue to be used for outreach purposes, but the organization has outgrown the building's capacity, Keshen said.

The new Reena residence is scheduled for completion in 2011, with official groundbreaking ceremonies slated for October this year.

According to the Ministry of Community and Social Services literature, Ontario is home to "approximately 38 per cent of people in Canada with a developmental disability."

Currently, Reena serves nearly 1,000 adults and children with developmental disabilities via daytime and evening programs and supports more than 350 clients in 132 housing locations throughout the city.

According to Keshen, Reena's new supportive housing complex will allow her organization to help another 36 special needs individuals with lodgings.

Other Jewish service organizations will also be included in the new space, including Chai Tikvah, Circle of Care and Jewish Family and Child, she said.

"The importance of this model is that there will be one company that will deliver support to all the organizations," Keshen said. "That might be Reena, but right now I've hired a consultant to help us look at this creatively to provide more support with less administration."

Madeleine Meilleur, Ontario's minister of community and social services, announced new funding for Reena last week. [Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

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Jerusalem sensory garden focus of Israel@60 event

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn, in partnership with Jewish Vocational Service, is highlighting Israel Elwyn's Sensory Garden in Jerusalem as part of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Israel@60 celebrations May 20 at the Barbara Frum Library.

Israel Elwyn, whose Canadian office is located at JVS, is one of Israel's largest providers of services such as rehabilitation, supported living, vocational training and employment, for people with special needs, providing them with the means to achieve independence and integration into the community.

The 3,000-square-metre Katie Manson Sensory Garden, located at Israel Elwyn, includes interactive devices to encourage physical and emotional development in a stimulating environment.

Israel's first sensory garden, The Katie Manson Sensory Garden, is located at Israel Elwyn.

The first of its kind in Israel, the garden consists of four corners, each focusing on one of the senses – sight, smell, sound and touch.

David Marcu, executive director of Israel Elwyn, will provide an audio-visual presentation of the garden at the event. He said the garden's purpose is to extend therapeutic activity from the treatment room into a natural setting.

"[We created a garden] that enhances quality of life and emphasizes activities that integrate interactive devices with the natural environment," Marcu said.

"[Our aim] was to have the garden oriented toward adults but also suited for children, be accessible to people with various types of disabilities, and be suitable for use by people with different levels of cognitive and motor impairment."

Karen Goldenberg, president and CEO of JVS Toronto and a Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn board member, said that in celebrating Israel @60, the two agencies want to help raise awareness of the "brilliant" work going on in Israel.

When she toured the garden, she said, she encountered a group of Jewish children with multiple disabilities, another group of Arab students who were autistic, and a number of visitors from the public. "To me, that proved how inclusive the garden is. It reaches out to everyone."

The May 20 event, chaired by Friends board member David Rechtsman, is free to to the public. "It is not a fundraiser. We're proud of the magnificent work done by Israel Elwyn, and we want people to know about it," Goldenberg said.

For information, call 416-787-1151, ext. 300.

Fundraiser to benefit Weizmann Institute, University of Toronto

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Toronto physician Arnie Aberman will be honoured this year by the Canadian Society for the Weizmann Institute of Science and the University of Toronto at a gala dinner on Nov. 3.

The event will be held at the Sheraton Centre Hotel. It will be co-chaired by David Naylor, president of the University of Toronto, and by Daniel Zajfman, president of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel.

Funds raised at the dinner will be shared equally by both universities, for their MD and PhD programs.

The tribute was launched recently at Naylor's official residence.

Mel Silverman, founding director of the U of T MD/PhD program, said that students enrolled it must fulfil all the requirements of both the MD and PhD degrees, which he said can take from 14 to 16 years to complete.

"It is a long-term investment, with the objective of a career as a clinician scientist, one who can go from the lab to the bedside and back again," he added.

Michael Ward, a sixth-year student in the program at U of T, is researching genetic therapies for those with cardiovascular disease. "It's a great experience," he said, although it means "putting off your life until your mid-30s."

Besides the time, he said, it is a considerable financial burden on the student.

Dr. Amir Shlomai, who already has both degrees, is now completing his residency in internal medicine at Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv. He is especially interested in liver disease and has researched the Hepatitis B virus.

He praised the atmosphere in the Weizmann MD/PhD program as one in which participants "think, talk, and dream science."

Montreal-born Aberman studied pulmonary diseases and critical care medicine at Albert Einstein College of Medicine, the University of California at San Francisco and the University of of Southern California in Los Angeles. He has written and lectured extensively on the problems of critically ill patients.

He has been physician-in-chief of the Toronto Hospital and Mount Sinai Hospital, dean and chair of the faculty of medicine, U of T, and U of T vice-provost. He also played a major role in the the establishment of the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine of Lakehead University and Laurentian University.

He has served on the boards of many hospitals and professional organizations.

We're celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary!

Join us for these free events

Friday, May 9 at 6:30 p.m.
Kabbalat Shabbat with vegetarian potluck dinner, Nirkoda dancers, Darchei Noam Rikudiya Kids, Kolot Noam singers, and Israeli dancing for all.

Saturday, May 10 at 8:30 p.m.
Join us for light refreshments, Havdallah and "Bonjour M'sieur Shlomi", an award-winning Israeli movie. Donations welcomed to Meir Panim, an organization providing food and social services to the needy in Israel.

Homelessness in Toronto and What We Can Do About It

Wednesday, May 14 at 7:00 p.m.

Come meet with Michael Shapcott, Director of Civic Engagement at Wellesley Institute, to discuss how we can advocate reducing and ultimately eliminating homelessness in Toronto. The Wellesley Institute is a Toronto-based non-profit research and policy institute focused on developing research and community-based policy solutions to the problems of urban health and health disparities.

We Are All One: The Jews of Sefwi Wiawso (Ghana)

Film co-produced and presented by Adam McKinney

Thursday, May 15 at 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a film presentation and discussion with Adam McKinney—member of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theatre and co-founder of DNAWORKS, an arts and service organization dedicated to creating projects and dialogue around culture, class, ability and identity. Adam will also share his own unique story at this richly rewarding event.

Light refreshments will be provided.

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Cycling fundraiser to be held for heart and stroke

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario's 21st Annual Becel Heart&Stroke Ride for Heart takes place on June 1.

This year, more than 12,000 enthusiastic cyclists and in-line skaters will take to the road, travelling along a traffic-free Gardiner Expressway and Don Valley Parkway.

This fun-filled event is one of Canada's largest cycling fundraisers. The participants will be raising funds for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario, to support breakthrough medical advancements and education to prevent and reduce death and disability from heart disease and stroke.

Gathering pledges is crucial to the success of the Becel Heart&Stroke Ride for Heart. Last year, generous participants raised a record $2.8 million in Ontario. This year, the goal is $3 million. Corporate teams, individual cyclists and in-line skaters are all putting their heart into the tremendous effort to meet that goal.

If you're participating on your bicycle, you can choose from a variety of distances along the cycling route. Pedal the beginners' route of 25 kilometres or go 50 kilometres. Feeling ambitious? The 75-kilometre route is for you. If you want to join the 75-kilometre ride or take the 7:15 a.m. early bird ride (25 kilometres or 50 kilometres), simply raise a minimum of $60 in addition to your registration fee and submit it by June 1. If you're an in-line skater, you can complete five kilometres, 10 kilometres or 20 kilometres on the Gardiner, west of Exhibition Place.

The easiest way to collect your pledges is online. You can set up your own Personal Profile fundraising page at www.rideforheart.ca. Registration for the 21st Annual Becel Heart&Stroke Ride for Heart takes place online at www.rideforheart.ca until May 27, at 11:59 p.m.; by fax at 416-932-1620; by phone at 416-486-RIDE; or by mail (Becel Heart&Stroke Ride for Heart, P.O. Box 1227, STN. K, 2384 Yonge Street, Toronto, Ont. M4P 3E4).

Bayefsky has little hope for Durban II meet

Continued from page 6

Neuer suggested Iran's "anti-Jewish animus" was further stoked by anger at "Canada's lead role in a UN General Assembly resolution that spoke out for victims of Iranian human rights violations."

Bayefsky said developments at the preparatory conference give little hope Durban II will be much different than the 2001 Durban I conference.

Durban I was used by "the worst human rights violators to cast themselves as the anti-racists." Durban II will likely be "a major step backward for the protection of human rights," she said.

Bayefsky pointed to several developments that suggest Arab and Muslim countries are attempting to set the agenda for Durban II. During the preparatory work, "there have been numerous statements that anti-Semitism is about Arabs and Muslims. It is an effort to deny Jews as victims by appropriating anti-Semitism," she said.

In addition, she said, "there is an effort to undermine dramatically the freedom of expression in the name of Islamophobia. To avoid criticism for the xenophobia in Islamic societies, you are seeing this constant references to Islamophobia, with the perpetrators being western societies."

A resolution advanced by Canada on freedom of expression was "butchered" by the UN Human Rights Council, she said, with Islamic countries amending it to require the rapporteur on free speech to report criticisms of Islam.

It's a reaction to the publication of editorial cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper, which sparked violent protests by Muslims in 2006, she said.

"The council is turning freedom of expression on its head, if it offends the feelings of religious extremists," Bayefsky added.

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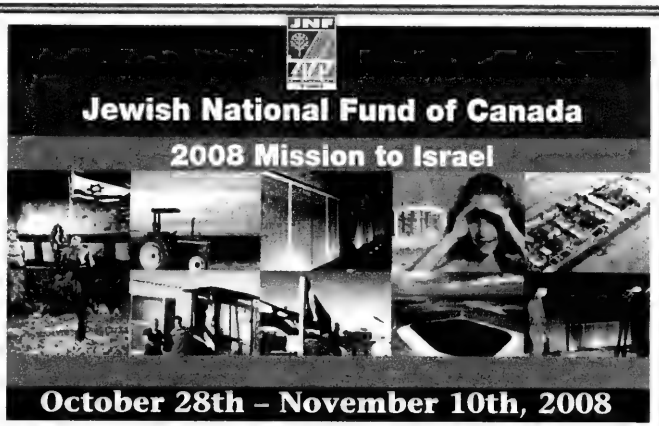

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Greater Toronto Area

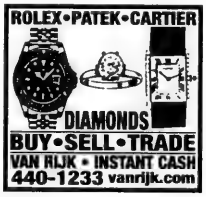
Gissin on a mission to help rebrand Israel to the world

Continued from page 3

Gissin said that as a diplomat, he's had occasion to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut outside of Israel in his various prior posts. But he expects that none of those prior experiences will compare with the one Toronto's Jewish community has planned for May 8.

"The love for Israel in Toronto, you'll not find another [Diaspora] community… that combines the strength, unity and efficiency as well as this one, and celebrates Israel in an event with 8,000 people," he said, referring to the Israel@60 bash at the Ricoh Coliseum.

"I want to tell all of Toronto's Jewish communities to come. The Russians, the Israelis… If you care about Israel, be there. It's a unique blend of unity and show of strength which can happen only here in Toronto," he urged.



Gissin has stated he's on a mission to help re-brand Israel on the world stage, shifting its image from one of a country in constant conflict to one of a nation of perpetual accomplishment.

Gissin said the marketing around Israel's 60th anniversary has helped nudge that positive image forward.

"Tourism was good last year. It will be better this year," he said. "We're sensing a change, especially among the younger generation and Christians. Israel is not just these flat images they see on the news. Instead, people see there's something cool, new and relevant happening here."

Anecdotally, Gissin said he's noticed a shift in focus by the media and in general opinion over the past year when it comes to Israel.

"It's true, we don't have all the positive images because of our enemies' attempts to brand Israel as 'apartheid'… despite these 10 per cent of people who hate our guts, the 80 per cent who know nothing about Israel now have a chance to know how Israel can [positively] affect their lives."

Looking beyond Yom Ha'atzmaut, Gissin said he plans to make many more public appearances over the course of the year to help get the positive word out on his beloved country.

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Inventions make it easier to live halachically

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

A Toronto rabbi has turned ingenious halachic loopholes into a way to make life more convenient for Sabbath-observant Jews.

With items ranging from lamps and oral hygiene aids to magnetic message centres, Rabbi Shmuel Veffer, Rebbetzin Chana Veffer and Moshe Orzech have designed a line of products that help make the observant Jewish lifestyle easier to keep.

The Veffers have a knack for finding everyday problems that people put up with and creating rabbinically approved solutions. They founded Kosher Innovations in 2004, out of a desire to help the observant community find adaptations in the modern world. As well, they work to educate people in Jewish law, and give sources and explanations on their website (www.kosherimage.com) for how their products meet rabbinical standards.

Currently, Kosher Innovations offers 10 products, with three more on the way. "These are items that were created out of problems me and my family found annoying," Rabbi Veffer said. "I kept thinking that there had to be a better way."

The Kosher Lamp, now in four models, was the first invention, with one that comes in a size that's perfect for children – a 31-centimetre-tall, teddy-bear-shaped nightlight. The lamps feature a shade that turns to let out or block the light, so that a person can turn the light "off" on Shabbat without turning off the bulb.

Veffer's not only a rabbi, but fittingly, he also has a degree from the University of Waterloo in mathematics and computer science, thus making for the perfect marriage of Torah knowledge and physics. Before becoming a rabbi, he devised computerized solutions for companies with technical predicaments. "I'm always trying to think of a way to do things differently," Rabbi Veffer said. "I like to come up with a sideways-thinking solution to problems."

The Kosher Lamp idea germinated from Rabbi Veffer's wife, who wanted to read in bed on Shabbat. One of his children, who has an affinity for building projects, decided that one Sunday afternoon, during father-son time, they would solve the problem together. After a trip to the local hardware store and a day's experimenting, they had a prototype.

They discussed the idea with Moshe Orzech; a fellow member of their synagogue, the Village Shul. Orzech happened to be in the lighting business. He had the contacts and networks necessary to release the product to the public.

The Veffers sought learned rabbis to examine and approve their products.

Continued on page 36

Moshe Orzech and Rabbi Shmuel Veffer have invented a line of "kosher" products.

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The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Jewish Life

Organ donation is a mitzvah

By RABBI AARON FLANZRAICH

Last month, we marked National Organ Donor Week. The idea of organ donation isn't something we should take for granted, nor is it something we should assume will be available to us when it's needed. Right now, 6,000 people are waiting for an organ, and an average of five people die every week waiting for one to be donated.

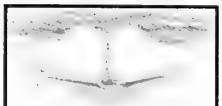
But the numbers don't tell the whole tale.

Consider the story of Alisa Flatow, 20, who in 1995 took the year off to study at a Jerusalem yeshiva. She decided before Passover to travel to Gaza, but she never made it. A Hamas suicide bomber drove his van into the bus she was travelling on, mortally wounding her.

Arriving from his home in New Jersey, Stephen Flatow confirmed that the brain-dead young woman on life support was his daughter. Hospital staff asked him whether he would be willing to donate his daughter's organs. After consulting with their rabbi, Stephen and his wife decided to donate Alisa's organs to six people on a waiting list who were clinging to life.

Alisa once wrote, "As Jews, it is our responsibility to help Jews less fortunate than we are."

Her heart was successfully transplanted into a 56-year-old man who had been waiting more than a year for one. Her pancreas and one kidney were transplanted into a 42-year-old woman with kidney failure who was reported to have been waiting 20 years for the organs.



Rabbinic Reflections

Flatow's lungs, liver and other kidney were transplanted into other patients. Her corneas were donated to the eye bank at Soroka Hospital in Be'er Sheva.

Her father said, "People have called it a brave decision, a righteous decision, a courageous decision. To us, it was simply the right thing to do at the time. I didn't know what all the media attention was about. But as I was leaving Israel, at the airport, I mentioned this to a journalist, who said to me, 'You really don't understand, do you?'"

What Alisa's father didn't understand was the emotional impact his family's gesture had on a grieving country – an impact captured by the late Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, who said at the time that "Alisa Flatow's heart beats in Jerusalem."

The Toronto Board of Rabbis and the provincial agency responsible for administering the organ donation program have joined forces to defeat the idea that organ donation is forbidden in Judaism.

Some believe it will preclude them from being buried in a Jewish cemetery. But I'm here to tell you that this belief is false. Since the 1950s, leading rabbinic authorities have looked upon this new technology as a way to fulfil the divine mandate to save a life – an obligation first expressed in the Torah itself: "You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbour." This obligation also includes giving blood, bone marrow transplants and donating redundant organs.

Judaism affirms this principle in the most unambiguous terms, because no one should see the preservation of human life as optional – for Jews, it is obligatory.

Judaism urges that consent be given for post-mortem organ donation when requested by doctors and hospitals for use when directly needed for life-saving transplantation procedures. This applies to an individual in anticipation of his or her own death, as well as to health-care proxies or next of kin whenever they are legally empowered to make such decisions. It's our belief that by so doing, we render a profound and genuine honour to the deceased.

Rabbi Flanzraich is spiritual leader of Beth Sholom Synagogue in Toronto.

So young, and yet so ancient

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

Israel, our beloved Israel, is turning 60 years old, so young for a modern state. It has accomplished so much and is consistently challenged. With its young voice, it speaks to the Jews of the world, who hear that voice with our hearts. Israel is growing and learning, and the country is still so young.

Midrashic Moments

Sitting on a foundation of text and covenant, Israel should enjoy its Day of Independence as we share with it our understanding of Jewish text and the number 60. The Talmud and midrash express so many thoughts about this number that we are able to offer Israel our blessings for this wonderful year with ancient insights.

Sixty is for renewal. While the waters of the flood of Genesis rained for 40 days and nights, we learn that they drained in 60 days.

Sixty is for guardianship. As Jacob, our patriarch, is returning to the ancient land of Israel, we learn that 60 myriads of angels escort him home.

Sixty is for spirituality. We learn that while the Shchinah will rest upon an assembly of 10 people, She will not rest upon less than 60 myriads of angels.

Sixty is for forgiveness. The first crime of one human being against another is Cain against his brother. Cain pleads with God, stating: "Surely my sin is not greater than that of the 60 myriads of Israel who will provoke You in the wilderness." God replies, "If I do not forgive Cain, I will shut the door in the face of all penitents." We are forgiven.

Sixty is for leadership. Rabbi Tanhum teaches: normally a burden that is heavy for one is light for two, but can a burden too heavy for 60 myriads be light for one? Now all Israel stood before Mount Sinai saying, "If we hear the Voice of God anymore, we shall die," while Moses heard the Voice by himself and lived.

Sixty is for protection. The *Song of Songs* tells us that Solomon's bed is surrounded by 60 warriors of Israel. We learn that these warriors are the 60 letters of the priestly blessing.

During one of the more challenging points in Jewish history, while we were travelling in the wilderness, the nation of Israel gathered together to volunteer their goods and their talents to build a mishkan, a place of communal spirituality. They bring donations from their heart and they give of their wealth, their vision, their skills and their talents.

When all is complete, the nation gathers together to dedicate the mishkan with sacrifices and offerings. We are told of the offerings in the Torah, and the midrash adds to our understanding: "The ram offerings were 60, the goats were 60, the lambs were 60. This number symbolizes the 60 myriads of Israel who came out of Egypt. It symbolizes the word 'counsel' whose numerical value is 60. It alludes to the 60 queens, to the Second Temple which was built with the dimensions of 60 by 60... to Elisha who served Israel for 60 years, to the 60 cities of Argov, to the text that states Isaac was 60 years old when his sons were born, to the 60 letters of the priestly blessing."

As the nation of Israel gathered together for its first ritual expression from within the structure they built from their hearts, the number 60 informs the text. The rabbis teach us that at that moment, we express spiritually while understanding the value of good advice, leadership, institutions, politics and personal strife. Sixty is for balance.

Israel, our beloved modern country, sits within our hearts, within our texts, within our history and within our ancient blessings that we are privileged to utter today.

As modern Jews of the 21st century, we offer Israel our blessing with words that are thousands of years old.

What could be more fitting?

Jewish Life

Sects and the Dead Sea Scrolls

By ALEX GROPPER

Past Forward

The period of the Dead Sea Scrolls, roughly from the second century BCE until the end of the first century CE, has been described by the eminent Harvard scholar Frank Moore Cross as a rich cauldron bubbling over with religious ideas and groups expounding them.

Risa Levitt Kohn, the curator for the upcoming Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit, to be held at the Royal Ontario Museum in the summer and fall of 2009, has said in her book, *A Portable Religion*, that even the term Judaism is not quite appropriate for these various nascent views. She prefers the Greek word, Judaismos, as a more apt name for the beliefs found in the land, which the Romans called Judaea after Pompey added it to their expanding dominions in 63 BCE.

There were a number of religious groups in the Land of Israel at that time. They have been variously called sects, groups, movements or parties. The best known of these groups are the Pharisees, Sadducees, Zealots and Essenes – and for want of a better term, the Jewish Christians or Christian Jews. Only two of these sects would survive the traumatic events associated with the destruction of the Second Temple. One was the Pharisees, the other the so-called Christians.

The destruction of the Second Temple would be just as important in the development of Christianity as it was for the development of Judaism. Until the cataclysmic events of 70 CE, the Jesus movement was controlled by those who wanted the group to adhere to its Jewish roots. Chief among them was Peter, and the apparent leader of the group, James, the brother of Jesus, whose supposed ossuary aroused much controversy when it was on display at the ROM a few years ago.

With the destruction of the Temple, it was the Pharisees who would come to dominate Judaism, while the Jesus movement fell increasingly under the control of those members who gravitated to the teaching of Paul, who believed that Christianity should place its emphasis on converting the Gentiles. To achieve this end, Paul moved the group beyond its original confines in Judaea and into the world of the eastern Mediterranean.

Although the eastern Mediterranean was part of the Roman empire, its common language was Greek, thanks to the conquests of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BCE. The popularity of Greek is demonstrated by the fact that the first translation of the Bible, the Septuagint, was into Greek, in the city of Alexandria. It was there that a sizable group of Jewish expatriates nearly succumbed to the seductive charms of assimilating into the Hellenistic Greek culture of the time. It was to these affluent Jewish communities of the eastern Mediterranean, and their neighbours, that Paul took his message.

Based on his work on the Scrolls, the eminent Oxford scholar Geza Vermes believes that it was in this Greek-speaking environment that the concept of divinity was attached to Christ. Vermes believes that the appellation "son of God" was not uncommon in Judaea at this time and could have any number of meanings attached to it that did not imply a divine nature. These meanings include the first born of Israel, or the saintly figures of the nation, or even all members of Am Yisrael. But in the Greek culture of the eastern Mediterranean, a son of God could be a semi-divine being such as Hercules or Achilles, who were the product of a union between a mortal and a deity.

However, Cross disagrees with Vermes and cites a document found at Qumran that he believes has divine connotations for the term "son of God." Such is the fascinating nature of the ongoing debate about the Dead Sea Scrolls as the evidence of the Past pushes Forward into the future.

Israel's birthday: six for sixty

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The Jewish Highway

Israel is about to celebrate its birthday, a special one at that. And that means for a small country that is constantly under the microscope of the world's – and its own – media, it's time to celebrate and forget about its many challenges, at least for a few hours. In honour of this occasion, I present an eclectic half-dozen websites. Six for sixty.

But first, we remember. Before Israel celebrates, it marks Yom Hazikaron, Israel's Remembrance Day, and honours the more than 20,000 soldiers who have fallen since Israel's War of Independence. Israel's Ministry of Defence maintains a large Hebrew-only website dedicated to Yom Hazikaron. You can view a list of all soldiers whose yahrzeit is being observed today. **[izkor.gov.il/izkor50.asp]** On the Yizkor page, you can read the special prayer for the fallen soldiers while hearing it recited **[izkor.gov.il/izkor11b.htm]**. A Hebrew poetry page includes works of some of the country's premier poets and King David's lament from the Book of Samuel II upon hearing of the deaths of Jonathan and Saul, "How the Mighty Have Fallen." **[izkor.gov.il/izkor30a. htm]**

As the sun sets on Yom Hazikaron, the mood in Israel shifts from sorrow to joy as Yom Ha'atzmaut begins. If you won't be joining the crowds on Hamelech George Street in Jerusalem or on Dizengoff Street in Tel Aviv this year, you can sample the excitement via some of the videos on YouTube. On the first page alone, there are excerpts from several Independence Day concerts, a fireworks display, a slide show of Israeli flags and archival footage of Israel's first prime minister, David Ben-Gurion, reading the Declaration of Independence. **[tinyurl.com/5gqclx]**

Speaking of Israel's first prime minister, what would a birthday be without some introspection? Back in 1961, on the occasion of Israel's bar mitzvah year, Ben-Gurion wrote an article for the *Atlantic Monthly* titled *The Kingdom of the Spirit*, in which he suggested that far more than a mere "national and political unit," Israel is to become a spiritual arena in which "a new way toward freedom, peace, justice and equality, the advancement and redemption of humanity." **[tinyurl.com/6hkepu]**

I love listening to Israeli radio on my computer. Unfortunately, finding their addresses can be a chore. That's why I am hooked on a piece of software appropriately called Israel Radio. After you download it, a special toolbar becomes part of your browser. Simply click on preset buttons for about 20 Israeli radio stations to have them start playing almost immediately.

Regular readers of this column may notice that I rarely recommend software that you can download. You're just never quite sure what it may do to your computer. I can't guarantee how it will function for you but in the several months I've used Israel Radio, I've never experienced a problem. It works with both Internet Explorer and Firefox in Windows. The Firefox version has only limited functionality on Macs. **[israelradio.lihi.co.il]**

I'm also a sucker for maps. Although you can find many standard Israeli maps online, I particularly like Eye On Israel's online map. Not only is it quite detailed, it also has a dose of whimsy that you could only find on an interactive map. Tiny trains make their way up and down the coastline map, while a sailboat plies the waters of Lake Kinneret. **[tinyurl.com/489bg]**

Soon Israel's birthday will be over and things will be back to normal. There will be no shortage of news stories that will question Israel's direction for the next 60 years and beyond. Honest reportage and criticism do play a critical role. But if you ever need a respite and a reminder of what the country can achieve, I recommend paying a visit to Israel21C, a site devoted to highlighting the stories you won't see on the evening news.

A recent sampling of Israel21C included a look at a program that helps disadvantaged kids learn leadership skills; a short documentary about what may be the world's first pomegranate wine; and an article about an Israeli company that is making men's suits using material made from wool and recycled plastic bottles. **[israel21c. net]**

Yom huledet samayach!

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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On Campus

Hillel sends volunteers to work with Ethiopian-Israelis

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Following the success of a student volunteer trip to Kiryat Moshe to work with the Ethiopian community last year, Hillel of Greater Toronto is getting set to send more students to Israel this summer to volunteer with the growing Ethiopian community in Bat Yam.

The volunteers have been divided into two groups – one that leaves May 15, and the other that leaves June 29 – for a six-week program that includes accommodation, health insurance and a stipend that covers groceries and travel costs in Israel, as well as two Shabbatons, weekly group dinners, organized field trips, lessons and other extra-curricular programming.

Rebecca Woods Baum, Hillel of Greater Toronto's Israel affairs director, organized the program with the Israel Volunteer Program Centre's regional director, Michal Kaye, as well as the Jewish Agency and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

She said the students will volunteer most of the day and will keep hours similar to that of a full-time job.

"In the morning, generally what the students will be doing is teaching English and helping with English homework with kids in grades 6 to 9, and in the afternoon, they will be running programs in the teen centre," she said.

Although the site of the program has changed from Kiryat Moshe to Bat Yam, Woods Baum said the Jewish Agency was so pleased with the success of last year's program that its given this year's volunteers the option to work in Kiryat Moshe for a few days.

"The idea is to understand Israeli society. It's a six-week trip and they are living on their own… They go grocery shopping by themselves, they take public transit within areas that are safe on their own. They have to work these things out on their own… It's really about getting integrated with Israeli society and doing tzedec while you're in Israel," Woods Baum said.

Samahra Zatzman, 21, a fourth-year theatre major at York University, took part in last year's program and said she loved the experience.

She was one of six participants who stayed in a house provided by Hillel in the Kfar Galil neighbourhood near Kiryat Moshe, where they volunteered.

While some of the volunteers chose to work in a community centre for high school kids, Zatzman worked next door to the centre with Chetz Kadima, an after-school program for underprivileged and at-risk youth aged eight to 14 in the community.

She said it was a place where kids could go to keep them off the streets.

"Some of the stuff we did was help kids with their homework, and then we got to create programs. I taught an English class twice a week. I did a girl's class, where we did nail polish, beading, and sometimes we'd play sports."

Having had experience volunteering with youth in Canada, Zatzman said she felt comfortable with the kids, but it took a couple weeks for the kids at Chetz Kadima to wrap their heads around the idea that someone wanted to spend her free time with them.

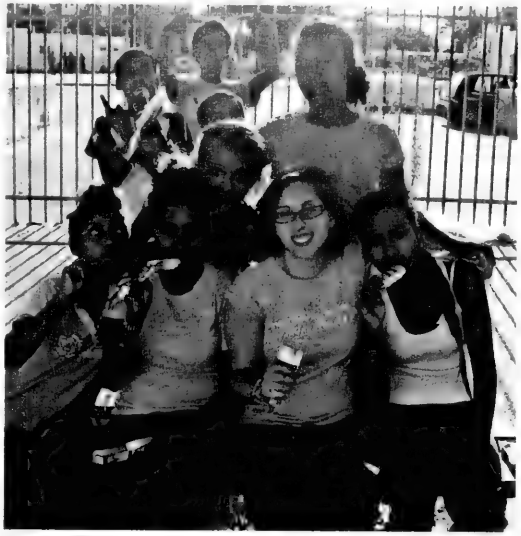
"Their first question was, 'Why are you here?' It took them a while to stop asking that… because the only experience they had with Canadian Jewish students were with people that came on Birthright, which is still a great thing, but they would come in for a day, play basketball and then go home. Their question was, 'Why would you want to spend your vacation here helping us?'" Zatzman recalled.

But once they realized she would be there to help for the next few weeks, friendships began to develop.

"They want to challenge you. They make jokes, they make fun of your accent because you're speaking Hebrew. I mean, I went to CHAT [the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto], but I didn't know that *chaver* meant boyfriend and *yadid* meant friend," she said, laughing.

Zatzman said the experience was both challenging and rewarding, and it taught her that she had a lot more tenacity and perseverance than she thought.

"I've always lived in Toronto, I go to school in Toronto, I live at home and this was about me going out and living on my own."



Samahra Zatzman takes a moment to enjoy a treat with some of the children at Chetz Kadima in Kiryat Moshe last year.

She said they had free time to explore Israel and meet with family and friends to get a better idea of what it's like to live like an Israeli.

"But it was about more than just having fun… I learned that when I apply myself and dedicate myself, there is such a wealth that can come out. You're also gaining from it. Giving back isn't always an altruistic thing. It it is also a wonderful personal thing," she said.

"I saw the vitality and the energy of this community, from all the different kinds of people that were living there… everyone was invested in trying to build up the community and make it a wonderful place."

She said that for those looking to experience Israel in a different way, this is an amazing opportunity.

"Birthright is wonderful and going on tours is wonderful, but this is above and beyond the tourist experience. If you really want to experience Israel and have a better understanding about life in Israel – the complexities, the joy, everything – then volunteering in Israel is the No. 1 thing I would recommend to anyone."

The deadline to apply for the June 29 program is May 9. For more information, e-mail Woods Baum at rebecca@hilleltoronto.org.

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Iran 'preparing for another Holocaust'

Canada can help stop Islamic Republic, MP says

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

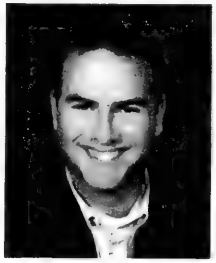
OTTAWA — In a message delivered by Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier, the Canadian government used the occasion of the fifth annual Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony on Parliament Hill to reaffirm its support for the State of Israel.

"We are proud to stand with Israel, a fellow democracy," Bernier said last Thursday. "We are proud to defend its right to survive in freedom, dignity and security, and we are proud to count ourselves among Israel's best friends."

The two-hour event included messages from all of Canada's major political parties and was attended by members of Parliament, senators and representatives of more than 40 embassies.

Bloc Québécois MP Richard Marceau, who brought forward the bill that led to Ottawa's recognition of Holocaust Remembrance Day, warned of a "new danger" facing the Jewish people.

"The current leader of a powerful country has said time and time again that he wants to eradicate Israel… the current president of Iran and his regime are preparing for another Holocaust," Marceau said.


Richard Marceau

He implored the Canadian government to take action.

"Canada can make a difference. Canada can contribute to stopping Iran… take the right stand against Iran's nuclear aspiration. Iran needs to understand that Canada will not sit quietly, will not stand by, will not do nothing… Yes, today we remember but today, also, we must act," he said.

"Today, with words and silence we remember the millions of people, the overwhelming majority of whom were Jews, who were systematically murdered under the Nazi regime," said Liberal leader Stéphane Dion.

"It is our duty to remember. It is our duty to fight racism everywhere – anti-Semitism, hatred and intolerance – wherever we find it… and we must work every day to ensure they do not take root in our country."

Messages of support were also delivered by BQ leader Gilles Duceppe on behalf of his party, as well as by NDP leader Jack Layton.

Israel's ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker, cautioned that the memory of the Holocaust must be kept alive in order to prevent a re-occurrence in the future.

"On behalf of the State of Israel, permit me to express our appreciation and extreme pride that Canada commemorates this on the steps of Parliament, in the presence of the leadership of Canada," Baker said. "May Canada and Israel go from strength to strength. Am Yisrael Chai!"

Child survivor Joseph Gottdenker related his moving story of being hidden by a Christian family who saved his life by risking theirs.

Holocaust survivors have retaliated against the Nazi regime "in the best way possible," Gottdenker said – by living and contributing to the world in many ways.

But "the world is still not a safe place… [and] remembering is not enough. My pain, that of my family, the destruction of my entire childhood is for naught unless we act in defence of those that cannot protect themselves," Gottdenker said.

World renowned architect and developer David Azrieli was introduced by Marceau as "a powerful testament to the resilience of Holocaust survivors."

Azrieli, who was born in 1922 in Poland and settled in Montreal in 1954, spoke of the contributions made to the world by survivors in science, the arts and every other field.

"This is our message, a message of life and creative life, a message that rings out loud and clear," Azrieli said. "We are alive and this is our victory and this is our revenge against the Nazis… With this contribution, we show our devotion and our commitment to life."

He added: "We must turn our thoughts, our minds to the living, to the country that gave us the opportunity and that gave us the means of becoming creative individuals again and the country that we are celebrating with great affection, the country that has adopted us – Canada."

Throughout the ceremony, wreaths were laid by survivors and the children of survivors, accompanied by politicians and dignitaries. Toronto's Netivot HaTorah Day School Choir performed, and the ceremony was opened and closed by the March on and off of the Colours by the Ottawa Jewish War Veterans.

The ceremony was co-ordinated by the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem with the support of B'Nai Brith Canada, Canadian Hadassah-WIZO, Canadian Jewish Congress, the Embassy of Israel, the Shoah (Holocaust) Committee of Ottawa, and the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre.

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Holocaust remembrance in Ottawa

These are images of the fifth annual Holocaust Remembrance Day on Parliament Hill. Clockwise from top left are Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister Maxime Bernier and Jewish war veteran Jack Cahan; members of the Netivot Hatorah Choir from left, Jacob Feldman, Daniella Einhorn, Adina Saban, Adina Samuels and choirmaster Klara Bagley lay a wreath of remembrance; Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day congratulates Jacob Feldman for his solo rendition of *Ani Ma'amin*; and members of the choir pose for a photo with, standing at the back, from left, Debbie Cahan-Feldman, Liberal party leader Stephane Dion, Israeli ambassador Alan Baker and Liberal MP Susan Kadis.

[Peter Feldman photos]

Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah

Holocaust scroll readings draw 500

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

The sixth annual community Holocaust Remembrance service, the Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah Commemoration, took place last week at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

About 500 people attended the service, which included a recitation of Megillat Hashoah (the Holocaust Scroll), a recently compiled book of English and Hebrew readings of brief, first-person experiences of the war.

Among the stories told in the scroll are that of a Christian journalist surveying the Warsaw Ghetto; of a young Jew forced to shove bodies into death camp ovens, and of a Jewish woman in a work camp.

The six chapters of the megillah were read by various community members and leaders, including Cantor Eli Kirshblum, Mona Brown, Harvey Haber, Cantor Marshall Loomer, Lou Cytrynbaum, David Schaeffer, Rabbi Howard Morrison, Sigal Tuch and Mitchell Goldenberg.

Two choirs performed songs between readings: the Beth Tikvah Synagogue Choir, directed by Eyal Bitton, with accompanist Nathan Rosen; and the Renanim Youth Singers, directed by Susan Michaels, with accompanist Mark Andrews. Songs included *Eli, Eli*, based on Psalm 22, and *Even When God is Silent* by Michael Horvit, written for the 50th anniversary of Kristallnacht.

The song *Bachuri Le'an Tisa*, performed by the Renanim Youth Singers, was written by Gideon Klein in 1942 while he was interned at Terezin. Klein, who died in Terezin three years later at age 26, wrote about love and loss in the camps.

Six candles were lit to commemorate and memorialize different aspects of the Holocaust and related postwar events: a candle apiece for the memory of the six million, the destroyed Jewish communities, the 1½ million murdered children, the ghetto fighters and partisans, the righteous of the nations, and the State of Israel.

Shelly Koren, left, and Talia Leibovitz were among those taking part in the service at Beth Tikvah. [Dave Gordon photo]

Rabbi Wayne Allen, Beth Tikvah's spiritual leader, said he hoped that the service would give survivors "strength for them to continue, and pay tribute to the martyrs who perhaps have no heirs."

In 1992, Alex Eisen of Toronto, a survivor, suggested the idea of Yom HaShoah readings to Rabbi Philip Scheim of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation. The Conservative movement subsequently embraced the effort to compile a service.

The Holocaust Scroll – written by Avigdor Shinan, a professor of Hebrew literature at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, along with an academic committee – was read for the first time publicly in 2003 on Holocaust Remembrance Day.

The scroll was edited by Rabbi David Golinkin, president of the Schechter Institute, a Conservative seminary in Israel. In Toronto, a different Conservative synagogue takes turns hosting the event each year, Rabbi Allen said.

The practice of reading the scroll has spread through the world and takes place in many languages.

Aaron Jesin, who with his family and wife's parents lit the second candle, said a religious commemoration of the Holocaust was long overdue.

"To a certain extent, the Megillat Hashoah fills this gap. Our only regret is that it is not universally embraced by all factions of Judaism."

Jesin's in-laws, the Weisbergs, and his parents, are survivors. Sam Weisberg was in the same concentration camp with Alex Eisen, and they remain close friends today, Jesin said.

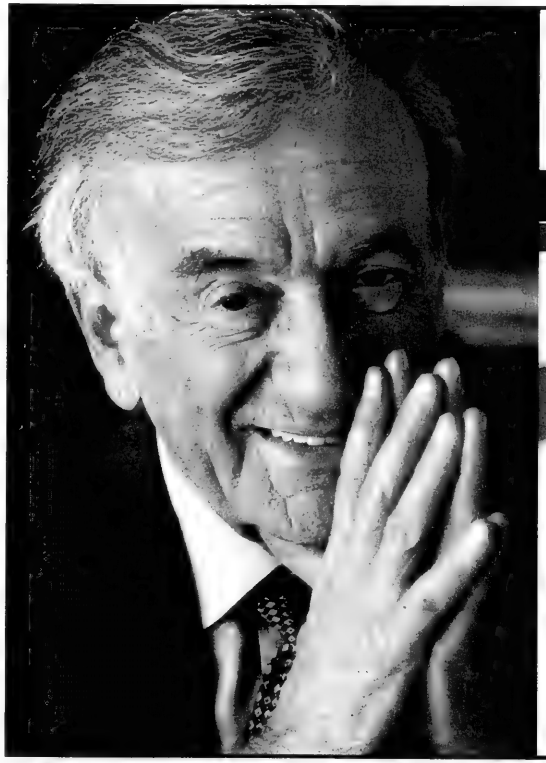
Other participants in the candlelighting were the Frieberg, Markin, Pilc, Gottesman and Waldman families.

Beth Tikvah's founding president, Harvey Haber, read aloud a portion of the scroll.

"The event profoundly impacted me," he said. "We have survived through a fundamental belief in God. We must never lose hope. We have to persevere."

He said such events are of particular importance today in light of increased ignorance about the Holocaust, and the growing problem of hatred.

"It's not enough to say 'Never again.' The problem is that it is beginning to happen again. Anti-Semitism is on the rise. Anti-Israel sentiments are on the rise."



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Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah

Journalist warns of another Shoah

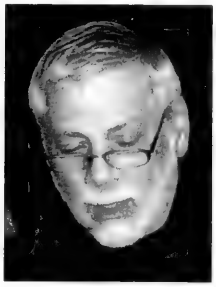
By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Edwin Black issued a challenge to the more than 200 people in the Yom Hashoah audience in Halifax.

"Do we shed a tear with the beautiful music we just heard, and think of the agony of survivor Phil Riteman [one of Halifax's main Yom Hashoah speakers], or do we look ahead 10 years and say, 'What did we know, when did we know it, and what did we do to stop Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur?'"

The award-winning American journalist and author of six best-selling investigative books also had this warning:

"Can the generation that survived the Holocaust to create Israel be considered successful when we have threats of nuclear annihilation [at the hands of Iran] on our doorstep?"



Edwin Black
[Joel Jacobson photo]

In a dynamic presentation at the May 1 event at Saint Mary's University, Black, a Chicago-born, Washington-based author whose parents survived Treblinka, quoted from his international expose, *IBM and the Holocaust*, a book that's available in 61 countries and 14 languages.

"The Holocaust was special and it has nothing to do with the numbers [six million Jewish deaths]," he said. "It was a 12-year, internationally advertised, out-in-the-open persecution."

He accused business leaders in the United States and Europe of being war criminals.

He said U.S.-based IBM had punch cards on every Jew in Europe, knew where they were, what their abilities were and enabled the Germans to find them and use them. IBM's systems organized the trains that transported Jews and other non-Aryans to the death camps.

He said General Motors provided the trucks that the Germans used to invade Poland, Austria and other European nations.

Even Coca-Cola invented Fanta as a drink to refresh German troops, he said.

All this can happen, and is happening, again because money talks, he continued.

"It took place in the 1930s and 40s, and it is happening now because the Mideast has the oil money and has announced its intention to obliterate Israel with missiles. How? They buy what they need with petro-dollars that I helped give when I drove here, that you provide when you drive your cars."

The audience was as hushed during his 15-minute address as it was when candles were lit to commemorate the millions lost in the Holocaust.

It was as silent as excerpts from letters and essays, written in the 1940s by youthful Holocaust victims and survivors, were read by Halifax-area youths, Jewish and gentile, who have attended the March of the Living and gone on an Asper Foundation-sponsored visit to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.

And the audience paid equally rapt attention as Halifax cellist Shimon Walt and pianist Barbara Pritchard played Ernest Bloch's *Prayer, from Jewish Life No 1.*

Black, the editor of the Cutting Edge News website, which receives nearly 100,000 hits each month, has worked for the *New York Times* and has been interviewed on national U.S. TV programs such as the *Today Show*, *CNN Wolf Blitzer Reports*, *Dateline NBC* and the *Oprah Winfrey Show*.

"We have forgotten, but we say we will always remember," he said. "We're forgetting, because holocausts have happened since, and no one is speaking out in the right way. Now another nation [Iran] is pledging to do in 12 minutes what Hitler tried to do in 12 years – wipe out the Jewish people [in Israel]."

Other Yom Hashoah ceremonies took place in Atlantic communities through the weekend in Sydney, N.S., Moncton, N.B., Saint John, N.B., Fredericton, St. John's, and Charlottetown, where large crowds heard talks from Holocaust survivors.

Ceremony remembers 'courage and moral resistance'

BY DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — An improvised spoon, a symphony concert, a Lodz Ghetto postcard, a clandestine wedding, an evocative work of expressionist art from Teresienstadt – all were cited as examples of "courage and moral resistance" at last week's Holocaust Memorial Day commemoration at Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem Congregation.

These gestures were ways for Jews to maintain vestiges of dignity and humanity in the face of unimaginable suffering, an overflow crowd was told at the event.

Acts of courage and resistance – the evening's theme – did not have to be linked to armed resistance, although such resistance most certainly took place, noted Marcel Tenenbaum, co-chair, with Jack Dym, of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre's Yom Hashoah committee. "Countless acts helped keep hope alive in the uttermost darkness."

Acts of resistance also included the writing of books and creation of schools – even a medical school in the Warsaw Ghetto. Tenenbaum said the logical subject of research, for lack of any resources, was starvation.

The evening included the presence of community leaders, dignitaries, and representatives from all levels of government, including from Germany. Pierre Duchesne, Quebec's lieutenant-governor, attended. Yoram Elron, Israel's consul general in Montreal, called the Holocaust the "darkest and most horrifying tragedy in the history of humanity."

Elron quoted Elie Wiesel's oft-cited statement that indifference remains humanity's greatest sin in the face of evil. "It facilitated the annihilation of two-thirds of European Jewry… history's worst crime."

Elron also cited the Jewish state as a permanent refuge for the Jewish people and a concrete manifestation of how the Jews emerged from the ashes of the Holocaust to create a vital and living land.

Israel's 60th anniversary, he said, "reminds us how far we've come."

Six brief but poignant Holocaust survivor testimonials on video screens preceded the lighting of six memorial candles by those survivors with their children and grandchildren. The ceremony also included a recitation of names of Holocaust victims by Elie Benchetrit, Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz and Hannah Eliashiv. Each candlelighting included readings and choir performances.

Ruth Fazel's ambitious work, *Oratorio Terezin*, was performed by the Vanier College Choir under conductor Erica Phare. Traditional Holocaust-related songs were performed by the Bialik High School Choir under Lorna Smith. Before the recitations of the *K'El Maleh Rachamim*, tehillim, Kaddish, the Partisan Hymn, and the Canadian and Israeli national anthems, survivors and members of the second and third generations were respectively asked to rise, and the promise was made to carry forward the Holocaust legacy from generation to generation and ensure that it not be forgotten after the last survivors pass on.

And now for something completely different: **HEEBONICS**

A sporting businessman

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

At 39, Jordan Banks is still young enough to qualify as a whiz kid in the corporate world.

But the Ottawa-born CEO of JumpTV – a burgeoning, Toronto-based international sports Internet broadcasting company – already has a rich history of success in business.

In fact, in 2006 he was chosen as one of Canada's "Top 40 Under 40," an award honouring business leaders who've "reached a significant level of success" before that birthday milestone.

A graduate of Osgoode Hall Law School, Banks practised corporate finance law in Toronto at Goodman, Phillips & Vineberg (now Goodmans') before becoming senior manager of the National Hockey League Players Association's (NHLPA) licensing and international business operations division, working with the league for the latter half of the 1990s.

A hockey and sports enthusiast, Banks recalls that particular job with fondness.

"I loved my job at the NHLPA," he told *Heebonics* in a recent interview. "I grew up playing a lot of hockey. There are great people and friends that work there. I think the business of hockey is full of opportunities, a lot of them not yet realized. So I miss being a part of that milieu for sure."

Banks takes a break from work to spend time with his kids.

Despite the fact he was working in what many would consider a dream job, in 2000 Banks was lured away from the hockey world by a then-little-known company trying to make inroads in the Canadian economy: eBay.

He was hired as employee number 2 and spent the next seven years helping turn eBay Canada into an online business juggernaut as its managing director.

"We just sorta went from scratch and launched the site in the latter part of 2000, and started having employees and building marketing plans and figuring out how you become the No.1 online shopping destination in Canada at a point in time where e-commerce was still in its infancy," Banks recalled.

After seven successful years with eBay, last year, he decided it was time for new challenges and to get back into the sports realm. So he joined JumpTV as its CEO in November 2007.

It was a calculated move, however.

"When I looked at the JumpTV opportunity, one of the things that intrigued me and jumped out at me was sports. There has been this constant theme that when all else fails, I look back at sports and there will be some gold in them there hills," Banks said. "And [JumpTV's] footprint for this space was perfect in terms of video broadcasting and global consumption."

While he admits that the ramp-up phase of his new job keeps him at travelling and at work upward of 15 hours a day and away from his wife and two children more than he'd like, he's confident that the business will get on track and he will be able to slow his hectic pace shortly.

"I said to my wife, 'Give me six months of being an absent dad and husband, because I think this is a big opportunity and will take a lot of work. Afterwards, you'll probably be sick of seeing me because I'll try and make this up to you,'" he said.

Banks said his goal with JumpTV is to provide consumers "the world's best, interactive and compelling experience through [Internet Protocol] TV."

As such, he said the company is focusing on two subjects, sports and the Hispanic community in the United States because "when you look at the most burgeoning population in the U.S., the one that advertisers are looking to target the most, and I would argue, the one that's most under-served, it's the Hispanic community.

"We have a good footprint in there already with our soccer and Hispanic content, so we're focusing on subscribers for that content."

Still, Banks said he won't rule out other business opportunities if they present themselves.

A case in point are Israeli sports such as basketball and soccer, which he described as "incredibly popular offerings" for his company.

"We are interested in exploring ways to get more Israeli content. The people who are watching it, are watching it in large numbers and they're enjoying it," he said.

When asked if he'd consider looking at deals with his old hockey buddies, Banks said currently there's no official plan to partner JumpTV with the NHL due to its focus on soccer and college sports in the United States and Latin America, but he doesn't rule it out as a possibility down the road.

As dedicated as he is in his business pursuits, Banks is equally, if not more so, unwavering in his philanthropic pursuits, with particular emphasis on the search for a cure for Alzheimer's disease.

He's a board member of the Baycrest Foundation, and in 2000 he founded Sportsfest, a non-profit that raises funds for research into the disease and which has so far raised $900,000 through charitable sporting events he organizes yearly.

"I've had three grandparents suffer and pass away from Alzheimer's," he said. "And I come from an incredibly tight family, both nuclear and extended. So I lived what was going on as a caregiver. I knew early on that I wanted to make a difference in raising funds and awareness for that disease."

Banks set a goal of raising $1 million in the fight against Alzheimer's, and he said this year he expects to meet that objective.

"I knew instinctively that Sportsfest would provide the opportunity to raise my peer group's awareness on Alzheimer's and its horrible effects, and hopefully turn some people on to something I'm passionate about," he added.

Banks said he owes his success in life to growing up in a close-knit family and taking inspiration from how his single mom worked hard to raise him and how his Jewish heritage influenced his values.

Banks and his wife during a visit to the zoo.

"We didn't have much means, but there was a ton of love and support. A lot of which came from my mom's family, who were located in Belleville at the time," he said. "My maternal bubbie and zaide are from Belleville where there was a small but very strong Jewish community.

"I spent a lot of weekends on VIA Rail going from Toronto to Belleville and the centre of that experience was the [Sons of Jacob] synagogue. Whether it was [Shabbat] services, High Holy Days or just large dinners where the local Orthodox Jewish community congregated, that was a big part of growing up and being together."

Banks said he considers himself a "traditionalist" Jew, and believes that the "greatest facet of Judaism" is the role that family plays within the religion.

"I love all of the family elements that are part and parcel of being raised in and participating in a Jewish home," he said, adding that his family is still "shopping" for a congregation to join in the city.

In terms of his business acumen and accomplishments, Banks is humble.

"There's nothing magic about what I'm doing. I attribute a lot of my business success to my involvement in the community. Because I think it provides a more fulsome enjoyment and appreciation for life and accomplishment. I think anybody that is singularly focused [on their career] is missing out on a lot of life experience. Besides my wife and kids, some of my proudest and most exciting experiences of my life have come out of my involvement with the community," he said.

Jordan Banks

"We need to look around and [realize] we are incredibly privileged. Whether from a health, financial or family perspective… we live in the greatest country in the world, in a Jewish community that is probably as strong as you're gonna find in the world, and we need to remind ourselves that we're lucky to have access to that and make sure we give back to those that aren't so lucky." —

Righteous family honoured at Toronto commemoration

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

In keeping with the solemnity of the occasion, the audience at last Wednesday's Yom Hashoah community commemoration at Earl Bales Park was asked not to applaud during the 90-minute service.

But the estimated 2,000-plus people at the annual event, co-sponsored by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Holocaust Centre of Toronto and the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, broke that rule with palpable respect to give a standing ovation to the family of Jan and Grietje Hiddema.

The Dutch couple hid Moshe Not, now Moshe Ben Zvi, on their farm in Friesland, Holland, from 1943, when he was 11 years old, until 1945.

The Hiddemas' son Eelke, who now lives in Kingston, Ont., with his family and who visited Ben Zvi in Israel in 2007, accepted a posthumous "Righteous Among the Nations" medal and certificate from Israeli Consul General Amir Gissin on behalf of his parents.

Gissin said the family treated Ben Zvi like their own son. "That family took a great risk for themselves and for their seven children."

Eelke's son John, who said his family was "deeply humbled" by the honour, read a moving letter from Ben Zvi to his father, Eelke, Ben Zvi's childhood friend.

"Today, I do not thank your parents. They would not want to be thanked. But rather, I thank God, who gave your parents a loving heart… They not only saved my life, but the lives of many others who were sheltered in their home," Ben Zvi wrote.

After the war, the Hiddemas offered Ben Zvi a permanent home on learning that he was the sole survivor of his family, but he eventually left to live with a family friend before making aliyah.

Gissin, in his remarks toward the beginning of the service, noted that 250,000 Holocaust survivors still live in Israel.

"Israeli governments were not that efficient in making sure that Holocaust survivors would have the best life possible," he said. "Nowadays, there is a growing understanding for this need, and more active action from the government.

"The second and third generations are the backbone of the State of Israel and of the Toronto community," Gissin said.

He urged audience members to do their "utmost" to ensure that people visit Israel, and to make the connection between "the Holocaust and the existence and continuation of the State of Israel."

Keynote speaker David Azrieli – an architect, real estate developer, philanthropist and Holocaust survivor who spent three years on the run as a teenager during World War II before arriving in Palestine in 1942 – stressed the lessons that survivors provided by embodying decency and dignity in the face of destruction of their families and communities.

"We have also found ways to give back to our communities and to our countries," said Azrieli, who was born in 1922 in Poland and settled in Montreal in 1954.

He paid tribute to survivors' "enormous contribution to the establishment and development of the State of Israel.

"They helped lay the foundation of the [Israel Defence Forces]. They became farmers, lawyers, journalists, athletes, educators, generals, rabbis and spiritual leaders," said Azrieli, who also recalled his happy, secure childhood infused with Jewish culture and Zionist values.

In Canada, he said, "tens of thousands of survivors who came after the war made an important impact on the Canadian Jewish community, in many ways making it more active, and contributing to the vibrant institutions of the Canadian Jewish community and in Canada generally," Azrieli said.

"After years of trauma, we found here an environment of freedom and security in which to rebuild, and in that rebuilding there is triumph."

Addressing survivors directly, Azrieli said they were "extraordinary" for finding it within themselves to "rekindle the spark of life, to love again, to celebrate holidays and anniversaries."

The most important way for survivors to honour their experiences, he said, is to teach the next generation about what happened.

Israel's consul general in Toronto, Amir Gissin, right, presents Eelke Hiddema with a "Righteous Among the Nations" certificate, as Hiddema's family looks on, at last week's Yom Hashoah commemoration at Earl Bales Park.
[Ruxandra Petolescu photo]

For others, he said, the most important way to honour survivors is to collect and preserve as many testimonies of wartime and postwar experiences as possible, an effort his family foundation is pursuing.

The event also included renditions by the Netivot HaTorah Day School Choir and the Boys' Choir of Grace Church-on-the-Hill. Other participants included Cantor Eric Moses; Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich; General Wingate Branch 256 Royal Canadian Legion; Jewish War Veterans of Canada, Toronto Post; survivor Arnold Friedman; shofar blower Marty Spring; Farnam Bigdoli and Elayna Fremes of Hillel of Greater Toronto, who read names of Holocaust victims, and Esther Buzaglo and Jeffrey Gottesman of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem's new leadership division, who read readings as six commemorative candles were lit.

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YOM HASHOAH PLAY: Grade 8 students at Netivot HaTorah Day School performed a play to mark Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah. It depicted the lives of concentration camp survivors after liberation and the long and dangerous road they took to reach Palestine. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

STUDENTS RECALL HOLOCAUST: Grade 8 students at Islington Junior Middle School in Etobicoke recently performed the play *Jakob and Tadek,* set during the Holocaust, for students in grades 4 to 8. The play was written by Rachel Brass, a teacher at the school, about her late father's survival during the war under an assumed identity as a Christian Pole. In back, from left, are teacher and play director Anne Potocnik, students Jing Wei, Stephanie Antwi, Malik Kaddoura, Madeleine McCoy, and Charles Darkwa. In front, Brass, centre, is flanked by students Esther Lee, left, and Helen Chen. Absent is student Yaseen Reiz, who narrated the play. Potocnik and Brass work on anti-racism issues at the school.

CELEBRATING ISRAEL@60: Middle school students at United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tzedec campus painted this colourful work of art on canvas. The design was created by Joan Loewenstein, the campus' art specialist at the school. It will be part of a silent auction to take place at a gala event on May 13.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

99 years young!
Mazel tov to Sadie Brenner
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Love, your family.

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Mollie & Paul Finewax on their
60th anniversary, married May 9, 1948.
From your children Francine, Terry,
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Mazel tov
Sam & Trudy Shain
on your 60th wedding anniversary
With much love from your
children and grandchildren.

Mazel tov, Irene Laiken, on your
90th birthday, April 19.
Much love and many more,
Stan & Elaine, Gord & Sarah, Rick & Ruth,
your grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Evy & Blake Breslin
Anita & Victor Direnfeld
announce Lauren & David's engagement.
A milestone we wish we could
share with their beloved late grandparents.

Greetings and best wishes
to Ava Elizabeth Krieger as she
celebrates her first birthday, from her
adoring family and friends.

Mazel tov Dr. Ken & Laura Beasley
on the birth of Jessica, and to big sister,
Rebekah. Love, Bubbie, Zaidie Pop,
Mema and Papa.

Mazel tov to
Lori & David Pollack
on the birth of their daughter
Carly Amanda.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Thursday, May 8, is the deadline for the May 22 issue, Thursday, May 15, is the deadline for the May 29 issue, and Monday, May 26, is the deadline for the June 5 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, May 8

CELEBRATING ISRAEL@60

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre begins festivities with a bagel breakfast at 8:30 a.m. followed by Israeli dancing, singing and other activities, concluding with a big birthday cake in the atrium. Sign the giant birthday card, which will be sent to Israel. Information, 416-636-1880.

The **London Jewish Community** celebrates at the JCC at 5 p.m. with entertainment, Israeli food, activities and fireworks.

FINDING GOOD DECISIONS

Chabad of Markham offers "Talmudic Ethics: Finding Your Way to Good Decisions," a six-week course with **Rabbi Avraham Plotkin** beginning this evening. First lesson free, enrol at jlitoronto.com.

Friday, May 9

BEACHES ONEG SHABBAT

The Beach Synagogue holds its monthly Oneg Shabbat beginning at 6 p.m. with a potluck dinner. Please bring a vegetarian main dish or dessert. The all-music service will be led by **Susan Litchen** and **Karen Gold**. 109 Kenilworth Ave. 416-694-7942 or beachsynagogue.com

Saturday, May 10

SISTERHOOD SHABBAT

Celebrate Beth Emeth Sisterhood Shabbat. Mothers and daughters participate in the service at 8:45 a.m. Guest sermon by **Rabbi Michal Shekel** of the Toronto Board of Rabbis. Mother's Day lunch to follow, where Rabbi Shekel will speak. Lunch $20; $13 children under 12; $25 non-members. Reserve in advance, 416-633-3838.

DANFORTH-BEACHES

Chabad of Danforth-Beaches invites everyone to its new shul for Shabbat services that include song, thought and community. Services 10 a.m. followed by kiddush and schmoozing. 2273 Queen St. E., lower level. Information, **Rabbi Sholom Lezell**, 416-809-1365 or rabbi@chabadDB.com.

LONDON SUPER SHABBAT

Temple Israel of London hosts Israel@60 Super Shabbat with prayer, singing, playing, talking and eating. Information, 519-858-4400.

Sunday, May 11

MOTHER'S DAY BRUNCH

Beth David Synagogue hosts a Mother's Day brunch with entertainment by **Peter Marino**. 10:30 a.m. $10. By reservation only, 416-633-2345.

GO FORWARD

Temple Kol Ami presents author and homeopathic doctor **Rose A. Weinberg** speaking about her book *Go Forward*, discussing past challenges with illness and how to appreciate success in getting well. 7:30 p.m. at Indigo, Yonge and Hwy. #7. www.templekolami.ca or 905-709-2620

ISRAEL'S SOCIAL MOSAIC

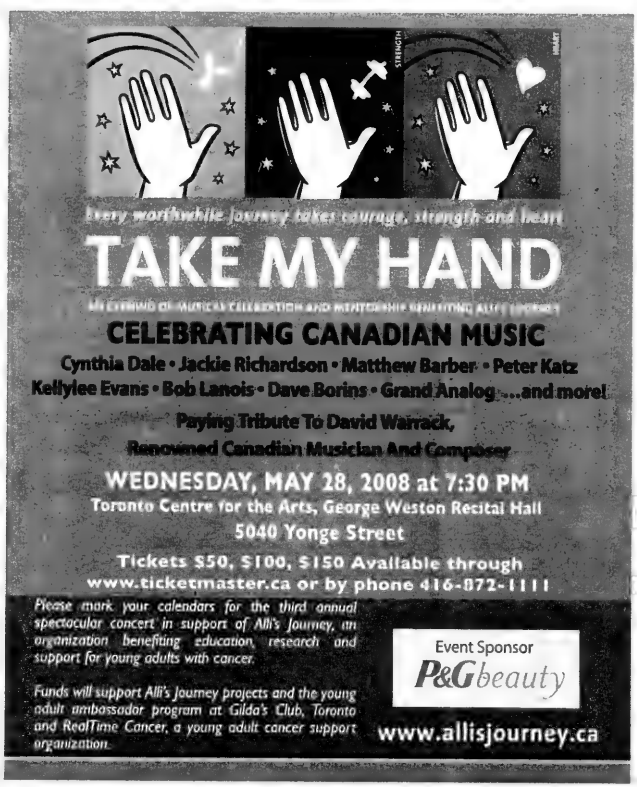
Shaar Shalom Synagogue celebrates Israel@60 with a lecture by **Dina Roginsky** on "Israeli Social Mosaic: A Complex Reality." 8 p.m. 905-889-4975

Monday, May 12

KOLEL FUNDRAISER

Kolel presents **Letty Cottin Pogrebin** and **Sarah Fulford** at a fundraising lunch at Darchei Noam Synagogue. 12-2 p.m. Tickets, 416-636-1880, ext. 255.

Continued on page 29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Toronto Centre for the Arts, George Weston Recital Hall
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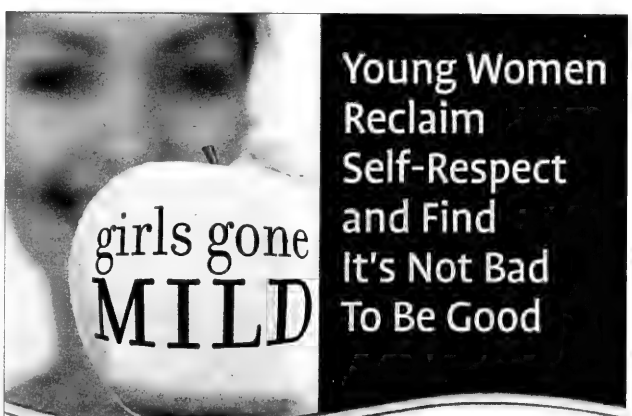
Tickets $50, $100, $150 Available through
www.ticketmaster.ca or by phone 416-872-1111
Please mark your calendars for the third annual spectacular concert in support of Alli's Journey, an organization benefiting education, research and support for young adults with cancer.
Funds will support Alli's Journey projects and the young adult ambassador program at Gilda's Club, Toronto and RealTime Cancer, a young adult cancer support organization.
Event Sponsor
P&G beauty
www.allisjourney.ca



The Aish HaTorah Dan Family Community Centre
905-764-1818
aishtoronto.com

A special Post-Mother's day Lecture for Women, Mothers and Daughters (15 and older)
Featuring Best-selling author Wendy Shalit

Wendy Shalit received her BA in philosophy from Williams College in 1997. She has written essays on literary and cultural topics for The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Slate, and other publications. Her book, "A Return to Modesty: Discovering The Lost Virtue," appeared in 1999 and won Barnes & Noble's Independent Thinker award.
Her second book "Girls Gone Mild: Young Women Reclaim Self-Respect and Find It's Not Bad to Be Good" was recently published by Random House.

aish Toronto

Tuesday, May 13
8:00 pm
$10.00/Pre-Registration by Monday, May 12 - $7.00
949 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill

What's New

Continued from page 28

CHRISTIANS FOR ISRAEL

Rev. John Tweedie, chair of Christians for Israel, speaks at the annual general meeting of Canadian Friends of Haifa University. 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Congregation. All welcome, reservations required, 416-972-9400 or info@haifa-univ.ca.

GIVING TO CHARITY

Rabbi Dan Roth, author of *Relevance: Pirkei Avos for the Twenty-first Century*, gives a multimedia presentation on the mitzvah of *ma'aser kesafim*, the obligation to give one-tenth of one's income to charity. The presentation explains the historical, philosophical and halachic aspects of this obligation. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-789-3213

Tuesday, May 13

BOOK TALK

The Holy Blossom Library Book Club discusses *The Violin Lover* by **Susan Glickman**. 9:30 a.m. All welcome. Information, **Anne**, 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

LUNCH & LEARN

Beth Tikvah Lunch & Learn hosts **Derek Penslar**, director of Jewish studies at University of Toronto, sharing his current research on "Jews at War: My Son the Soldier." 12:15 p.m. $20. By reservation only, deadline May 9. 416-221-3433, ext. 352

FAMILY IN ISRAEL DINNER

Emunah Women of Toronto holds it's annual Family In Israel Dinner honouring the women of Leah Kidron chapter and celebrating Israel@60, at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Men and women welcome. Reserve, 416-636-0036.

ISSUES FOR PARENTS

Kehillat Shaarei Torah Synagogue presents a series of talks for parents: **Sheila Jacobson** on "When Sleep Becomes an Issue in the Family," **Debra Danilewitz** on "Raising Resilient Children" and **Jay Pasternack** on "How to Engage Your Child on Difficult Issues." 7:30 p.m. A donation to JACS can be made in lieu of admission. RSVP, 416-229-2600, ext. 5, or education@shaareitorah.com.

TULCHINSKY READING

Beth David Sisterhood welcomes **Karen X. Tulchinsky**, reading excerpts from her new book *The Shoemaker's Daughter* and speaking about the writing process. 7:30 p.m. Guests $5. Information, 416-633-5500.

WELLNESS AND VITALITY

Temple Sinai Congregation hosts a panel discussion on "Maintaining Wellness and Vitality" with **Dr. Beth Abramson**, **Carol Dombrow** and **Dr. Karen Kaffko**. 7:30 p.m. $10. 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net

ADATH ISRAEL BOOK CLUB

Adath Israel Sisterhood series with **Heather Kassel** will discuss the *Can You Hear the Night Bird Call* by **Anita Badami.** 8 p.m. $10, non-members $15. 416-635-5340

VALUE OF HUMAN LIFE

Beth Tikvah Congregation offers an evening of study with **Bracha Feder**, teacher and educational coordinator at Associated Hebrew Schools, on "The Supreme Value of Each Human Life," a text-based exploration of ethical dilemmas in the Israeli reality. 8 p.m. 416-221-3433

Wednesday, May 14

REVIEW: *THE BOOK THIEF*

Beth Tzedec Sisterhood hosts **Heather Kassel** reviewing *The Book Thief* by **Markus Zusak**. 7:30 p.m. Cost, $5 donation to the chesed committee. 416-781-3511

SURVIVAL SEMINAR

Aish HaTorah presents The Jews for Judaism Counter Missionary Survival Seminar, a six-week course that will give you knowledge to respond to those who challenge your Judaism with **Rabbi Michael Skobac**. 8 p.m. 949 Clark Ave W. Free. Register, 905-761-0040.

MODELS FROM TANACH

Congregation B'nai Torah hosts a public shiur on "Parents and Children: Models from Tanach" with **Lori Grysman**, teacher at Ulpanat Orot and Netivot HaTorah. 8 p.m. 416-226-3700

DEAD SEA SCROLLS

Mekorot hosts a four-week course on "The Dead Sea Scrolls and Second Temple Judaism" with **Hindy Najman**. Find out how the scrolls provided insight into the development of midrash and the history of ancient biblical interpretation. To June 4, 8-9:30 p.m. at Congregation Bnai Torah. $50, men and women welcome. Registration, www.mekorot.ca or 416-877-2050.

CAMILLA GIBB SPEAKS

Temple Har Zion Sisterhood presents **Camilla Gibb**, author of *Sweetness in the Belly*, speaking on living in Ethiopia and her other experiences. 8 p.m. $5, non-members $8. 905-889-2252

MUSICAL AWARDS

Temple Sinai Congregation hosts "The Ben Steinberg Musical Legacy Award Concert," the 25th anniversary of this award for deserving young Jewish artists. This year's co-winners are **Melanie Gall**, a soprano from St. Albert, Alta., and **Jared Miller**, a pianist/composer from Garibaldi Highlands, B.C. 8 p.m. 416-487-3281

Other News

GENTLY USED BOOK SALE

Holy Blossom Temple annual book sale of gently used library books is Monday, May 12, to Wednesday, May 14, 1-6 p.m. Information, **Anne**, 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

JERUSALEM ART SHOW

The Jerusalem Foundation of Canada presents an art exhibition and sale of prints on canvas by **Gina Godfrey**, works by social documentary photographer **Beverley Abramson**, spiritual works by muralist **Ian Leventhal** and a large-scale painted installation by fabric artist **Rochelle Rubinstein**. Proceeds go to the Jerusalem International YMCA Peace Preschool. Through May 31, 70 Wingold Ave. 416-741-5542

JEWS OF GHANA

Join Congregation Darchei Noam and film co-producer **Adam McKinney** for the film *We are All One: The Jews of Sefwi Wiawso, Ghana*, followed by discussion. Thursday, May 15, 7:30 p.m. 864 Sheppard Ave. W. 416-638-4783

CRAFT AND GIFT SHOW

BAYT Sisterhood holds its third annual Craft and Gift Show with unique items from hats, jewelry, purses and toys to kitchenware, skincare products and clothing. Sunday, May 19, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Information, 905-731-0351.

VENDORS WANTED

Na'amat Canada invites vendors to its Gift and Craft Sale held in conjunction with Israel@60 celebrations, Sunday, June 1, at Mel Lastman Square. Information, 416-636-5425 (days) or **Rosaline Newell** (evenings), 905-881-8161.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child, 4600 Bathurst St. Information and registration at 416-638-7800, www.jfandcs.com, or call **Shawna**, ext. 215.

For Men After Divorce. A supportive six-week group for men experiencing separation or divorce. Begins Thursday, May 15, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Creating Fulfilling Relationships. A six-session group for single adults interested in learning more about relationships. Begins Thursday, May 15, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Sholom's Chai Society celebrates diversity on Wednesday, May 14, 12 p.m. with the Annual Multicultural Music Program and light lunch. $10. Reservations required, 416-783-6103, ext. 228.

Lunch & Learn in Retirement at Holy Blossom hosts **Dr.Guy Prouix** discussing "The Aging Mind: What's Normal and What's Not." Wednesday, May 14, 12:30 p.m. Bring a dairy lunch. $1. 416-789-3291

55+ Forward for Seniors at the Miles Nadal JCC visits the photography exhibit Aging is Living, Wednesday, May 14, 1:15 p.m. Meet in the lobby. Information, 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Beth Tikvah Friendship Group screens *The Conspiracy of Kindness*, a film about Japanese diplomat, **Chium Sugihara**, who saved more than 2,000 Jews during World War II. $3, non-members $5. Thursday, May 15, 2 p.m. 416-221-3433

The Association of Jewish Seniors hosts **Rabbi Michael Skobac** of Jews for Judaism, discussing "Jewish Spirituality and personal Growth." Thursday, May 15, 9:30 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Guests $2. Information, **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, Wednesday, May 14; Sunday dance, May 18. Information Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Children with Explosive Behaviours," a lecture by **Jennifer Saltzman-Benaiah**. Tuesday, May 13, 10 a.m. $3, non-members $6.

Wellness Lecture, "Your Brain is Like a Computer: Memory Connections," with **Theresa Wackerman**. Thursday, May 15, 1:30 p.m.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

"Perspectives on a Planet," with **Bob MacDonald**, host of CBC Radio's *Quirks and Quarks*. Monday, May 12, 2:30-3:30 p.m. in the assembly room.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

"The Power of the Book: The Story Behind *None Is Too Many*," a lecture by **Harold Troper**. Tuesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m. Information, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 34

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Krakowitz, Robert	April 10/08	595 Old Orchard Grove
Rosenthal, William	April 10/08	418 Glengrove Ave. W.
Wilson, Eva	April 10/08	2045 Finch Ave. W.
Meshnik, David	April 16/08	
Tsiller, Leonid	April 18/08	7300 Yonge St
Plener, Morton	April 19/08	300 Hedonicks Rd
Brodsky, Hector	April 19/08	115 Antibes Dr
Bronshtein, Sofya	April 19/08	
Starkman, Gertrude	April 19/08	54 Canyon Creek
Tiz, Feiga	April 20/08	Private
Frenkel, Lia	April 20/08	Private
Shub, Belle	April 21/08	3560 Bathurst St
Benmergui, Simy	April 24/08	
Kiner, Celia	April 24/08	Private
Wasserman, Anita	April 25/08	Private
Hauer, Mina	April 22/08	
Barnartt, Sarah	April 20/08	
Levenstein, Eva	April 25/08	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Rob Rochkin	Apr 18/08	58 Shalimar Bl
Willi Karpel	Apr 19/08	154 Delhi Ave
Fishel Fiksel	Apr 19/08	60 Sisera Dr
Irving Lebofsky	Apr 19/08	146 Pleasant Ridge Ave
Charlotte Hollenberg	Apr 20/08	2 Buchan Crt
Anne Tanenbaum	Apr 20/08	2045 Lakeshore Bl W
Rita Leventhal	Apr 22/08	500 Avenue Rd
Melvin Grossman	Apr 22/08	1 Clark Ave W
Abraham Nerenberg	Apr 21/08	349 St. Clair Ave W
Beatrice Rosenbloom	Apr 22/08	42 Hearthstone Cres
Louise Shahrebani	Apr 22/08	4 Forest Lane Way
Murry Zuckerman	Apr 22/08	Caves Point
Boris Kurgatnikov	Apr 24/08	10 Tangreen Crt
Gigi Schwartz	Apr 24/08	1 Concorde Pl
Lynne Ackerman	Apr 24/08	72 Ava Cres
Eve Shapiro	Apr 25/08	10 Senlac Rd
Florence Moss	Apr 25/08	4 Cobblestone Dr
Helen Stein	Apr 25/08	89 Skymark Dr
Reveka Kompaniyets	Apr 27/08	5935 Bathurst St

HEDREW BASIC BURIAL

Joseph Mailach	Apr 18/08	130 Neptune Drive
Lillian Baker	Apr 21/08	5935 Bathurst Street

A Mother's Day Tribute for
HANNAH BRESLIN (1912-2001)

When a mother is special, her love lives on.
Mother, you were extraordinary.
Your love continues to fill, guide & inspire us.

Your Loving Kids
Stephen, Perry, Cindy, Blake

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of

LILLIAN SALSBERG ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, May 11th, 10:30 a.m.

Roselawn Cemetery
Eitz Chaim Section

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

HYMIE LEIBOWITZ - passed away peacefully on April 26, 2008 surrounded by his wife and children in Johannesburg, South Africa. The beloved father of Linda Davidson, grandfather of Maya and Lee Roth, and Adam and Talya Davidson, and great-grandfather of Zachary Roth will forever be remembered for his strength, dignity, commitment to family, and "sameyach bechelko".

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Obituary

Rabbi co-owned Miriam's Fine Judaica for 41 years

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Rabbi William Rosenthal, a beloved teacher and dedicated volunteer who co-owned Miriam's Fine Judaica for 41 years, died on April 11. He was 97.

Born in Miskolc, Hungary in 1911, he and his brother operated a lumber business. He had attended yeshiva and at age 34, he became engaged to Miriam Schwarcz who lived in Komarno, Czechoslovakia.

Rabbi William Rosenthal

The wedding was planned to take place in Miskolc, but in 1944, things were very difficult for the Jews.

With the help of a gentile friend and employee who provided Miriam with false identity papers from his own daughter, Miriam was taken to Miskolc by her father's friend, Miriam told *The CJN*.

Miriam and William were married on April 5, 1944, several hours after she arrived in Hungary.

Three months later, William was taken to work in a slave labour camp in the Carpathian Mountains. Miriam was taken from the ghetto to Auschwitz and there she discovered that she was four months pregnant.

Their stories of survival are filled with suffering and miracles. After liberation, they were reunited, and to William's surprise, they had a four-month-old baby boy.

They came to Toronto after travelling to Bratislava, Prague, Paris and Cuba. After working in a mattress company for a short time, William obtained a position in Timmins, Ont., as a rabbi and Hebrew teacher. After one year, the family moved to Sudbury, where he served for 16 years as rabbi, cantor and teacher.

In 1965, the family moved to Toronto and opened Miriam's Fine Judaica on Bathurst Street at Caribou Road which the Rosenthals operated for 41 years.

Knowledgeable about Jewish rituals, he was often asked for advice. When a man came to the store who said he had to say *Kaddish* and needed tfillin but couldn't afford them, Rabbi Rosenthal gave him the tfillin and taught him how to put them on and how to recite the prayer, his daughter, Lilian, said.

Through the years, he served as rabbi and cantor for High Holy Day services in communities such as Halifax, Glace Bay, N.S., Guelph, Ont., and Welland, Ont.

His passion for Jewish learning led him to perform many services for the elderly as a volunteer telling Yiddish stories and performing Hebrew and liturgical songs. He was recently honoured for more than 2,000 hours of service at Baycrest.

He is survived by his wife Miriam, sons Leslie and his wife Annette; Murray and his wife Margo; daughter Lilian; seven grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Obituary

CJN staffer really was a renaissance man

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

It's almost trite to call anyone who is even remotely interesting a renaissance man (or woman).

But I and my colleagues at *The Canadian Jewish News* had the good luck to actually know such a person.

Eric Layman

In the confines of the newspaper office, Eric Layman, who died suddenly last week, was a sales representative, writer and proofreader at *The CJN*, where he had worked since 1974.

Outside, in what he probably considered the "real world," he was a poet, a creator of science fiction worlds, a thinker, a teacher and a songwriter.

He would arrive at the office – to which he often bicycled in all kinds of weather – dressed in either a beret, set at a jaunty angle, or a squashed hat and a long scarf.

Eric was one of those people who always had something to talk about. Current events. The language he invented for his *Star Trek*-inspired stories - complete with pronunciation, grammar and sociological justification. The poetry workshops and readings that he both attended and gave. His relationships.

He wanted to know all he could about the history of things and people and places and religions.

But it would be wrong to suggest that Eric was only interested in his own pursuits. He wanted to know all about other peoples' experiences – the good things and the bad. And he remembered things you told him long after you said them.

When a friend once asked him to come to visit her classes of special needs children, he quickly agreed. They adored him and kept asking when he was coming back.

In many ways, Eric was a throwback to hippie times in the 1960s, when he used to sell his poetry on the streets of Yorkville. Not for him the suit and tie, or the downtown condo. Oh, he lived downtown all right – in an apartment in the heart of Kensington Market.

Every so often, he and I would be scolded for getting so engrossed in a conversation that we would disturb the people around us.

It will be quieter in the *CJN* offices now. He will be missed.

ALL I NEED OF HEAVEN

I'll know life's joys to overflow;
far sooner flames than rust.
Before I go, I'll share what I know,
though the womb reclaim my dust.

I'll leave a little joy behind me;
this is my final wish.
This is all I need of heaven,
and no post-mortem bliss.

Let the words I write, inspire,
blades in freedom's hand,
birds of bright desire,
and rain to a greening land.

I'll leave the world a little freer;
this is my final wish.
This is all I need of heaven,
and no post-mortem bliss.

In flesh and wind and weather,
in sinew, blood and stone,
I'm meshed with the world together,
yet one to myself alone.

I shall return where I came from;
my destiny is this.
This is all I need of heaven,
and no post-mortem bliss.

In the wombs of stars compounded,
the elements burn and birth.
As our galaxy's wheel swings round,
we shall return from earth.

From stardust back to stardust,
our destiny is this.
This is all we need of heaven,
and no post-mortem bliss.

Eric Layman, 2007

On behalf of the **Ontario Liberal Caucus** *best wishes to the community on the*

60th Anniversary of Israel's Independence

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Hon. Kathleen Wynne
Don Valley West
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Authorized by Ontario Liberal Caucus

Coke urged to compensate Montreal family

MONTREAL — The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) held a protest outside the Coca- Cola Company's recent annual shareholders' meeting in Wilmington, Del., calling on the multi-billion dollar company to compensate the Bigio family of Montreal, Egyptian Jewish refugees whose land and factories were expropriated by the Egyptian government during an anti-Semitic campaign in the 1960s.

In 1994, Coke bought a minority interest in the El Nasr Bottling Company (ENBC), the Egyptian firm that took over the Bigios' seized property. Three years later, the family sued Coke for trespass in federal district court in New York.

"Coca-Cola continues to violate its own code of business conduct," said Leonard Getz, a national vice-president of ZOA and a Coca-Cola shareholder.

"First the company refuses to acknowledge that it is profiting from stolen property, and now it reneges on its promise to engage in good faith settlement discussions with the Bigios. What will it take for Coke to do the right thing?"

Last year, Getz submitted a shareholder proposal for consideration at Coca-Cola's annual shareholders' meeting, proposing that Coca-Cola be required to fairly compensate the Bigios for their loss. He said the company agreed at that time to negotiate with the Bigios.

This year, Getz was outside the shareholders' meeting, along with several dozen other protesters, displaying signs that read, "Who's Benefiting from Anti-Semitism? Coke is it!," "Coke Trespasses on Stolen Jewish Property," and Christians and Jews United for Justice Ask 'The Real Thing' To Do The Right Thing."

"The ZOA called off a demonstration last year after Coca-Cola promised to discuss settlement terms with the Bigio family. But after several meetings held during the past year, it is now abundantly clear that Coca-Cola has no intention of offering the Bigios a fair settlement," said ZOA national president Morton Klein.

In the 1960s, the Egyptian regime of Gamal Abdel Nasser expropriated the Bigio family's land and factories near Cairo without compensating them. The ZOA claims the only reason was that the Bigios were Jewish.

Soft drink giant has share in firm that took over seized land in Egypt

The Bigios had owned the property since the early 1900s. Coca-Cola had leased the land and a factory from the Bigios since the 1940s. The Bigios had a longstanding business relationship with Coca-Cola in Egypt, supplying bottle caps and other products to the company.

The New York federal district court dismissed the Bigios' case at Coca-Cola's request, concluding that Egypt was a more appropriate forum to decide their claims. The Bigios appealed, asking the ZOA to submit an *amicus curiae* ("friend of the court") brief on their behalf.

The ZOA's brief showed that the Bigios would not get a fair trial in Egypt because hatred of Jews is deeply ingrained in Egyptian society, and that this hatred is still fostered today, even by the government-sponsored media.

The Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit reversed the federal district court ruling last year, and decided that the Bigios' case could proceed in an American court, saying, "It was perfectly reasonable under these circumstances for the plaintiffs to bring their action against Coca-Cola, the only U.S. company involved, in the United States."

The ZOA has been actively supporting the Bigios' cause and has called for a boycott of Coca-Cola products until the company makes a fair settlement with the Bigio family.

"Despite its self-image and promise to act with honesty and integrity in all matters, Coca-Cola has been unfairly and immorally benefiting from the campaign of anti-Semitism against the Bigios," said Susan Tuchman, director of the ZOA's Centre for Law and Justice.

The Bigios are represented by Washington, D.C., attorneys Nathan and Alyza Lewin, who successfully argued before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit that the Bigios were entitled to proceed with their claims in an American court.

Raphael Bigio, 63, speaking on behalf of his family, said he is deeply grateful for the ZOA's assistance. He hopes that Jews and other "fair-minded" people will stop buying Coke products.

"As Coca-Cola well knows, my family owns these valuable assets in Egypt, and they were stolen from us. You can't go and buy stolen assets and then reap the benefits. It is only right that my family be compensated because of Coca-Cola's using and benefiting from my family's property in Egypt."

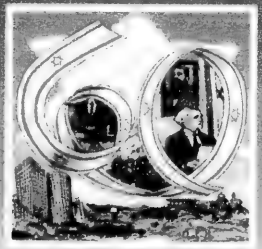
Klein added: "This case is important for several reasons. First, it seeks to right a shameful wrong committed by Coca-Cola. Second, it's a reminder of the billions of dollars worth of assets, businesses, homes, etc., stolen from Jews in Arab countries.

"And finally, the case is a reminder of the close to one million Jewish refugees who suffered in the Arab and Islamic countries in which they lived. Israel and the Jewish community must demand full and fair compensation for their losses."

Coke spokesperson Crystal Warwell Walker said the company is not commenting as this is a matter of ongoing litigation.

She reissued an earlier statement, which reads in part: "Prior to submission of the bid for the purchase of the Egyptian bottler by a Coca-Cola Company subsidiary, a due diligence investigation was conducted. The investigation did not reveal any pending claims by the Bigios against ENBC."

Hot Topics:
Outlook on Israel @ The House
Free Dinner followed by an engaging dialogue with a renowned panel



Wednesday May 14th 7:30pm
Free with RSVP or $5 @ the door
For more information contact dcollin@cjnews.com
kashrut observed

HEEBONICS bac CJPAC The House Hillel of Greater Toronto The Canadian Jewish news

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Thursday, May 22. 8:00 PM
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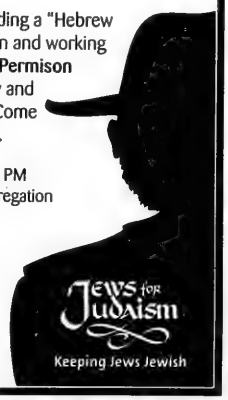

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Coast to Coast

Downtown Ottawa shul marks 50 years

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — At a time when many cities are seeing the demise of synagogues in their downtown cores as Jews continue their migration to the suburbs, Congregation Beth Shalom is bucking the trend.

Located in Ottawa's downtown Sandy Hill neighbourhood, the Beth Shalom will be celebrating its 50th anniversary with an "Evening of Bubbles & Bites," June 18 at the shul.

Vera Klein, who is chairing the event, is the daughter of one of the synagogue's founding members, Bill Grossman.

"Besides celebrating the 50th anniversary of the synagogue, the evening is also an opportunity to celebrate its rebirth and renewal, a coming alive again with a new vibrancy," she said, noting that although over the years many families have moved away from the downtown core, there are young couples and families moving into the area and joining Beth Shalom.

There have, of course, been challenges and changes along the way for the formerly Orthodox and currently unaffiliated Beth Shalom.

By 2002, after much of Ottawa's Jewish community had moved out to the suburbs, the congregation had shrunk to about 400 member families, about half the number it had 25 years earlier.

In an effort to attract new members, in 2003, two-thirds of Beth Shalom's members voted to secede from the Orthodox Union and introduce mixed seating in the sanctuary. The shul also decided to allow bat mitzvah girls to read haftarot – though not to read from the Torah – but it retained its Orthodox liturgy and kashruth standards.

The changes led to the resignation of the shul's chazzan and rabbi, and about 40 to 50 people split off to form a new downtown minyan that eventually became the Orthodox Community Ohev Yisroel.

Membership now stands at about 400 families and is growing, said parnass Allan Baker.

The June 18 celebratory evening will have a number of nostalgic components.

A documentary video tracing the shul's history is being prepared by a committee under the leadership of shul member and former CBC reporter Jason Moscovitz. The video will feature interviews with congregants sharing their favourite stories of bygone eras.

Pictures are also being gathered for a "walk down memory lane" display of storyboards to be mounted in the foyer, which guests will enjoy while meeting old friends during the opening reception.

Other highlights of the evening will be a tribute to Issie Rose, "a stalwart member and fixture in the life of Beth Shalom," said Alyce Baker, whose family has also been involved with the synagogue over the decades. There will also be a ceremony honouring the founding members of the synagogue, many of whom are still active and will be present that evening.

There will be music from the five decades of the synagogue's existence, and a cocktail reception will feature food kiosks with delicacies from each decade.

Organizers are hoping that many former Ottawans will come "home" to join in the celebration.

Tickets are available through the synagogue office at 613-789-3501, ext. 223, and the cost, following the theme of the evening, is $57.17, commemorating the year on the Jewish calendar that Beth Shalom was founded.

Ex-Mossad agent tells amazing story over matzah

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — It's not so unusual that Michael Ross, who grew up in Victoria, B.C., has returned to live there with his second wife and child after spending most of his adult life elsewhere.

The unusual part of his story is where the "elsewhere" was.

In his youth, while backpacking through Europe, a chance encounter led Ross to make a side trip to Israel. What was intended as a brief adventure turned into a sojourn of nearly two decades, and what happened during that time is now the subject of a book and a film about to begin production.

Ross' recounted his story — as told in his book *The Volunteer: A Canadian's Secret Life in the Mossad*, written by Ross and *National Post* columnist Jonathan Kay—at a recent Passover lunch, held April 24 at Ottawa's Agudath Israel Congregation and sponsored by the Ottawa chapter of Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University (CFHU).

When he arrived in Israel in 1982, Ross had no idea that within two years he would convert to Judaism, marry an Israeli woman and live on a kibbutz, as well as become an Israeli citizen and join the Israeli Defence Forces.

For various reasons – perhaps because of his non-Jewish background, native English-speaking ability, and previous experience in the Canadian military – he was recruited into the Mossad, Israel's spy agency, following his regular military service.

Continued on page 35

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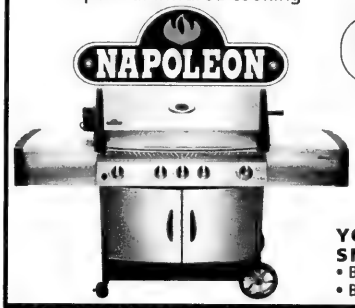

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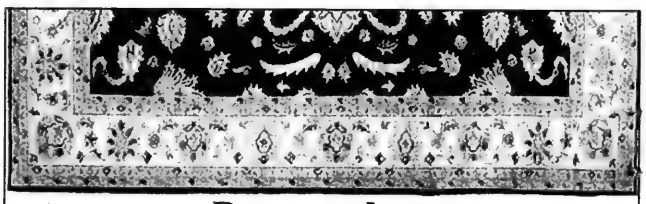

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Coast to Coast

Staring down the barrel of Iran's nuclear gun

As Israel approaches its 60th anniversary, many in the media are looking at the danger that Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons poses to the very survival of the Jewish state.

Some downplay the threat entirely, based on what others would consider wishful thinking.

For instance, in the May/June issue of *Foreign Policy* magazine, the sensationally titled cover story "The Israel Myth," by Israeli writer Gershon Gorenberg, states categorically that a nuclear Iran would not destroy Israel.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Gorenberg's argument is that Iran's nuclear ambitions can be deterred by Israel's presumed stockpile of nuclear weapons, just as the leaders of the former Soviet Union were deterred by the threat of nuclear retaliation by the United States.

Gorenberg writes: "Experience shows... that Iranian leaders share the Soviets' caution. Iran agreed to a ceasefire in the war with Iraq once Iraqi missiles began falling on Tehran. The ayatollahs were willing to sacrifice soldiers [and tens of thousands of children] – but not to pay a higher price."

Gorenberg's self-consciously clever summary: "The threat of mushroom clouds will concentrate [Iran's] thinking about Israel wonderfully."

But, as most Israeli and a large number of western analysts agree, Israel can't afford to sit still and allow Iran to produce nuclear weapons on the assumption that Iran would never be so irrational as to use them.

Even Gorenberg acknowledges that if Iran acquires nuclear weapons, it could set off a regional race for the bomb and increase dramatically the risk of "a mistake." He fails, however, to mention the other looming possibility: that a nuclear Iran could place such weapons in the hands of its terrorist proxies, such as Hezbollah.

The *Economist*'s special report on "Israel at 60" (April 3) said: "Within the Israeli government, secret debates rage over whether, and when, Israel should strike Iran alone. Outside it, squadrons of ex-spooks and retired generals hold conferences on the future of a polynuclear Middle East. Soothing voices counsel that for all the inflammatory statements about wiping Israel off the map, Iran wants a bomb for national pride and self defence, not unprovoked aggression.

Will deterrence stave off the threat?

"But in a country obsessed with security, the hawks tend to have more sway."

The *Economist* quoted Shmuel Bar, a former Mossad agent and now an Iran expert at Herzliya's Interdisciplinary Center, as an example of a "hawk" who rejects the idea that the Cold War model of deterrence would work in the Middle East.

Bar responded in an April 26 letter to the *Economist* in which he rebuked the magazine for minimizing Israel's concerns about a nuclear Iran: "Israel has little choice but to view the Iranian threat through the prism of the past 60 years in the region and take into account the record of brinkmanship by regional leaders seeking to enhance their public support, popular enthusiasm for nuclear weapons, and the strong influence of religious beliefs that sanctify risk propensity and martyrdom. These do not augur well for a stable Middle East."

In other words, no one should assume that Iran's clique of mullahs, led by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, will act according to western rational calculations.

As *Jerusalem Post* editor David Horovitz wrote in "Stopping Iran" (April 24): "The combination of Iran's incitement to genocide and its determined acquisition of the tools to carry out the deed has created a consensus in leadership here [in Israel] – not absolute unanimity, but certainly a strong majority view – that Israel's future well-being necessitates the thwarting of this Iranian regime's nuclear aspirations."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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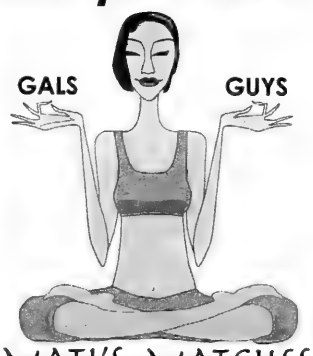

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YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל

רעדאגירט פון: אַלעק סילווער

דער יום־טוב פון מדינת ישׂראל

(60־יאריקע עקזיסטענץ פון אונדזער לאַנד)

פון אַלעק סילווער

היינט, דעם 8טן מאי וועט די יידישע וועלט איבעראַל פייערן א ספּעציעלן יום־טוב. עס איז דער 60סטער געבוירנטאָג פון מדינת ישׂראל — אונדזער נײַ־אויפגענומען לאַנד. עס וועלן זיכער געשריבן ווערן הונדערטער ארטיקלען, עסייען, זכרונות, פּאָעזיע, וויסנשאַפט אויספֿירלעך צום לויב־געזאַנגען. נישט בלויז וועלן יידן און ישׂראלים באַשרייבן די דאָזיקע געשעעניש. אויך וועלן א סך פון די ליבהאבער אַנדערע פעלקער זיך פּריען צוזאַמען מיטן יידישן פֿאָלק אין דער דאָזיקער דערגרייכונג.

עס וועלן אויך, אָן ספֿק, געהערט ווערן פון די אַנטי־צינסיסטישע און אַנטיסעמיטישע שׂונאים פון אונדזער פאָלק און לאַנד. אָבער מיר, די יידישע אינ־ווייַנער פון לאַנד, וועלן זיך פֿריען ביז נאָר.

צו דער געלעגנהייט דרוקן מיר אינעם אַן אַלטע פּאָעטישע אַרבעט פון איינעם פון די בעסטע דיכטערס אין אונדזער ליטעראַטור ספּעציעל געשריבן צום געבוירנטאָג פון מדינת ישׂראל.

צו אונדזער יום־טוב

פון יוסף פּאָפּיערניקאָוו

כ'בין שטענדיק געווען אין מיין היימלאַנד דער זינגער
פון אַרבעט און בוי,
כ'האָב שטענדיק די ברידער באַזונגען אין שווערקייט
פון היים־עול און יאָך,
איך האָב זיי מיט לידער באַגלייט, ווען אויף אַלע איז,
ווי בלוטיקער טוי,
געלעגן דער שוייס פון דער מי, און די שטויביקע
גראָקייט פון וואָך.

היינט וועל איך זיי זינגען, די ברידער,
א יום־טובדיק הלל געזאַנג,
אַ ליד וועגן תחית הארץ, אַ ליד וועגן תחית העם —
נאָך דעם ווי אַ פּאָלק איז געווען שוין צום־אויסגיין
מסופּנדיק קראַנק,
געווען שוין, נישט מער ווי אַ פּניאָק פון אַ
בלוטיק־פֿאַרשניטענעם שטאַם.

און אָט סאַראַ בוים אַ געזונטער עס האָט
פּונעם פּניאָק זיך צעבליט —
אַן אינערנעפּלאַצטער פון היימלאַנד באָדנס —
אויף איינגענער ערד,
אין איינגענער אַלט־ייַנער היים, ווו מען לעבט שוין
פון איינגענעם שניט,
אין איינגענעם זכות און מיט שטאָלץ
פון דער איינגענער וועלט.

טאָ זאָלן מיר טרינקען פון טאָליקע בעכער
דעם איינגענעם ווייַן,
די אייגענע ריחות פון בלימעכער, וואָס ס'טראָגט זיי
אונדז אונטער דער ווינט,
און זאָלן מיר, שיכורע, טאַנצן אין נייעם
באַגינען אַרײַן —
אַזוי ווי מיר וואָלטן, מיט טענץ און געזאַנג,
דעם באַשעפער געדינט.

און זאָלן אין טאָג פונעם יום־טוב — פֿאַרהייליקטע,
ווערן דערמאָנט
די יינגסטע, בייַ וועמען די עלטערע האָבן
בטחון געשעפט:
די זון און די טעכטער, וואָס האָבן ווי ליבן
געקעמפט פֿאַרן לאַנד,
געשלאָגן די שׂונאים, געזיגט און — דעם יום־טוב
פון זיג נישט דערלעבט ...

Coast to Coast

Congress, First Nations group putting Ahenakew behind them

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Representatives of First Nations and Jewish organizations who met in Ottawa last week are touting the goodwill and co-operative spirit of the meeting and downplaying any lingering after effects of the David Ahenakew affair.

Chief Lawrence Joseph of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) said contrary to some media reports, there are no "strained relations" with the Jewish community.

"I have never expressed or experienced anything but good relations with the Jewish community," Joseph told *The CJN*.

"Ahenakew is an individual and he does not represent the 74 First Nations organizations that I do.

"He's an individual who made a horrendous mistake and he doesn't reflect the character of all the First Nations people," he said. "We 100 per cent condemn it."

Co-operative spirit cited at joint meeting

Ahenakew, a former leader of the FSIN and the Assembly of First Nations, was charged with promoting hatred of Jews after he told a reporter covering a FSIN health conference that Jews were a disease and Hitler was justified in killing them.

A trial court found him guilty, but the conviction was overturned on appeal and a new trial ordered.

The retrial is scheduled to begin in the fall, but about a month ago, the FSIN reportedly reinstated Ahenakew to the position with the FSIN senate that he lost after his comments were reported.

Ahenakew turned down the seat after federal and provincial ministers threatened to reconsider their support of the FSIN.

Joseph said the FSIN never reinstated Ahenakew but only had been asked to take the first step in that direction. (News reports at the time stated the FSIN legislative assembly held a closed-door meeting in which it voted 43-3 to reinstate Ahenakew.)

Joseph said the FSIN will follow a clearer and more transparent voting process in any future bid to reinstate Ahenakew.

He said the meeting with Canadian Jewish Congress and Saskatchewan Jewish community leaders was a first step toward fostering closer ties between the two communities. Part of their discussion focused on putting in place an arrangement that would allow Ahenakew to demonstrate that he has truly repented for his remarks, Joseph said.

Congress CEO Bernie Farber, who attended the 2½ hour meeting last week, said much of the discussion focused on ways the two organizations could address issues of common concern.

Native treaty rights and the residential schools scandal are two issues where the organization could co-operate, Farber said.

Discussion of the Ahenakew issue "proved more challenging," he continued. "They wanted us to understand their tradition on forgiveness and redemption. We have a tradition in Judaism on that," he said.

"They wanted us to understand their position. At the same time, we wanted them to understand our position."

"Now we have a starting point to work towards that goal… We are far from any conclusion here, but we are on the road to dialogue."

Farber said the meeting was "frank, passionate and challenging, and in the end, both [sides] came away with a better understanding of each other."

He said Congress has accepted a FSIN invitation to visit Saskatchewan reserves sometime in the summer to see first hand the conditions Saskatchewan Indians face.

Although contact with the FSIN is a recent development, Congress has for 10 years pursued closer ties with First Nations, Farber said.

Joining Farber at the meeting were Congress co-presidents Rabbi Reuven Bulka and Sylvain Abitbol; Wendy Lampert, Congress' director of community relations; Jim Scharfstein, a Saskatchewan member of Congress' board of directors, and David Katzman, president of Congregation Agudas Israel in Saskatoon.

Mossad experiences

Continued from page 33

When asked whether he was concerned about divulging Mossad secrets, Ross said he has the utmost respect for the organization and wouldn't do anything to imperil it.

"[The book] is a personal story, not a smear of the Mossad," he said. "There are people in this country and in Europe who owe their lives to the Mossad. Much of its intelligence has been used by, and helps, other countries. Pretty much everything I have described in my book can be found on the Internet or in another book."

Ross related some of the experiences he had while working undercover for the Mossad, such as his mission to help the Jews of Zimbabwe escape when President Robert Mugabe started to seize the farms of whites in 2000 and also "targeted the Jewish community there… My job was to meet with members of the Jewish community there and help people to escape, to recruit people to help us. Time was of the essence."

There were complications along the way, including a hair-raising roadblock that was set up to find arms smugglers.

"During this period, I decided I had pretty much had enough of living that kind of life," Ross said. "This kind of work can take its toll on you, professionally and personally… Your cover life starts to take over your real life. When someone reaches that point, usually you have to go back to Israel and get yourself re-aligned."

CFHU's sixth annual Passover lunch attracted approximately 300 people.

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Med student faces his own battle with cancer

Diagnosed right before Rosh Hashanah, treatment started on Erev Yom Kippur

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Marc Ginsburg, 33, has wanted to become a doctor since he was 10 years old.

After getting a master's degree as a nurse practitioner from the University of Toronto and completing two out of four years of medical school abroad, Ginsburg was shocked to find himself at the other end of the stethoscope.

While studying for an exam last summer, he fell ill and discovered that he had cancer.

Ginsburg began his career in health care at Mount Sinai Hospital in cardiology, where he became one of the charge nurses and worked in the Intensive Care Unit.

He was working to obtain his master's degree at the University of Toronto to become a nurse practitioner when he was accepted to medical school abroad.

"At that point, I had applied to medical school six years in a row. I didn't get accepted anywhere in Canada for those six years. And I applied everywhere. I always said seven years would be my cut off, so thank God," said Ginsburg, who is Orthodox.

With his wife, Gillian, six months pregnant, Ginsburg travelled to Bulgaria for his first year at the Medical University of Varna.

And with a newborn son, the Ginsburg family transferred to the University of Sint Eustatius School of Medicine in the Caribbean for his second year. At both schools, Ginsburg was at the top of his class.

In August 2007, he returned to Toronto and began to prepare for the United States Medical Licensing Exams, of which there are three.

"So I'm studying for the step one exam, and after about 2½ to three weeks of studying… I had a weird chest discomfort, a little difficulty swallowing… I thought it was school-related stress getting close to the end, and I didn't fit the age group for anything sinister," he said.

"I don't drink, don't smoke, I'm generally a very healthy person and a very active person. My nails turned white, I was short of breath," he said, adding that it all seemed to happen at once.

He said he went to see a friend who is a family physician. His blood was drawn, and it was discovered that Ginsburg's hemoglobin, the protein molecule in red blood cells that carries oxygen from the lungs, was extremely low.

"I got myself to North York General, they gave me two transfusions of blood and then they did more testing."

Doctors discovered that he had a tumour on the lower end of his esophagus where it meets with the stomach – the gastroesophageal junction. Ginsburg was diagnosed with adenocarsinoma.

"Something like less than 1.6 or 2 in a million people get what I get at this age. A cancer like this usually hits people in their 60s and over, and they are generally smokers, drinkers, obese…"

He said that while he sought specialists to join his treatment team, he met some resistance and pessimism.

He said a specialist at Princess Margaret Hospital, "basically wanted to put nails in a wooden box, so to speak."

But his oncologist at North York General Hospital was eager to start him on an 84-day chemotherapy cycle.

From left, Marc Ginsburg, with his son Yosi, wife Gillian and daughter Miriam.

"I was diagnosed right before Rosh Hashanah… On Erev Yom Kippur, I started chemo at North York General."

He said that same day, his wife, who was nine months pregnant with their second child, had gone into labour at Mount Sinai Hopital.

"I heard Miriam being born over the phone… It was just unbelievable."

After Ginsburg completed his 84-day cycle, his oncologist decided to extend his chemotherapy to 27 weeks because he was responding so well.

During his second-last CT scan, two of the radiologists who were friends with Ginsburg, said they were shocked by the result.

"In terms of how things looked and how things are now, it is nothing short of miraculous. The metastases, the lymph nodes that were affected have calcified and shrunken down. Our two friends who are radiologists at North York looked at it and said, 'If we didn't know where the primary tumour site was, we wouldn't even know where to begin to look.'"

It's been six weeks since the treatment ended, and since then, Ginsburg and his wife, who is an engineer, have been doing their own research into therapeutic treatments.

"With my background, I've been drawing on the biochemistry and immunology associated with supplements and putting myself on a regiment as well."

He said he also consulted with the naturopathic college across the street from the hospital to get confirmation that he is doing the right thing.

"On the Jewish side of things, we do our usual – pray three times a day, tfillin, mitzvot, we've visited many different rabbis. Gill's cousin is Rabbi Ya'acov Hillel, who is one of the foremost authorities on Kabbalah in the world, and he does the legitimate, legitimate stuff," Ginsburg said.

"He said, 'Just pray, have your faith, keep your emunah and do what you have to do.'"

Ginsburg, who is shomer Shabbat and shomer Mitzvot, said the rabbis he met with instructed him to be even more observant than he already was, light a candle everyday in honour of a late rabbi, and give tzedekah every day in an amount equivalent to the gematriah of his Hebrew name.

"All of these rabbinical discussions happened right before I started doing chemotherapy," he said.

He recalled being encouraged to change his Hebrew name to Chaim.

He said that Rabbi Hillel had organized two minyanim in his honour in Israel, and just as the rabbi called to inform his wife that his name had been changed to Chaim, Ginsburg was on his way home after having just purchased a complete set of the Talmud.

"People will go a whole lifetime and not get a fraction of these messages," he said.

Now that he is in remission, his latest battle involves being accepted for a transfer into a Canadian medical school that is close enough to home.

"My followup is here in Toronto, my treatment is here in Toronto. Any other treatment that is going to be done, will be done at [Princess Margaret Hospital]."

Despite being rejected by schools including U of T, where he obtained his master's degree as a nurse practitioner, he is still waiting to hear from others.

"They say because you went to school outside of Canada, we can't really account for the weight of your education and what is the comparability to that to your peers," he said.

"What they're failing to see is that I'm a nurse practitioner from the school of graduate studies from the faculty of nursing and I was trained by their physicians and even one of the former deans has come to my support… I'm just trying to catch a break, you know?"

He said he was even willing to be accepted on a probationary basis or even go back a year.

Ginsburg has met obstacle after obstacle, yet he refuses to give up on his dream.

"You don't cave in and lose your faith. That's what being Jewish is all about. That's what being human is all about. That is the triumph of the human spirit… I want to be a doctor more than anything."

Ginsburg, frustrated, said that if it all went as planned, he'd be applying for his residency, rather than fighting to be accepted by a Canadian medical school.

"But there's a blessing in everything," his wife said. "Now you get to spend more time with the kids."

"That I wouldn't change for anything," he said.

Toothbrushes approved for Shabbat use

Continued from page 17

One particular invention, their bug checker – a light to inspect fresh vegetables for potential insects – had to be made brighter, after a request came from the Union of Orthodox Rabbis, which used the prototype. The possibility of treif – consuming an insect via produce – has become more of a hot button issue in recent years.

Some of the products that the Veffers sell include special toothbrushes and dental wash approved for use on Shabbat.

According to various opinions held by communities and rabbis, regular toothbrushes use nylon bristles that are so densely packed and thin that wringing out water is inevitable, and this is a Sabbath prohibition. To solve this problem, Kosher Innovations created a brush with wide-spaced, thick rubber bristles.

Rabbi Veffer said he is particularly excited about the new bathroom tissue that you need not tear. Its dispenser contains pre-cut folded tissues.

One of the newer products available from Kosher Innovations is the Shabbat alarm clock, which automatically shuts off by itself after a minute, without the need to press any buttons. The clock is equipped with five alarms, so it can be set for multiple naps and wake-up times over the course of a day.

The Magnetic Shabbos Message Board is the halachically approved way to leave fridge notes to the family on Shabbat or Yom Tov, when writing is not allowed. The message board comes with more than 150 colourful magnets, with words, pictures and phrases common to the typical Jewish household.

"These are items that help people feel better about the commitments they made in terms of Jewish practice," Chana Veffer said.

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Recipes from survivors and their families

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

"We were starved in Auschwitz, and to alleviate our numerous hunger pangs we invented frequent 'dream meals' ranging between coffee klatches, luncheons, informal and formal dinner parties. This may sound delusional I know, but during these meal planning sessions, we were briefly transported to a normal world, a world that was so far from our miserable reality." – Lillian Berliner, New York

This is just one of the many touching excerpts from the stories and recipes found in *The Holocaust Survivor Cookbook*, now in its second printing. My friend Dalia Carmel of New York told me about the book when I called her a few weeks ago.

She said, "Although the recipes are not thoroughly edited, this is such an important book and it deserves to be on cookbook shelves everywhere."

I then contacted Joanne Caras of Port St. Lucie, Fla., who has worked tirelessly over the past two years to collect recipes and stories from Holocaust survivors, compiling them into this unforgettable book. It contains "129 miracles, 250 great recipes," along with many photos of Holocaust survivors and their families.

Caras told me: "We asked Holocaust survivors to send us their favourite recipe, photos, and also the story of how they were able to survive the Holocaust. We collected 129 stories from all over the world, including Europe, South America, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa, Israel, and many US states. Each one is a miracle!

"In the introduction to our cookbook, we ask each person who cooks one of the recipes to also read to their family the story that comes with it. That way, not only will we preserve the recipes, but more importantly, we will help to insure that the stories of these brave survivors will live on for generations to come."

The Holocaust Survivor Cookbook is different from most typical cookbooks, which are organized into sections – appetizers, salads, soups, main courses, side dishes, desserts, etc. Since many of the survivors submitted more than one recipe, the recipes were kept together, even though they might run the entire gamut of categories. So you may find one page with a soup and a dessert recipe side by side. There is a recipe index where you will find the recipes listed by categories and page numbers. There is also a list of survivors and their stories.

Cookbooks can be purchased at the retail price for personal use, or they can be purchased in large quantities at the wholesale price by groups who want to sell them to their members as a fundraiser.

Proceeds from every cookbook sold will benefit Carmei Ha'ir in Jerusalem, the soup kitchen where Caras' son and daughter-in-law volunteer, serving more than 500 meals each day to poor and hungry Israelis. Those who can afford to pay do so, and those who can't afford it, don't. The money is collected after meals in a tzedakah box near the door.

Continued on page 38

NANA'S KUGEL

2 packages wide noodles
6 brown farm eggs
1¼ cups sugar
1 tsp salt
½ tsp. cinnamon
1½ sticks butter (¾ cup regular salted butter)
1 small can crushed pineapple/and raisins (optional)
1 tbsp. vanilla extract
24 oz. creamed small curd cottage cheese
1 pint sour cream
8 oz. package cream cheese

Preheat oven to 350. Boil 2 packages of wide egg noodles until tender; drain and set aside.

Grease a large Pyrex baking dish (about 15x10x2-inches – 4 quarts).

Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and add cooked noodles, mixing until ready to pour into baking dish. Dot with butter and sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar. Bake for 1½ hours.

Check the bottom of the glass baking dish, for the kugel to be brownish. Let cool before cutting.

MA'S FAMOUS COOKIES

⅔ cup oil
1 cup sugar
2 eggs
2 tsp. vanilla
2½ cups flour
1 tsp. baking soda
2 tsp. cream of tartar
½ tsp. salt
cinnamon sugar (and/or jam like raspberry or strawberry or apricot, etc., if desired)

Preheat oven to 375. Beat oil with sugar. Blend in eggs and vanilla. Stir in dry ingredients. Drop from a teaspoon onto a lightly greased baking sheet. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon and/or a variety of jams. Bake at 375 for 10 minutes, or until golden brown.

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Many touching tributes found in cookbook

Continued from page 37

"Our goal is to raise $1 million for Carmei Ha'ir, and millions more for Jewish groups all over the world," Caras said. "In total, we would like to raise $6 million as a tribute to the memory of those Jews who did not survive the Holocaust.

"Right now the demand is so overwhelming that we had to order more cookbooks from our printer. We have shipped cookbooks from Florida to Canada, New York to California, and all over the world. We have touched the hearts of thousands of people."

The Holocaust Survivor Cookbook can be ordered wholesale or retail by going to the website www.survivorcookbook.org, or you can contact Caras at 443-604-2643.

The following story was just one of many touching tributes found in the book. It was submitted by Carol Master about her late mother-in-law, Henna Master of Montreal, along with two recipes from Carol's collection.

Carol Master wrote: "My father-in-law, Ralph, came to Montreal, Quebec, Canada in 1936, and my mother-in-law followed in 1938. Both were born and grew up in Lublin, Poland. The Pa, as we called him, had two sisters that never made it out, his Dad died at an early age and his mother perished in the camps with his two sisters. His brothers Moshe got out earlier and Maurice followed later after escaping Poland through Portugal, Belgium and ultimately England.

"My Ma had two brothers who never made it along with her folks. Her sister Golda survived the camps. Golda came home with numbers on her arm telling how she had to watch her husband and son being burnt alive, while she was tied up.

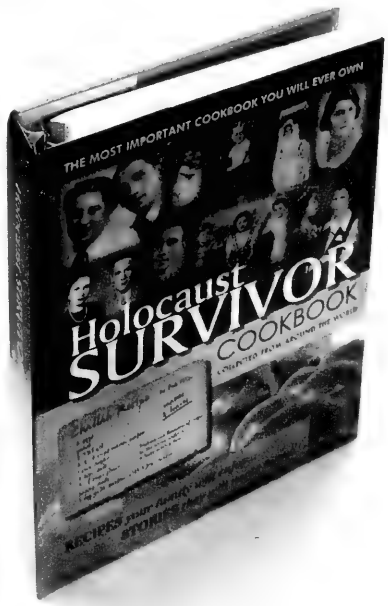
"My father-in-law's brother Moshe, who was a reverend and cantor in Montreal, brought my Pa over to be a choirmaster… Their name was Gelibter, and somehow Master remained, as that's what the officials heard… My Ma was allowed to come because my Pa was going to marry her… and 'the Master Family' came to be.

"My late mother-in-law Henna Master was a wonderful cook. Even her husband helped her, another survivor, to make Shabbat every Friday night even in a Montreal blizzard. I learned all my mamaloshen from her, a little Yiddish, and about family.

"She had riches in her baby's smiles… if she knew all her children and grandchildren were well and happy… then she was content. When I married her golden son Eli, I soon after asked her for her recipe for her marvelous cookies that her kids and friends would anxiously wait for. Well, she said all the ingredients, and off I went to bake. I put it all together in a bowl, however the mixture seemed very loose. Then I put the cookies in the oven and when I opened it to check – you guessed it, a giant puddle.

"I immediately phoned my Ma. 'So,' she said, 'tell me what you put in.' I read her back her recipe and she then said 'So where's the flour?' I said you never mentioned flour. 'How can you make cookies without flour?' Being that I'd never baked before, I didn't know that flour was not necessary to tell because I should know that. Between all the great aromas, tastes and laughter, I became a great cook, and I'd like to share what my grandchildren love me to make."

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, cooking teacher and food consultant. For information, call 416-226-2466 or visit her website at http://www.gourmania.com



Chocolate chips — more than just cookies

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

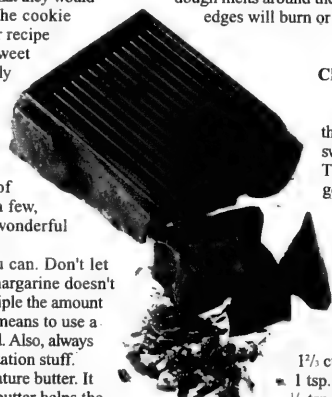
Back in the 1930s a woman named Ruth Wakefield decided to put small bits of a semi-sweet chocolate bar in her cookies with the idea that they would melt. Sad to say, it didn't melt, but the cookie became so popular that Nestlé put her recipe on the back wrapper of their semi-sweet chocolate bar. Ruth got a lifetime's supply of chocolate. Not a bad deal for them or us.

Obviously, chocolate chip cookies are one of the most popular uses for semi-sweet/milk chocolate chips and contrary to the recipes on the back of most bags of chips I think there are a few, little-known tricks to making really wonderful chocolate chip cookies

First, always use real butter if you can. Don't let anyone convince you that butter vs. margarine doesn't make any difference. It does. Second, triple the amount of vanilla extract recommended. This means to use a tablespoon where a teaspoon is specified. Also, always use real vanilla extract and not the imitation stuff.

Use melted butter not room temperature butter. It makes a big difference. Using melted butter helps the dissolving and melting of the sugar, improving the consistency of the dough as you are working with it, and also improving the texture of the cookies after they are baked. I also like to add my brown sugar to the butter as it's melting. Fourth, add a little milk, maybe just a tablespoon or two, when you are mixing the dough. This will make it less stiff and the cookies will be less hard and crunchy when they are done. Refrigerate the dough for at least 1 hour before cooking it.

Make sure the cookie sheet is room temperature or cooler when you put the dough on it and put it into the oven. If the dough melts around the edges before it starts to bake, the edges will burn or get too brown.



CHOCOLATE CHOCOLATE CHIP MUFFINS

Truly a chocolate-lover's dream, these muffins are made with semi-sweet chocolate and chocolate chips. They freeze well, but they will be gone before you know it.

6 squares semi-sweet chocolate
1/3 cup unsalted butter
3/4 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup white sugar
1 egg
1 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1 2/3 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1/2 tsp. salt
1 cup mini semi-sweet chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 400. Line 12 muffin cups with papers. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt the semi-sweet chocolate together with the butter. Let stand until cooled, about 10 minutes. Lightly beat the egg. In a small bowl, stir together the chocolate-butter mixture with the buttermilk, sugar, egg, and vanilla, until blended well. In a large bowl, stir together flour, soda, and salt. Make a hole in the center of the dry ingredients, pour in the chocolate mixture, and stir until just combined. Stir in the mini chocolate chips. Spoon the batter into the lined muffin cups.

Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of a muffin comes out clean. Remove muffin tin from oven and let stand at least 5 minutes, before removing the muffins and letting them cool on a wire rack. Serve warm or cooled; can be frozen as well. Makes 12.

CHOCOLATE CHIP PANCAKES

1/2 to 3/4 cups milk
2 tbsp. melted butter
1 egg
1 cup all purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
2 tbsp. sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
3/4 cup mini chocolate chips
butter, for oiling pan

In a medium bowl, whisk milk, melted butter and egg lightly until incorporated. Sift flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt into bowl with egg and milk mixture. Mix the batter just until combined; do not over work batter. Add chocolate chips. Heat a large nonstick sauté pan, wipe down with butter. Spoon the batter into the pan making the pancakes. Cook in the pan until the cake is golden brown on the bottom and full of bubbles on top. With a spatula turn the cake over to brown other side. Serve warm with sweet butter. Makes 6 to 8 pancakes.

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Iran rejects tough atomic inspections

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JERUSALEM — Iran on Monday ruled out accepting intrusive nuclear inspections unless there was an end to "double standards" on global non-proliferation that it said benefited nuclear arms powers, which allegedly includes Israel.

Squaring off with western nations at a global meeting on how to shore up the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Iran rejected allegations of covert Iranian atom bomb work and blamed nuclear weapons powers for the treaty's problems.

Iranian Ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh asked why developing nations should accept intrusive International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections as a condition for obtaining nuclear know-how when nuclear arms powers could unilaterally curb IAEA checks of their facilities.

Soltanieh accused industrialized powers of enshrining "nuclear apartheid" by imposing harsher export controls for developing states within the NPT while secretly helping non-NPT state Israel build a nuclear arsenal.

"This double standard cannot be sustained, and no additional measure in strengthening [IAEA] safeguards can be accepted by non-nuclear weapons parties unless these serious constraints and discrimination are removed," he said.

Earlier Monday, Iran ruled out halting its disputed nuclear work, saying it would reject any incentive package offered by world powers that violated the Islamic Republic's nuclear rights.

Double standard cited

Six world powers agreed at a meeting in London on Friday to offer a new incentives package to coax Iran to suspend uranium enrichment, a process that the West believes Tehran wants to master so that it can build nuclear weapons.

Iran, which insists its nuclear program is aimed at generating electricity, says enrichment is a national right that it will not give up.

"Those incentives that violate the Iranian nation's right in any form will not be reviewed by the Islamic state," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mohammad Ali Hosseini told a news conference Monday.

Iran's English-language Press TV earlier translated Hosseini as saying incentives violating Iran's rights would "not be supported by us". It said Iran had not officially received any package.

The five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council – the United States, France, Britain, China and Russia – and Germany, known as the P5+1, offered a package to Iran in 2006 that demanded Iran halt enrichment. Tehran rejected it.

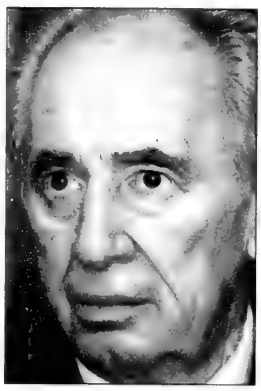
"Regarding the incentives package ... we believe the path adopted in the past should not be continued. They should act based on realities and international regulations. Talks should be held based on respecting nations' rights," Hosseini said.

Russia, which sent an envoy to Iran last week for discussions that covered the nuclear row, said on Saturday that enrichment would have to be suspended during international talks aimed at resolving the dispute.

The UN Security Council has demanded that Iran stop uranium enrichment. Tehran's refusal has led to three sets of limited sanctions since 2006.

Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said on Sunday the Islamic Republic would not give up its right in the face of western pressure, but did not explicitly mention nuclear work.

In related news, Israeli President Shimon Peres on Monday said that while he was not in favour of attacking Iran over its nuclear program, a strong alliance needed to be put in place to sanction the Islamic country to deter it from its atomic path.



Israeli President Shimon Peres

"I am not in favour of a military attack on Iran, but we must quickly and decisively establish a strong, aggressive coalition of nations that will impose painful economic sanctions on Iran," he said.

Addressing a press conference of foreign journalists, in Israel for the country's 60th anniversary celebrations, Peres said that "Iran's efforts to achieve nuclear weapons should keep the entire world from sleeping soundly.

"[Iranian President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad is calling for Israel to be wiped off the map, and the combination of nuclear weapons in the hands of a deranged extremist religious leader is a nightmare for the world.

"In a way, it's more complicated than in the time of the Nazis," he said. "Hitler didn't have a nuclear bomb."

The president also said that Iran is a global terror centre that "trains and finances generations of killers and terrorists."

On the topic of Hamas, Peres said that the militant rulers of the Gaza Strip are standing in the way of Palestinian statehood.

"If it weren't for Hamas and their criminal behaviour, the Palestinian people would have had an independent state a long time ago," he said.

The president added that talking to the Islamic group was like "talking to a wall."

"We mustn't forget that we evacuated the Gaza Strip and the areas surrounding it, all the while under Hamas fire aimed at women and children in Israel. We don't want to harm the civilian population – we transfer food, fuel and medicine to the Gaza population, but we can't ignore the fact that Hamas is causing much damage to their people and can blame no one but themselves."

In regard to Syria, Peres said that if the Syrians were earnestly ready to enter into peace talks with Israel, Israel would be willing to comply. "We want a comprehensive peace in the Middle East, and we are willing to pay a price for a comprehensive peace, as we have done in the past," he said.

16 Israeli civilians killed this year in terror acts, 1,634 since May, '48

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JERUSALEM — Sixteen Israeli civilians were killed in terrorist attacks in the first four months of the year, bringing the total of civilian terror-related deaths to 1,634 since the creation of the state 60 years ago, the National Insurance Institute's (NII) director general, Esther Dominissini, said Monday.

An official ceremony to commemorate victims of terror was to be held on Wednesday, Memorial Day, at the Mt. Herzl national cemetery.

Eight Israeli civilians were killed in 2007, and 133 wounded, in 87 terror-related incidents last year. Most of the injuries were incurred in Qassam rocket attacks, Dominissini said in a statement released by the NII.

A total of 14,000 people have been wounded in terrorist attacks over the past 60 years.

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We extend our heartfelt condolences to his wife Darlene (Dee), his children Jeffrey and Richard and the entire family

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National President

Rami Kleinmann
National Director

Israel Briefs

Police question Olmert

Police questioned Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert last Friday for 90 minutes under caution that he may face charges. The interrogation was leaked to the media before it took place. It's not clear what it concerned. Olmert has been questioned in recent years about a number of alleged crimes, including steering government contracts to friends and making illegal patronage appointments. None of the investigations have resulted in charges. The secretive nature of the questioning, the news that Olmert had been given just 48 hours warning, and the fact that the interrogation was "under caution" led to speculation police may be close to breaking one of the cases. Olmert must step down if he is indicted.

Inquiry clears troops

An army inquiry cleared Israeli troops in the killing of a family of five in the Gaza Strip. A blast on April 28 killed a Palestinian mother and her four children while they were preparing to eat breakfast in their home in Beit Hanoun. Palestinians blamed an Israeli missile strike. An army inquiry concluded an air-launched missile had hit its target, four gunmen who had been targeting Israeli troops, and that the missile hit no other targets. The gunmen were carrying backpacks loaded with weaponry, and the army theorized the family might have been killed in a blast caused when the missile hit a gunman's weaponry, or that the mother and her children were knocked down by the force of the second blast, or hit by debris.

PM meets Jordanian king

Ehud Olmert held unannounced talks on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process with Jordan's King Abdullah. The Israeli prime minister flew to Jordan last Wednesday to meet Abdullah, a key patron of efforts to bolster Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. The Israeli media quoted Abdullah as urging Olmert to ensure that his talks with Abbas lead to an accord on Palestinian statehood before U.S. President George W. Bush leaves office at year's end.

Schalit captor killed

An air strike killed a Palestinian terrorist who was involved in the abduction of Gilad Schalit. Nafez Mansour, a Hamas militiaman, was killed in the Gazan town of Rafah. Military officials said Mansour was involved in Schalit's abduction on the Gaza border in June 2006. Hamas vowed to avenge Mansour's killing, which came as Egypt tried to broker a ceasefire between Israel and armed Palestinian factions in Gaza.

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From Berlin to London to Paris, Europe-Israel ties warming

By DINAH SPRITZER
JTA

PRAGUE — When Israel asked for European troops, including Germans, to patrol the Israel-Lebanon border area following Israel's 2006 war with Hezbollah, it was a salient sign of how far European ties with Israel have come in recent years.

"Who would have ever thought that German soldiers would be charged – and trusted – to protect Israelis 65 years after the Holocaust?" observed Oded Eran, formerly Israel's ambassador to the European Union and now head of the World Jewish Congress office in Jerusalem.

The Germany-Israel bond was further underscored in March when German Chancellor Angela Merkel addressed the Israeli Knesset in German and held an unprecedented joint cabinet meeting with the Israeli government.

Across Europe, similar signs show the warming relations with Israel, at least on the political and institutional levels.

Earlier this month, Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk visited Israel in what both sides deemed a turning point in bilateral relations since Poland became a democracy in 1990. Last October, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was received warmly in Britain when he visited 10 Downing St. And for the first time in 25 years, France has a president, Nicolas Sarkozy, keen on making the country's foreign policy friendlier toward Israel.

> ***'I cannot recall a time when there has been such a positive flurry'***

"I cannot recall a time when there has been such a positive flurry of diplomatic exchange between Israel and Europe," said Arye Mekel, a spokesman for Israel's Foreign Ministry.

Many diplomats and analysts say Europe-Israeli relations are in a new era of growing co-operation and understanding following years of mistrust and recrimination.

"Relations have improved and matured substantially in recent years," said Ran Curiel, Israel's ambassador to the 27-country European Union in Brussels.

The improvement in ties is a consequence of quietly enhanced economic cooperation, the European Union's expansion to include unabashedly pro-Israel countries from the former Eastern bloc such as Poland and the Czech Republic, and the replacement of the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat with the more tractable Mahmoud Abbas as president of the Palestinian Authority.

Still, public opinion across Europe, according to polls and media reports, continues to cast Israel in an unfavourable light. This is evident in the negative media coverage of Israel during the Second Lebanon War in the summer of 2006, stepped-up criticism of Israel by European nongovernmental organizations, and ongoing British trade union calls for boycotts of Israeli goods and academics.

"The media and church institutions since 2000 have tended to adopt a position which suggests people don't support Israel's right to defend itself, which means they don't support its right to exist," said Robin Shepherd, a senior fellow at Chatham House, a London think tank.

"What is still missing is to correct the [public's] image of Israel," said the secretary-general of the European Jewish Congress, Serge Cwajgenbaum. "The image is still unbalanced."

On the governmental level, however, ties between Europe and Israel appear to be at a high point.

Some examples: European governments across the continent are holding celebrations for Israel's 60th birthday; Israel trusts Europe to train PA security forces and oversee the international funding of the Palestinian Authority; Germany plays a key role lobbying for European support for Israel; and the British government has proven to be a staunch ally of Israel, domestic criticism of its policy notwithstanding.

In recent years, Israel has gained many trade and aid benefits associated with EU membership due to the adoption in 2005 of the union's European Neighbourhood Policy. One-third of Israeli exports last year went to the European Union. Plans call for Israeli co-operation in the European space agency, and the sharing of intelligence is rising.

Such ties once were linked to Israeli progress in the peace process. That's no longer the case, Curiel says.

"You don't hear calls for sanctions against Israel anymore every time there is a disagreement about Israeli policy," he said.

This is a relatively new development. European politicians weaned on the milk of post-World War II rapprochement long have castigated Israeli military operations viewed by Israeli officials as vital to survival.

During the early years of the second intifadah, which began in 2000, EU External Affairs Minister Chris Patten consistently harangued Israeli leaders over the country's targeted assassinations of Palestinian terrorists, the West Bank security fence and Jewish settlement growth.

Europe wasn't always tilted against Israel. In the early years of the state, when Israel was seen as the underdog, it found friends and arms suppliers in Europe.

That changed following the 1967 Six-Day War.

"This is partly ideology, and partly oil, as Arabs were threatening to turn off the spigot," said Jonathan Rynhold, a professor of political science at Israel's Bar-Ilan University and a researcher at the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies.

Israeli-European discord worsened when Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982.

"Whatever is left of the image of plucky little democratic Israel, darling of the left, becomes to some the big bully Israel, the brutal occupying country," Rynhold said. "The first intifadah, starting in 1987, just magnifies this negative picture."

Hope emerged during myriad episodes of negotiations, but the collapse of the Oslo peace process and the second intifadah sent Israel-Europe ties to a new low.

In 2004, after the International Court of Justice at The Hague condemned the West Bank security fence, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon told then-European Union Council Secretary-General Javier Solana that the court must think "Jewish blood is cheap."

Sharon also called the European Union, which had backed the court's conclusion, biased against Israel.

But the ensuing few years changed the tenor of the relationship significantly.

In 2004 and 2007, the European Union extended membership to 11 post-communist countries that are notably more pro-American and pro-Israel than older EU members. These countries, associating inaction with appeasement and noting their suffering under the Soviets, don't share Western Europe's aversion to Israeli military actions.

In Madrid in 2004 and in London the next year, deadly terrorist attacks by Islamic extremists gave European leaders a better sense of what Israel was facing.

Perhaps most important, Israel's disengagement from the Gaza Strip in 2005 dispelled the European conception that Israel is unwilling to make sacrifices for peace.

"Israel's formal acceptance of the two-state solution cemented a new, closer understanding between top-level Israeli and European politicians," Curiel said.

But many European politicians remain upset about Israeli settlement activity and Israel's treatment of the Palestinians, according to the vice-president of the European Parliament, Britain's Edward McMillon Scott.

"If Israel can pull out of Gaza, Israel can pull out of the occupied territories," he told JTA. "Yes, it is true there is more co-operation on the institutional level – call it normalization – but after the invasion of southern Lebanon, I think many of us thought Israel had lost its bearings."

Some other sticking points remain. The European Union refuses to label Lebanon"s Hezbollah a terrorist organization, EU funds go to anti-Israel nongovernmental organizations, and Israel wants Europe to do more to stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

Still, Israeli diplomats say, their concerns at least are being heard, even if they are not all being addressed.

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- **traiter toutes les demandes :** toutes les demandes déjà en attente seront traitées.

Le Parlement s'emploie actuellement à examiner ces mesures.

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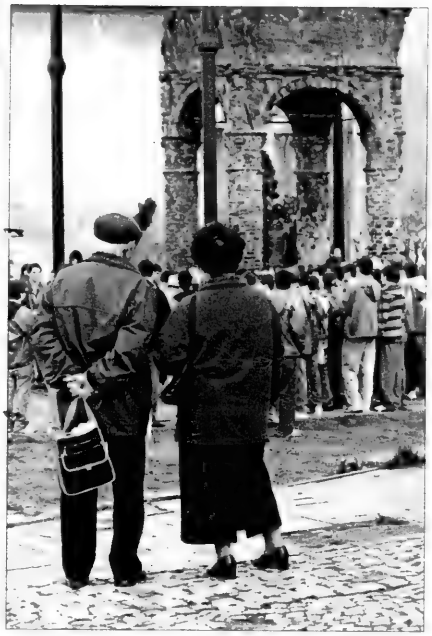
Canadians on the March of the Living



These images convey some aspects of the sites and the feeling of the participants on the March of the Living this year in Poland. The participants were in Poland for Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah. They left Poland for Israel where they were to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut.
[Elad Winkler and Igal Hecht photos]

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1948...They Were There

'We volunteered because it was natural'

Waldston, 79, served with IDF in 1948

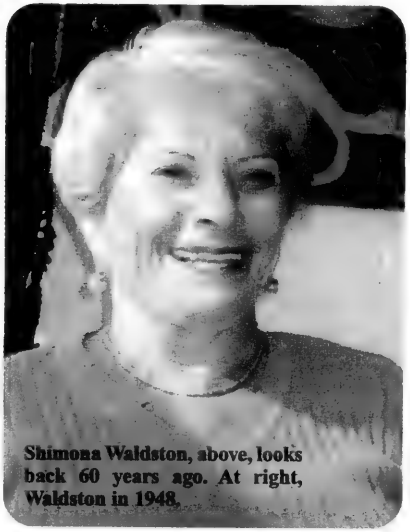
By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

She has lived in Canada for the last 56 years, but this 79-year-old sabra still embodies the Israeli qualities that made her a pioneer who served in the nascent Israeli army during the Jewish state's War of Independence.

"Even today, I can lift you up and throw you over my shoulder," Shimona Waldston said with a laugh while describing the intense training she received in the army alongside her male peers.

Waldston was born in Tel Aviv in 1929, years after her father escaped the Russian Revolution in 1917.

"When my father came to Tel Aviv, it was sand dunes. There was nothing," said Waldston, who is the youngest of five children.



Shimona Waldston, above, looks back 60 years ago. At right, Waldston in 1948.

She said her entire family volunteered to help develop Israel, and through their involvement in their community, they helped lay the foundation for what the country is today.

Her two brothers were part of a group of eight men who established Kibbutz Hulata, which was on the border of Syria and Israel.

"My oldest brother was a member of Magen David Adom. He was a volunteer ambulance driver. He was the No. 1 blood donor, because he had O-negative blood."

She said she took part in a course he led through Magen David Adom to teach people first aid.

"He was a volunteer with all his heart," she said of her brother.

Her oldest sister, who was already married with children at the time, volunteered in the army, while her husband volunteered as a firefighter.

"Everything was volunteer at the time," she said.

Although Waldston couldn't join the army until she was 18, as a child, she was involved with many youth groups and was always eager to do her part.

"I think I was in high school, I think I was about 13 or 14, when the Haganah [an underground Jewish defence force in pre-state Palestine] came to recruit us to do things. We used to run at night and post [messages] and run away. It started early."

She said that she and her other sister, who was just three years older, joined the army together.

At the time, it wasn't mandatory for women to join the army. Only men were conscripted.

"Coming from this type of home, we volunteered," Waldston said.

She said they joined just two weeks after the Israel Defence Forces was established. Waldston pointed to the number on her dog tags that showed that within that short time, more that 60,000 others had already joined before them.

"In the first week, we went to *turanut*, training. I came from the Haganah, so I knew a little more... The second week, both of us went to the sergeant course with about 20 or 30 others," Waldston said.

"It was a month-long course. There you get really trained – how to throw a grenade, how to train other people."

She said that toward the end of the course, the woman in charge of female army recruits came to speak to them about Israel's situation, and about the problems in Jerusalem.

She said that at the time Jerusalem was surrounded by Arab forces who had cut off the water and food supply to the Jews, and no one could get in or out of the city.

But the IDF was secretly building the Burma Road to gain access to Jerusalem.

When the head of female recruits interviewed each soldier in the course individually, Waldston's sister volunteered to serve in Jerusalem.

"She had a rough time there. She was a sergeant, and she was in charge of the girls."

Meanwhile, Waldston was assigned to teach new army recruits.

"I remember, I must have been 18½ or something. I was young, but there were volunteers who were older than me. A woman, who must have been 45 or something, came to ask me for a three-day pass to get to the Golan because her son was injured. A 45-year-old coming to ask me for permission. Naturally, I gave it to her, but until today, I remember it so well, and I remember her face," she said, looking off into the distance, no doubt recalling that moment more than 60 years ago.

After about three or four months, Waldston was sent to a sergeant major's course, where she and another woman were the only two females in the course and became two of the first sergeant majors in the IDF.

She recalled being told by the head of the course that she and her female colleague would be exempt from the physically demanding training.

"But we said, 'No, we want to do everything the men do'... We convinced him that we could do it... Sure enough we did it," she said.

At the start of 1949, Waldston, by then an officer, was transferred to serve with the air force at its headquarters in Jaffa.

Waldston said that she didn't know it at the time, but her future brother-in-law, the late Eddy Kaplansky, a native of Montreal and a veteran of the Royal Canadian Air Force in World War II, was a Machal pilot in the Israeli Air Force during the War of Independence.

He ended up meeting and marrying Waldston's sister, who moved with him to Montreal.

Waldston, who finished her service in the army as a second lieutenant, went on to work as a flight attendant for El Al.

When she took a vacation to Montreal to visit her sister, she met Gerry Waldston, whom she married, and she has lived in Canada since 1952.

Waldston said she is very proud to be an IDF pioneer, but she never did anything for accolades.

"Everyone in the family did something for the country. We just didn't sit back. We did things because we wanted to do it. We volunteered because it was natural to do it."

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Vol. 2 of Simchovitch's Yiddish-English collection published

By SHLOMO SCHWARTZBERG
Special to The CJN

The recently published second volume of *The Fiery Mountain*, Simcha (Sam) Simchovitch's career-spanning compilation of his poems, is like the first one, a uniquely bilingual Yiddish-English collection.

That might sound odd, considering that Simchovitch is equally adept in both languages, but the vagaries of the publishing industry have meant that his 18 books, prior to *The Fiery Mountain*, had to be written in one or the other language, since putting the two together, facing each other in different typefaces, was deemed too complicated by his publishers.

It's also why the 87-year-old Toronto poet is self-publishing *The Fiery Mountain*, which when complete in three volumes, will contain some 500 poems.

The title of the three-volume series, says Simchovitch, sitting in his north Toronto kitchen, "is a metaphor, first of Mount Sinai [where Moses is said to have received the Ten Commandments] and as a metaphor of the Holocaust."

'I have a prayer not to be silenced'

The horrors of the Holocaust weigh heavy on Simchovitch, who lost all of his family except for a sister and aunt during that time, but he is unusual among Canadian Yiddish poets in that he is just as likely to address current, less specifically Jewish concerns such as nuclear war, which he refers to memorably in his poem *A Kaddish for the World*.

"In an eyeblink haughty skyscrapers crumble, wrapped in flame – clouds, blasted in successive jolts, fiery debris carried over the horizon," he writes. "It's a danger all the time," he says somberly about the possibility of this occurring. "I'm socially aware," he adds, "following the news and so on."

Simchovitch, who was born in Otwock, Poland, spent World War II in the USSR, where he met and married his late wife and they had the first of their two daughters. After a brief return to Poland and a stint in Paris, the family immigrated to Montreal in 1949.

"For the first two years, I worked in a factory," he says. "Then I was accepted in the United Jewish Teachers Seminary [in Montreal]." After studying there for three years, Simchovitch became certified as a full-time teacher (of Yiddish and Hebrew) and taught in Montreal, Ottawa and, finally, in Toronto where he moved in 1961. Until his retirement in 1988, he was the librarian and curator of the Beth Tzedec Museum (now the Reuben & Helene Dennis Museum), where he still works on Sundays.

Simchovitch has written books, essays and articles in English, Yiddish and Hebrew; many of his English-language books have been published by the respected Mosaic Press and favourably commented upon by such well-known Canadian poets as Raymond Souster and James Deahl, as well as the author and activist Elie Wiesel.

Sam Simchovitch

Simchovitch also had a unique relationship with the poet Irving Layton. "Layton was my teacher of English [at] the beginning of his career," he says, adding that Layton offered the ultimate compliment to his poem *Sanctifying God's Name* by saying it "should be recited in the synagogues."

Simchovitch, who has won several Toronto Jewish Book Awards over the years, also translated more than 80 Yiddish poems of Mordechai Gebirtig in *The Song That Never Died: The Poetry of Mordechai Gebirtig* (2001) and has written one autobiographical novel, *Stepchild of the Vistula*, a 1990 Yiddish novel, which was translated by Simchovitch into English in 1994 and then translated into Polish in 2005 by Marian Domanski, and issued in a handsome edition, with an introduction by Wiesel.

Simchovitch's hometown of Otwock invited him and Domanski to visit there last summer for the commemoration of the 65th anniversary of the liquidation of the city's ghetto, an experience he wrote about in *The CJN*.

Two years ago, vocalist Lenka Lichtenberg and guitarist/pianist Brian Katz combined forces to put 10 of his poems to music on the CD *Pashtes* (Simplicity).

Simchovitch's poems – and the modest man himself – can also be said to evoke simplicity, his plain-spoken words underlying strong, emotional themes, as in the poem *Yiddish Tongue*.

"Wherever, I go," he writes, "I carry the orphaned voices of those who are no more – my Yiddish language and lore." O Yiddish language," he goes on, "mother tongue, you are sweet like honey and, like wormwood, bitter. With you I have risen and fallen, with you I mourn and sing, in your pained letters I sink, until my heartbeat will stand suddenly still."

That poem also forces one to contemplate the state and future of Yiddish as a living everyday language. Simchovitch, who names 22 Yiddish poets in his poem *Yiddish Poets of Canada*, says he's "the last Yiddish poet in Canada," the others having passed away or like Chava Rosenfarb, moved onto writing Yiddish novels.

"I have a prayer not to be silenced," is how he explains his continuing to write in Yiddish, though he adds that "it's harder lately to write poetry." *The Fiery Mountain*, then, can be seen as his legacy for the ages. "It looks like I wrote already everything that I wanted to say."

The Fiery Mountain can be purchased for $25 in Negev and Israel's Judaica stores or by sending a cheque for $32, including shipping and handling, to the Simcha Simchovitch Book Fund, 4266 Bathurst St., Apt. 803, Toronto, Ont., M3H 5Y7.

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TJFF award in memory of young filmmaker

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

This year, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival is offering a new award in memory of a local filmmaker who contributed to the festival.

The David A. Stein Memorial Award is given, along with a prize of $5,000, for the best documentary making its Canadian première at the TJFF.

Stein died of a brain tumour weeks after diagnosis, at age 34 in December 2004. He had made trailers – one-minute ads – for the festival.

The Stein family of Toronto and the contributions of extended family and friends have made possible the award, named the "Tzimmie," after Stein's production company, Tzimmes Entertainment.

About eight years ago, Stein approached Helen Zuckerman, executive director of the TJFF, regarding funding for his films. She remembers the encounter, and says that "it was his passion about making films that had me."

Though Zuckerman says she rarely offers funding in such a manner, "he walked out of here with a small cheque."

Stein's 1998 film *Needle and Tread*, in which his bubbie recounts her days as an immigrant seamstress in Toronto sweatshops, went on to play at the festival to an audience of 600 people, who showed their high regard for the film with loud applause, Zuckerman recalls.

Last fall, David's father, Mel, was thinking about doing something in David's memory.

"I spoke with Helen Zuckerman to get her point of view," he says. "I wanted the reward to have some meaning, something that would be meaningful for a filmmaker. The money gets filmmakers reasonably along their careers."

***Stealing Klimt* won the first TJFF Tzimmie Award.**

Often a film may not come to fruition because of funding issues. "Sometimes the difference between doing it and not doing it is a few thousand dollars," Stein says.

Memorial donations made when David passed away have been transferred to the David Stein Memorial Fund.

"I am getting a feeling of some satisfaction. The loss of a child by a parent is a very profound experience. Being able to do something meaningful in that context is meaningful to a parent," Stein says.

"Years from now it will continue as an award. It's something that will have some life of its own that will keep going."

The family decided that the choice of winning film should be up to the festival and its judges. "I don't believe that any of the family or friends should be judges. It should be objective, more in the nature of David's peers than us," Stein says.

The Israeli feature *Stealing Klimt*, directed by Canadian Jane Chablani, was the winning film, announced on opening night of the TJFF at Bloor Cinema on May 3.

The film is about Maria Altman, whose family owned paintings by Gustav Klimt, stolen by the Austrians during the war. The prize money won by the filmmaker will be donated to the Association of Jewish Refugees in London, England, which works toward the recovery of stolen art.

Three jurors reached a unanimous decision for the award: broadcaster and journalist Ralph Benmergui; Judy Gladstone of Bravo; and Tereza Barta, a professor of film at York University. Fifteen films were eligible for the award, and the jury will change every year.

"It was the story that won it, a fascinating mystery story. It was a story of stick to it-ness. Someone who was not going to back down, someone who fought her way through bureaucracies of both countries," Zuckerman says.

Two other films received honorable mention: *Orthodox Stance*, about a 19-year-old Russo-American observant boxer, and *To Live in Utopia*, about factory workers in the Bronx.

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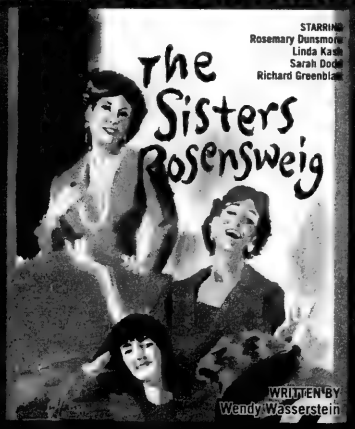

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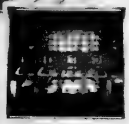

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Celebrate Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Jerusalem

Israeli spy sent to sabotage Egypt's missile program

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

This year's Toronto Jewish Film Festival is presenting films for virtually every taste.

The Champagne Spy

Nadav Shirman's sizzling documentary burnishes but also tarnishes the reputation of the legendary Israeli spy, Ze'ev Gur Arie. Otherwise known as Wolfgang Lotz, he was sent to Egypt in the early 1960s to pose as an affluent horse breeder.

Lotz's mission was two-fold: to gather firsthand data about Egypt's arms acquisitions and to sabotage its budding missile program, spearheaded by German scientists who had worked for Adolf Hitler. A half-Jew who fled Germany with his Jewish mother after Hitler's rise to power, he was uniquely positioned to play that role. He had Aryan features, was not circumcised, spoke perfect German, had nerves of steel and was fearless, and could effortlessly connect with people and extract vital information from them.

The 90-minute film, which moves from the present to the past and back again, begins as Lotz explains to an Israeli TV interviewer how he adopted the false identity of a dashing, high-living former Nazi and Wehrmacht officer based in Egypt. "He lived his character," says one of his Mossad associates. "He could have been a good stage actor," observes another colleague. "The job was made for him."

Throughout it all, Lotz led a double life, moving seamlessly between two very different worlds. In Cairo, he befriended Egyptian army officers and German expatriates. Recharging his batteries every few months, he would return to Paris, where his wife, Rivka, and son, Oded, lived temporarily.

The Champagne Spy unfolds through the perspective of his son – who loved and admired his father and implicitly knew was he was up to – and through old family movies and interviews with colleagues.

Even after he was caught, shortly before Israeli spy Eli Cohen was executed in Syria in 1965, he succeeded in concealing the fact that he was an Israeli national. Yet Lotz was also a bigamist, having married Waltraud Neumann, a German woman he had met in Cairo. The Mossad had moral qualms about this arrangement, but ultimately tolerated it because Waltraud was a valued asset.

As the film suggests, life for Lotz following his escapades in Egypt was rather dull and disappointing. After his horse farm in Israel failed and Neumann died, he was at loose ends, piling up debts and living aimlessly. When the champagne stop flowing, he became a pale imitation of his former self, and finally, a lonely and tragic figure.

Sunday, May 11, 11 a.m., Al Green Theatre.

Arranged

This feature film, directed by Diane Erespo and Stefan Schaefer and starring an unknown but accomplished cast, examines the phenomenon of arranged marriages among traditional Jews and Muslims.

Nasira (Francis Benhamou) and Rochelle (Zoe Lister-Jones) form an unlikely friendship in *Arranged*, playing at the Bloor Cinema on May 9 at 1 p.m.

Rochelle (Zoe Lister-Jones) and Nasira (Francis Benhamou) are both new teachers at a Brooklyn public school. They are as different as night and day, Rochelle being an Orthodox Jew and Nasira being a Syrian Muslim. To their thoroughly modern and somewhat blinkered principal, however, they are identical peas in a pod.

When they come under pressure from their parents to choose a spouse from a list of preferred candidates, they co-operate with the plan. Once they have met the less than captivating men that have been selected for their consideration, they rebel. They are not willing to settle for just anyone. In the process, they form an unlikely cross-cultural friendship.

Sparks fly when Rochelle invites Nasira to her home. Being anti-Arab, Rochelle's closeted mother claims that there may be "repercussions" that will hurt her prospects. By contrast, Nasira's parents are more welcoming when she brings Rochelle to their house.

In her quest to find Mr. Right, Rochelle attends a party to which her secular cousin takes her. She feels uncomfortable in that milieu and rejects it. Nasira, meanwhile, glows with satisfaction after being introduced to a suitable young Muslim man. In an interesting twist, Rochelle spies the man of her dreams in a library, prepping for an exam with Nasira's brother.

Arranged, a sweet confection with a feel-good ending, will appeal to a wide range of viewers.

Friday, May 9, 1 p.m., Bloor Cinema.

The First Basket

Basketball, an international sport, originated in the United States and was popularized by Jews in New York City before going global. Jews took to the game like ducks to water, suggests sports writer Charley Rose in David Vyorst's engaging documentary. "And they really put their stamp on it."

Sports in general and basketball in particular appealed to Jews because it was "a powerful vehicle" for social integration and acceptance. So much so that the basketball coach replaced the rabbi as a central force in the lives of these young athletic Jewish men. Indeed, compared to boxing, which was harder to "sell" to dubious parents, basketball was deemed to be a "good" sport.

The Jewish legends of basketball are trotted out. Arnold (Red) Auerbach, one of basketball's greatest tactical minds, coached the Boston Celtics to eight National Basketball Association titles. Nat Holman, an intellectual who read Molliere and Shakespeare, was Auerbach's predecessor at the Celtics. In 1949, Holman helped establish basketball in Israel.

David Stern, the current NBA commissioner, recalls walking to games at Madison Square Garden to watch his heroes play. But these days, Jewish professional basketball players are rare, Dan Schayes having been one of the last of them. Basketball, though, is big in Israel. Tal Brody, an American who made aliyah and played for the Maccabi Tel Aviv club, was one of its biggest stars before his retirement.

Sunday, May 11, 2 p.m., Al Green

Danny Kaye: A Legacy of Laughter

Danny Kaye, the multi-talented comedian who could act, sing and dance, is the subject of Bob Marty's puff piece profile, which originally appeared on the PBS television network.

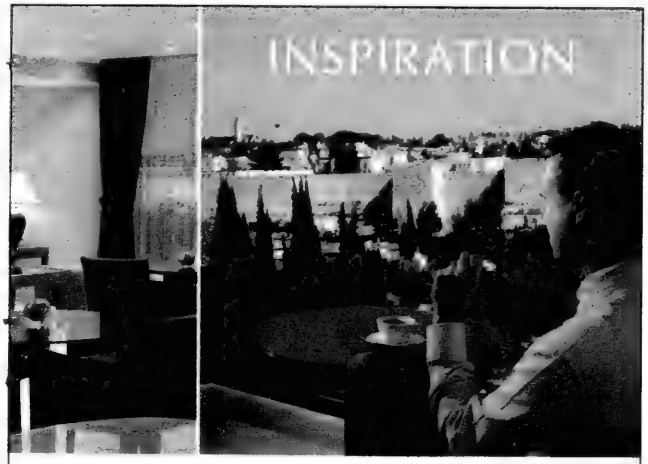
Born David Kaminsky in 1913, the son of Russian immigrants, he went into show business after setting his sights on a career in medicine. "I'm crazy about what I do," he once said. Working in one-reel films and as a tummler at Borsch Belt resorts in the Catskills, he broke into film after signing a five-year contract with Samuel Goldwyn in 1943. His movies, ranging from *The Kid From Brooklyn* to *White Christmas*, catapulted Kaye to stardom and the cover of *Time* magazine, and prompted UNICEF – a United Nations agency – to offer him a roving ambassadorship.

Friday, May 9, 2:30 p.m., Al Green.

To Be Or Not To Be

Ernst Lubitsch's 1943 comedy classic, starring Jack Benny and Carole Lombard as conceited actors in a Warsaw theatre in 1939, has not aged badly, though it looks a little dated and quaint. In terms of plot, the wily pair become embroiled in a surreal plot to ridicule and bamboozle the Nazis. The pace is fast and furious, though a bit convoluted, the farce is cutting, and the film resounds to the sardonic chorus of "Heil Hitlers." Lubitsch made the film before realizing that the Nazis were intent on exterminating European Jews.

Friday, May 9, 5 p.m., Al Green.



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Fugitive Pieces' new 'upbeat' ending is disquieting

By SHLOMO SCHWARTZBERG
Special to The CJN

***Fugitive Pieces* has been turned into a much simpler film than originally intended, reporter contends.**

The decision to change the ending of Jeremy Podeswa's film adaptation of Anne Michael's acclaimed novel *Fugitive Pieces* from the one unveiled last fall, when the movie opened the Toronto International Film Festival, is both appalling and sad. Considering that the change renders this Holocaust-themed film "upbeat" is also disquieting and more than a little offensive.

The film's conclusion, as initially conveyed and faithful to the novel's ending, was a tragic one, with Holocaust survivor Jakob (Stephen Dillane), and his new love Michaela (Ayelet Zurer), both killed in a traffic accident in Greece. Ben (Ed Stoppard), Jakob's friend and neighbour from Montreal, has travelled abroad to collect their possessions after the pair have died.

Ben reads from Jakob's writings, with tears streaming down his cheeks, and absorbs the painful irony that a man who had finally been able to write optimistically about his future has now had that future suddenly ended in a flash. Equally upsetting was the realization that Michaela was pregnant, information she had left in a note for Jakob, but one that he never got to read. **[Next three paragraphs contain spoilers].**

That was the cut I saw last fall at a press screening. The new version of the film is significantly different. That's because Jakob and Michaela don't die at all, and the telling words written and narrated by Jakob are entirely hopeful ones. Jakob lives, he will find out that Michaela is expecting his child, who will be named after his sister Bella, who vanished during the Holocaust, and all will be right with the world. Jakob, who lost his family at the film's outset, has now, after much travail, found a new one of his own.

Undoubtedly, for many people, this conclusion will be an easier one to absorb than the other ending would have been. It's not as emotionally jarring, nor does it provoke questions about God, life and the meaning of the universe, the concerns of Holocaust survivors such as Primo Levi and Elie Wiesel, to name two of the most famous examples among those who have tried to glean something out of the unimaginable horrors of the past. *Fugitive Pieces* has been turned into a much simpler, more obvious film, with a pat ending that reassures instead of disturbs.

Film's revision is entirely unacceptable

This revision is problematic, to say the least, and on artistic grounds entirely unacceptable. It also sets a possible new precedent in Canada, wherein movies' sad endings may regularly be altered after completion, in the hopes that the box office can be improved if only the films end on an optimistic note. **[Spoilers end]**

This isn't new in cinema; from the 1950s version of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* to '80s hit *Fatal Attraction*, among so many others, Hollywood has frequently done this to movies deemed too downbeat, usually after the films have been test screened for unsophisticated audiences who have objected to the unhappy endings. I don't know if that was the specific case here; regardless of the reasons, the damage has been done.

In a joint statement issued to this reporter, director Podeswa and producer Robert Lantos said, "We wanted the audience to leave the film with a sense of hope, not despair. We feel that the spirit and essence of the novel are still very much embedded in this film. What the book conveys about history and memory, about living with the past without letting it destroy you, about the healing power of love and compassion – these are equally the concerns of the movie."

I wonder if Michaels, who was unavailable to comment for this article but who introduced the first cut of the film at Toronto's Jewish Book Fair last November, would agree. Nor can I easily believe, despite his statement, that Podeswa, who spoke to me in a phone interview for an article last August about the love and reverence he felt for the novel, would readily go along with, or conceive of this revision, thereby betraying Michaels' novel in the process.

The craziest aspect of all this is that whoever decided to make the change to *Fugitive Pieces*, has, in effect, bungled the job, so much so that the box office possibilities of the film will probably be less than they otherwise would have been.

For starters, when American producers tamper with their movies, they usually make sure the changes have been put in play before the film is press screened. Here, virtually every Canadian film critic of note has seen the initial cut of the film, because it opened Toronto's prestigious film festival, and, likely, so have many American and European reviewers.

This suggests, of course, that the decision to change the film was made later on, but it's also allowed comparisons to be made between the two cuts of the movie, which would otherwise not have been the case. And it's a safe bet, that most of the critics, whether they liked the film or not, won't comment favourably on the happier ending.

Then, you have the fans of Michaels' novel, and they are legion, who won't want to go out to a movie that so alters their favourite book. Other serious filmgoers, who read the reviews, will likely not want to see it, either, so the makers of *Fugitive Pieces* will be left right back where they started, trying to sell the public on a Canadian Holocaust-themed movie without any big name stars. And, I doubt they're going to market this movie by emphasizing that it's a feel good Holocaust film. In that light, why didn't they trust the audience to find the film simply because it was a good, honest movie, in fact, one of the better recent English Canadian films of note.

As a discerning film critic, who found this movie, a few weak performances aside, to be a generally moving, poignant and powerful experience, I'm saddened by this turn of affairs. Despite the strengths that still exist in the film, notably the beautifully rendered relationship between the young Jakob (Robbie Kay) and Athos (Rade Sherbedgia), the kindly non-Jewish Greek archeologist who rescues him from the Holocaust and later brings him to Canada, I can't in good conscience recommend you see *Fugitive Pieces*. The bowdlerizing of this movie goes against everything I believe art should be and smacks of the dumbing down and pandering to audiences that has become almost the norm in much of today's cinema. Perhaps, the honest ending of the film will be restored when *Fugitive Pieces* will be released on DVD, but even if it is, it won't eliminate the bad taste left by what was done to the movie beforehand. We don't make nearly enough good movies in this country, especially outside of Quebec, that we can afford to trash the few quality ones we do make. But that's what's been done to *Fugitive Pieces*, to the detriment of us all.

Israeli appears in Canadian film about the Holocaust

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Ayelet Zurer's acting career has not been the same since her cameo role in Steven Spielberg's film, *Munich*, which was released in 2005.

"It was a complete turning point," said Zurer, one of Israel's leading actresses. "It was like a huge wave."

Ayelet Zurer

Since then, Zurer – the recipient of an Israeli Film Academy Award for best actress – has appeared in three Hollywood movies and a Canadian film, *Fugitive Pieces*, which had its world première at the 32nd Toronto International Film Festival last September and opens here on May 2.

"It was wonderful being directed by Spielberg," said Zurer in an interview during the festival. "I felt very lucky to be on set. He's a very brilliant man and nice, too."

Munich, which unfolds against the backdrop of the Arab-Israeli conflict, was her first English-language film. She was asked to audition for it shortly after giving birth to her first child, Eliad.

Preoccupied by motherhood, Zurer, 38, was doubtful whether she would even bother reading for the role as the wife of an Israeli commando who joins a hit team tasked to hunt down Palestinian terrorists who killed Israeli Olympic athletes in Germany.

But after learning that Spielberg would be the director, she had a change of heart. Three weeks later, she was informed that the role was hers.

After *Munich*, she and her husband – a swimming instructor – and their infant son moved to Los Angeles.

"Career-wise, it's smart to be in L.A.," said Zurer, who was in Toronto last autumn to promote *Fugitive Pieces*. "I'm very open to anything, though I miss home very much."

Born and raised in Tel Aviv, she is certain that her appearance in *Munich*, not to mention her Israeli film credits, brought her to the attention of Jeremy Podeswa, the director of *Fugitive Pieces*, which is based on the Anne Michaels' novel of the same name.

In Israel, Zurer has starred in a succession of feature films, notably in *Nina's Tragedies*, a bittersweet comedy that won 11 Israeli Film Academy Awards.

She was also in *Florentine*, a popular TV series.

For *Fugitive Pieces*, which turns, in part, on memory and the Holocaust, she was asked to read for the part of Michaela, a sensitive soul who falls in love with a Holocaust survivor. The audition took place very close to the start of production.

Zurer, a plain-spoken woman without the slightest airs, is satisfied with *Fugitive Pieces*. "I'm very pleased. It's a complex film with many different layers. It was an achievement to translate the novel into a film."

In Hollywood, Zurer has made three films, one of which, *Vantage Point*, was released this past winter.

Taking place in Spain, it turns on the assassination of an American president. Improbably enough, she plays a terrorist, opposite Dennis Quaid.

She will also appear, with Jeff Goldblum and Willem Dafoe, in *Adam's Resurrection* and in *Snappers*, an independent film.

"I'm usually drawn to dramatic roles," she said. "I like a strong script. This is the most important thing."

Zurer, a performer in an army entertainment troupe during her military service in Israel, launched her career in 1994 in an Israeli television series aimed at a youthful audience.

Her parents, Joshua and Aviva, were initially opposed to her decision to pursue acting. "But now they're my best fans and very proud."

She has no idea whether she is in Los Angeles to stay. This obviously depends on how her career develops. "But I wouldn't like to think I'll never go back to live in Israel," she said. "My roots are very important."

Documentary reunites metal band for world tour

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Anvil were once hailed as the demigods of Canadian heavy metal.

The band influenced a musical generation, including the metal bands Metallica, Slayer and Anthrax. Although Anvil never made it big, the band was persistent, recording 12 albums.

In the summer of 2005, wondering what happened to Anvil, writer and director Sacha Gervasi, the band's former roadie, typed their name into Google.

"This semi-official website came up, so I wrote the webmaster, 'I'm an old friend of the band, my name is Tea Bag, and I'm really anxious to get in touch with them,'" said British-born Gervasi during brunch at Toronto's Sutton Place Hotel.

Steve (Lips) Kudlow, Anvil's guitarist, wrote back: "We thought you died or became a lawyer."

Gervasi is now a successful Hollywood screenwriter. He wrote the screenplay for Steven Spielberg's *The Terminal*, which starred Tom Hanks.

Gervasi telephoned Kudlow and told him, "Dude, you've got to come to L.A. man."

When Gervais got in touch with Kudlow, Kudlow was delivering for a catering company, while the band's drummer, Robb Reiner, worked in demolition.

"So I got him [Kudlow] a ticket and picked him up at the airport. It was as if no time had passed – it was just magical," Gervais said.

While in Los Angeles, they met with Gervasi's friend and mentor Steve Zaillian, who won an Academy Award for his screenplay for *Schindler's List*.

Zaillian and Gervasi talked about Anvil. "I told Steve [Zaillian], 'I think there's something – I don't know what it is, they never quit. They never made it, but kept churning out these albums,'" Gervasi said.

It was Zaillian who suggested that Gervasi do a documentary about the band.

For the film, *Anvil! The Story of Anvil*, Gervasi followed the now-fiftysomething rockers, inseparable since their teens, on a world tour. Shot in London; Toronto; Parry Sound, Ont.; and Tokyo and Kyoto, Japan, as well as in Austria and Romania, the film also includes footage of moments from their past.

The band performed to enthusiastic audiences at sold-out film festival screenings during Sundance in Park City, Utah, and recently at Toronto's Hot Docs, where the documentary ranked sixth out of the top 10 audience favourites.

"You'd think that someone who spent 30 years crushed on the sidewalk of life by the shoes of fate would be bitter, but Lips was quite the opposite," Gervasi said. "He thought, 'I guess that's life and I'm not going to quit.' That's pretty admirable."

Gervasi first came across Anvil on the cover of the rock magazine *Sounds* in April 1982. Gervasi was 15 when he met the band at a concert in London, England, the following September.

"We bonded. I knew everything there was to know about the music, so they invited me on tour the following summer. My parents were divorced, so I ostensibly spent the summer with my father and hopped on the train to join the tour," Gervasi said.

"My mother went completely nuts, but I didn't really care. I toured twice more 'cause my mom's family, the Kosoys, are from Toronto, so I'd visit my family and rehearse and do shows with the group."

Enjoying a resurgence of popularity, Kudlow, Reiner and bassist Glenn Five, who joined the band 12 years ago, now play in packed clubs. Recently, Anvil performed at the Bovine Club on Toronto's Queen Street West.

"The Jews of Metal" as Gervasi fondly calls the band, are back on the road, taking the documentary to New York's BAM Brooklyn Academy of Music on May 31; Sydney's film festival, at which Anvil will play for 2,000 people; the Melbourne International Film Festival and the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival.

For more information, visit www.anvilmovie.com.

Steve 'Lips' Kudlow hammering the Flying V guitar.

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

TULCHINSKY'S *FIVE BOOKS OF MOSES* WINS VANCOUVER'S 'ONE BOOK' COMPETITION

The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky, the novel by ex-Torontonian **Karen X. Tulchinsky** that is set almost entirely in the Jewish community of Toronto of the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, has won a prestigious literary award in Vancouver, thousands of miles from where the story takes place.

The book, which documents the life and times of fictional boxer Sonny Lapinsky and his family, has been chosen winner of One Book, One Vancouver, a program that the Vancouver Public Library sponsors to get Vancouverites to read and talk about the same book together.

When *The Five Books of Moses Lapinsky* came out in 2003, one reviewer commented that Tulchinsky "does for Toronto what Mordecai Richler did for Montreal." Library spokesperson Janice Douglas called the novel "superbly crafted," and the One Book, One Vancouver committee said it was "crammed with humour, sorrow, folly, bravery and the richness of everyday life."

Now living in Vancouver, Tulchinsky has been working on a screen adaptation of the novel titled *Sticks and Stones*. She has been invited to give a series of readings at various library branches in Vancouver over the next few months. One would hope that in coming months Toronto readers, just like those of Vancouver, will discover this novel, which stands as one of the best works of fiction yet about our own Jewish community.

* * *

The Sisters Rosensweig: The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents the Toronto première of *The Sisters Rosensweig*, **Wendy Wasserstein**'s captivating look at three uncommon women and their quest for love, self-definition and fulfilment.

Wasserstein, who died two years ago at 55, "spoke for a generation of smart, driven but sometimes unsatisfied women in a series of popular plays" that included the Pulitzer Prize winner, *The Heidi Chronicles*, and *The Sisters Rosensweig*, according to the obituary that appeared in the *New York Times*.

"Ms. Wasserstein drew on her own experience as a smart, well-educated, funny Manhattanite who wasn't particularly lucky in romance to create heroines in a similar mould, women who embraced the essential tenets of the feminist movement but didn't have the stomach for stridency."

The Sisters Rosensweig premièred on Broadway in 1993. It tells the story of one weekend in the lives of three Jewish-American sisters from Brooklyn who gather in London to celebrate the birthday of the oldest sister. The Toronto production is directed by **Jim Warren** and stars **Rosemary Dunsmore**, **Linda Kash** and **Sarah Dodd**. It previews from June 7, opens June 12, and runs until June 21 at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Performing Arts' Jane Mallett Theatre, 27 Front St. E. Tickets are $41.50 to $69.50. 416-366-7723, www.stlc.com

* * *

Guitar Duet: Brian Katz and **Rob Piltch** don't perform together often, so their upcoming performance is a rare opportunity to hear these elegant guitar maestros in conversation. They offer an evening of standards, improvisations and Katz originals, with Katz on a nylon-string (classical) guitar and Piltch on electric. Free Times Café, 320 College St. May 16; sets at 8 and 10 p.m. $25 dinner buffet; $10 cover. Reservations, 416-967-1078.

* * *

Book Launch at Israel's: Gerald Tulchinsky, historian and author of *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* (University of Toronto Press) will discuss and read from his book at Israel's Judaica, 870 Eglinton Ave. W. on Thursday, May 15, 7:30 p.m. Refreshments; everyone welcome. Please RSVP by e-mail, awilson@utpress.utoronto.ca. (In case you were wondering, Gerald and the above-mentioned Karen X. Tulchinsky are first cousins once removed; a writing gene must run in the family.)

* * *

Jewish Genealogy on Display: Tracing Our Jewish Roots is an exhibition of resources from the library collection of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada (Toronto). Pieces in the exhibition highlight the shtetls where our ancestors once walked, the immigrant experience, and life within the early Jewish community of Toronto; other material focuses on Holocaust research, Canada's Jewish war veterans and notable ancestral trees. At the North York Central Library, Canadiana Room, 5120 Yonge St., 6th floor, until June 30.

* * *

Karen X. Tulchinsky, left, at the award ceremony in Vancouver.

Arts in Brief

• **Robert Shechter's** Northern Reflection: Canadian and Greenlandic High Arctic is on view at the Scollard Street Gallery, 112 Scollard St. (lower level). Part of the Contact Toronto Photography Festival, May 1 to 31. 647-436-9784, www. scollardstreetgallery.com

• Dancap Productions presents Cameron Mackintosh and the National Theatre of Great Britain's award-winning production of **Lerner & Loewe**'s *My Fair Lady*. $60 to $100. Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. May 8 to 31. 416-872-1111 or dancaptickets.com

• Submission deadline is May 31 for the 2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition. For submission guidelines, please contact Esther Arbeid at the Miles Nadal JCC, 416-924-6211, ext. 606, or esthera@mnjcc.org.

• 55+ Forward...For Seniors is hosting a group visit to the photography exhibit Aging is Living. Meet in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre lobby on Wednesday, May 14, 1:15 p.m. Contact Phyllis Fien, 416-924-6211, ext 155; phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

• VisionTV honours Israel on its 60th anniversary with a week of special programming that began May 5. Highlights include the new documentary series *Ralph Benmergui: My Israel*; a first look at the new season of the acclaimed series *The Naked Archaeologist*; and the Canadian première of *The Six Day War*, a feature-length documentary.

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67 HOUSE SITTERS
70 UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION
75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
81 APARTMENT TO SUBLET
82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
84 ROOM WANTED FOR RENT
85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM AVAIL
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT-OF-TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT-OF-COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH /SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND/LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND/LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
246 VOLUNTEERS
247 DAY CARE AVAILABLE
248 DAY CARE WANTED
250 DOMESTIC HELP AVAILABLE
255 DOMESTIC HELP WANTED
257 HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE
258 HEALTHCARE WANTED
259 SENIORS
260 BUSINESS PERSONALS
265 PEOPLE SEARCH
270 PERSONALS
273 INTRODUCTION SERVICES
275 PERSONAL COMPANIONS WANTED
279 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY
280 ANNOUNCEMENTS
290 LOST & FOUND
295 PETS
300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY

345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
379 CLOCKS/WATCHES
380 CLOTHING
382 COUNSELLING
385 COMPUTER
386 DANCING
387 DECORATING
390 DRIVING
392 DRY CLEANING/LAUNDRY
394 EDUCATION
395 ELECTRICAL
396 ELECTRONICS
400 ENTERTAINMENT
402 FINANCIAL
404 FITNESS & WEIGHT LOSS
405 FURNITURE
406 GARAGE DOORS
407 GIFTS
410 HEALTH & BEAUTY
412 HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING
415 HOME IMPROVEMENTS
416 HOME INSPECTION
419 INTERNET SERVICE
420 INVITATIONS/PRINTING/CALLIG.
425 JEWELLERY
427 JUDAICA
430 LEASING
431 LANDSCAPING/LAWNCARE
432 LAWYERS
433 LESSONS
434 LIMOUSINE/TAXI
435 LIQUIDATION
438 LOCKSMITH
439 MAKE-UP
440 MISCELLANEOUS
442 MUSICAL SERVICES
443 MORTGAGES
445 MOVING
449 PEST CONTROL
450 PAINTING/WALLPAPERING
452 PARTY SERVICES
455 PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO
460 PLUMBING
465 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
470 RENOVATIONS
472 RETIREMENT HOMES
475 ROOFING
476 SATELITE & EQUIPMENT
480 SECURITY SYSTEMS
481 SEWING
485 SNOW REMOVAL
490 TABLE COVERING
493 TAILORING/ALTERATIONS
495 TILING
496 TRAINING
498 TRAVEL & TOURISM
500 TUTORING
510 UPHOLSTERY
512 WAITERING SERVICES
515 WATERPROOFING
520 WINDOW SERVICES
550 WORKSHOPS

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Lovely 4 Bedroom, Spacious Kitchen & Family Room, Hardwood, Finished Basement, Huge Backyard

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Updated 4 Bedroom Executive on Quiet Street, New Kitchen, New Baths, Pool, Finished Basement. $$$+++

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"Primrose". 2 bdrm, solarium, 2 washrooms, eat-in kitchen with window. $259,000.

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*Dollar Value Sale Of MLS Listings Sold

#1 in Toronto - Luxury Homes Sales over $2,000,000*

THE HAZELTON
$7,500,000
Ultra luxury penthouse in the heart of Yorkville. Designed with Old World European flair balanced with small scale exclusivity. Amenities include pool, fitness centre & spa & 24/7 concierege.

THE CHEDINGTON $2,680,000
Garden Suite ~ Extensively upgraded 3,460 sq. ft. Jatoba hardwood & granite floors. 2 f/p's. Fr. doors in living rm, kit, fam. rm & 3 br's w/o to wrap-around garden & terrace. 3 Parking spaces

FOREST HILL - $6,680,000
Metron Construction w/Carol MacFarlane interior. Orig. staircase & paneling. 2nd level sound proofed music room w/programmed sound system. Htd stone flrs thru-out 3rd level exercise rm & spa, office. Wine cellar, work shop.

FOREST HILL – $2,900,000
Contemporary design w/ ambience of a warm family home. 5 + 1 br's, 7 bth's. Circular beamed family room w/ fireplace. Sunroom w/o to garden. Master w/ his 7 hers closets, 5-pc ensuite. Lower level games & ent rms., nanny's suite.

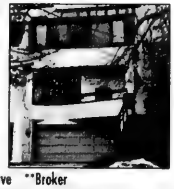
FOREST HILL - $6,250,000
Remarkable opportunity to reno grand stone mansion. 7,500 sq. ft. Oak paneled mn flr, leaded glass windows, plaster crown mouldings. Updated kitchen. Main floor family room w/ w/o. Mud room w/laundry. 6 br's + den., 7 bths. 130' frontage.

HEART OF FOREST HILL
$2,295,000
Impressive wrought-iron gated residence in Lower Forest Hill. 2-storey foyer, grand staircase w/skylight. 9'ceilings. Large principal rooms. 5 br's, 6 bth's. Many-walk-outs to terrace, pool & cabana.

HIGH POINT RD. - VACANT LAND
$4,880,000
Rarely does a 2 acre lot in the Bridle Path become available. Fabulous opportunity to build your dream home. Superb location, close to some of Toronto's best public & private schools. Easy access to downtown.

THE CHEDINGTON – $2,250,000
Private elevator access to 3,012 sq. ft. Elegant details include: walnut floors, textured walls, expansive windows, high ceilings, French doors walk-out to 2 covered terraces. Fab ravine views. 24/7 valet & concierge

HISTORIC KLEINBURG
$4,780,000
Superbly built, custom design ~ 7,000 sq. ft. bungalow w/ loft, 4 + 1 br's, 7 bth's, 12' & 16' ceilings. Finished Lower level entertainment rm, w/o to salt-water pool. 3 acres natural setting.



SUMMER HILL – $1,725,000
Charming home w/ impeccable details. Dining & living rms. w/ open concept & high ceilings. Wall-wall & floor-ceiling windows w/ skylights & Fr.dr. w/o to terrace. 4 + 1 br's. Landscaped gdns by Janet Rosenberg 2 car gar.

*Sales Representative **Broker

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NEW HOME – FOREST HILL RD - $4,295,000
4,600 sf w/up lwr level on 50x146 lot on beltline Lorne Rose Arch., Omudford Design, Crisstar Cab. Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

FABULOUS BUILDING LOT ON FOREST WOOD $1,950,000
Rarely offered 62 x 134 foot treed and very private lot in high demand locale. Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

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ST. ANDREWS FABULOUS [SOLD] M FAMILY HOME $789,000
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Fabulous Monarch Built Home with Many Upgrades including a Gourmet Kit & Hrdwd Flrs throughout. M. Atkins** 905-881-7653

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4 bdrm/4bath, 2 kitchens, fin bsmnt w/separate ent, 9 ft. ceilings, hardwood flrs on main flr, neutral décor. N. Sarova* 905-881-7653

LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION!!!!
Detatched 3 bdrm/4bath, large family room, new windows, Central Air, great street, deck. J. Engel* 905-881-7653

BEAUTIFUL 7 YEAR OLD HOME ON 41FT WIDE LOT
Large rms, upgraded kitchen, family rm, oak stairs & parquet on both flrs, 9ft ceiling, entrance to grge. B. Abramov* 905-881-7653

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BATHURST / SULTANA — INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY!
Magnificent custom home on 65 x 132 ft. lot. Large principal rms., master bdrm. on main flr., 2 bdrms. on upper level, huge bsmt. incl. self-contained in-law ste., rec. room & 5th bdrm. Luscious garden & fruit trees. A must see! $929,000. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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BATHURST/STEELES "TOWNSGATE"
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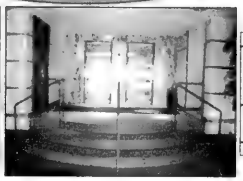

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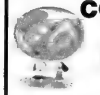

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Livingstone loses London mayorship

JTA

LONDON — Ken Livingstone, a frequent critic of Israel, was beaten in London's mayoral election.

The Conservative Party's Boris Johnson was confirmed with 53 per cent of the vote Saturday to 47 per cent for Livingstone, the Labour incumbent. Johnson was sworn in the same day.

Livingstone has accused Israel of "ethnic cleansing" and refused to apologize after comparing a Jewish journalist from London to a Nazi concentration camp guard.

Boris Johnson

Ken Livingstone

The first person to serve as the mayor of London, a post created in 2000, Livingstone served two terms.

Johnson, a former journalist and MP, visited Israel in 2004, and his website displays pictures of him with a group of female soldiers and shaking hands with Likud party leader Benjamin Netanyahu.

During a pre-election tour in predominantly Jewish districts in northern London last month, Johnson told JTA he would never invite anti-Semitic figures to London, if elected. Johnson was referring to his predecessor's controversial decision to invite Islamist scholar and spiritual leader Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, who supports killing of Israeli civilians, to a conference in 2004.

Johnson has worked to understand the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and has been a supporter of Israel. He opposed a call last year by Britain's University College Union to boycott Israeli colleges and universities.

While many London Jews supported Johnson, others, such as prominent *Guardian* columnist Jonathan Freedland, endorsed Livingstone, arguing he was better qualified to run the city than the inexperienced Johnson. Jewish organizations traditionally refrain from endorsing political candidates.

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Squash-playing brothers win at Ontario Open

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The youngest of four sports-loving brothers, Ethan Shoihet has had to put up with the indignities of being pounded upon by his older siblings.

Yeah, he shrugs, his older brother Albert did "beat me up," but "he's a great older brother. He's tons of fun."

Like younger brothers everywhere, Ethan, 10, took up the same sports his older brothers enjoy – particularly squash and rugby – and because his older brothers constantly pushed him, he's had to work harder to keep up.

The result can readily be seen on the squash court, where Ethan recently won the last two Ontario tournaments he entered, and he did pretty well at the nationals, playing against kids a couple of years older than him.

Adding to the family's pride is that Ethan, winner of the under-11 category at the Ontario Junior Open Championship, was joined in the winner's circle by Albert, 15, who took top honours in the Under-17 group.

Two brothers, two champions.

Ethan took the title with three straight 3-0 shutouts in the best-of-five final, semi-final and quarter-final matches.

Albert won his championship with a little more drama. In the final, he was tied at one win a piece with nemesis Adam Engel and then lost the third game by a resounding 9-0 margin.

In game four, he fell behind 7-3, but rallied to win and then went on to take the deciding fifth game.

Proud pop Earl Shoihet said Albert is known as "a shot-maker, with great skills and great hand-eye co-ordination."

In the final, he showed more than that: "He has good mental toughness," Earl said. "I thought he was done, but he came back."

With the Open win, Albert's provincial ranking (under-17) moves to fifth; Ethan's (under-11) is first.

Ethan, who is 4 foot 10 and 90 pounds, is quite modest about his success. "I'm a bit bigger than the kids I play. I do a lot of training, so I run them out, make them as tired as possible."

But then comes the telltale hint that, on the squash court at least, he is master of his domain. "Sometimes I feel like putting it away quickly."

Ethan was pushed a little in the semi-final at the Ontario Open, which saw players from across Canada compete, but the fact he didn't lose a game at the provincials suggests he's something special at his sport.

His coach at the Oakville Club, Mike Way, agrees. Ethan, he said, is the complete package. "He's got talent and a work ethic."

"He's a little workhorse. He plays very strong and very fast. He's a very good athlete and very competitive. He's a physical little beast."

Way, who's coached world champion Jonathon Power, a Canadian, believes Ethan "will have an exceptional career if he continues."

"I haven't seen a kid this good, this young," said Way.

Ethan followed in his brothers' footsteps when he took up the sport.

Jacob, 17, was the first to pick up a racket and excel, but all the Shoihet brothers are pretty good athletes. Caleb, 13, plays rep basketball and rugby and Albert, before a knee injury sidelined him, also played AAA hockey.

As for Albert, Way believes Ethan's big brother has even more talent, but not Ethan's competitive drive.

Still, Albert is Ontario Open champion and ranked fifth in the province. His Open championship came after 18 months away from the sport while he recovered from knee problems brought on by a growth spurt. Missing that much time and still winning the title is a testament to his abilities, Way said.

"He's got hands and the mind and the tactical aspect" to be a great player.

"Albert is a natural talent," he added.

Nevertheless, there's room for improvement in both brother's games, Way continued. "The big brother has to get the work ethic from little brother, and little brother need to get the touch and tactics of big brother."

Both boys have the potential to make the under-19 junior national team and compete for Canada at the international level. It's even possible that Ethan, when he reaches age 15, will make the junior "squad," a wider pool of players from which the team is selected, he's that good.

Ethan has shown he can compete above his age level. At the nationals in Victoria a few weeks ago, he played with kids two to 2½ years older – a huge spread at his age – and still managed to finish fifth in the Under-13 event, even beating the tournament's third seed, Way said.

It's no surprise, really. He's been competing with older kids for a long, long time.

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SALUTE ON WHEELS: As part of celebrations of Israel's 60th anniversary, the Israel Defence Forces organized "Salute on Wheels," the largest cross-country bike ride in Israel's history. Hundreds of participants from all walks of life cycled across Israel during the intermediate days of Passover. The ride started at the tomb of David Ben-Gurion in Sde Boker in the Negev, travelled north via Sderot and Ashkelon and ended in Kiryat Shmona near the Lebanese border. [Israel photo]

The show must go on

ALMOST FAMOUS
BY JACOB MEDJUCK

Larry Bird. Michael Jordan. *Star Wars. The Matrix*. Success happens.

To understand the why, when and how of it typically requires hindsight.

That's what I thought, anyway, until last week, when I saw beyond the experience I was having while sitting in row "O" watching the regional theatre production of a classic Broadway musical that I adored growing up.

Not to sound too fawning, but the sets were fantastic. Very professional. The trademark of regional theatre is usually the opposite when it comes to sets. But in this case, the sets were great.

The performers were – how to put it? – "regional," but sturdy. The audience, while enormous, had realistic expectations. Which was great. But what sparked my attention in this production had more to do with the script than the staging, more to do with story structure than on-stage construction.

The music was as breezy and infectious as ever, and the plot was sincere and relevant. And if Tony Award trophies were Jewish men, the original Broadway version of this play could've held a minyan with the number of statues it won, while as a movie, it grabbed 10 Oscars.

And yet, when costumes in a film become dated, we say it's a "period" piece or nostalgic. But when jokes become dated, it's just not funny.

Wow. Not funny. Acclaimed, even lauded, but not funny. Dramatic and poignant, but not funny. With punch lines like "flabber-jabber?" Hmmm.

This *Romeo and Juliet* adaptation pitted locals against immigrants – a classic social clash, whether it's black versus white, or Jews versus everyone else. But I found this particular mounting comically current and poignantly punctuated by the accidental casting quirk that had "scripted as" Puerto Ricans all played by local Asians. It was a classic "commentary" play that actually mirrored the mixed community that was putting it on.

It was ironically relevant, passionate and catchy, worldly and respected, but still, not very funny.

Why the concern? We are talking about a legacy show after all, right?

Well, to explain: I've recently had implanted in me a promptly practical and predictive perspective, courtesy of repeated unprotected exposures to Neilsen ratings and studio marketing and distribution strategies over the past year.

All of which means, simply, that when the vertical hold is off on my television, it's distracting. When the sound is fuzzy on the radio, it's hard to stay engaged. Entertainment is a cold, quick business, and keeping your audience engaged is a serious priority. It's hard to suspend disbelief if I can see the strings holding up the UFO! So when any element of a production is consistently distracting me, that's a concern, and it directly affects the degree to which we're able to absorb additional themes and messages.

Performances that distract will fall out of favour. "You get more bees when you use honey" was (ironically) the message beaten into me early on.

Essentially, if it stings to watch a production's comedic elements, we're probably not consuming as much of the meaningful part of the play as its author intended.

This age-old, yet jazzed up, show is clearly a powerful story about tolerance and compassion, love and friendship. It's as relevant now as it was hundreds of years ago when it was first presented by William Shakespeare, then re-imagined by Broadway in 1957 and Hollywood in 1961.

Hundreds of years suggest that social advances would demand that earlier re-tooling of the tale.

But as I sat in row "O" last week, I wondering if it was already time for an update?

Rent. Avenue Q. UrineTown. It's getting spicy out there. I'm taking my jazz hands these days with the middle finger extended.

So when the show I'm watching feels undeniably like a museum of merriment and not like soaring entertainment, I do get sad that the great history of it all is slipping into shadow, yet I'm charged for a new stage of content that's about to rush in.

My feeling is that several classics will soon be recalled. Expect new ones by Christmas, such as *Romeo and Romeo, Hello Dolly: The Cloning of Sheep, Fiddler on the Internet*.

Not to be overly dramatic or anything.

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FITNESS CORNER
BY FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

Injuries: we've all had them, but most people only deal with their injuries if they're acute or very painful.

When we have an accident, we seek treatment for any resulting injuries right away, and most times, we get better.

But when the effects of an injury are only felt gradually over time, we tend to wait to get treatment. But injuries involving muscles, tendons and ligaments need attention as much as, if not more than, broken bones. Nobody would leave a broken leg unattended, but it always surprises me how many people will leave a strained ligament, tendon or muscle untreated.

I often hear, "If I just leave it alone, it will get better over time." Sometimes, that's true: an injury will seem to get better over time, but once you start to really use the injured part of your body again – especially in resistance training – the chance of re-injury becomes very high.

I always urge my clients to seek attention and regular maintenance for any injured area. Complete treatment of the injury is necessary so you can begin to regain your strength. To do that, you need proper diagnostic care from a doctor in order to direct you to the right rehabilitative treatment or treatments. Once you have completed the rehabilitative processes, only then can you start to rebuild.

But I have seen too many people not finish rehab, either because they think they can do it on their own or because rehab is too painful for them to complete. As a result, the injury never truly goes away, and as we age, that can cause pain and sometimes immobility.

Our body is an amazing piece of equipment, but if we damage it, we must fix it and fix it right. Most injuries involving muscles, tendons or joints are complicated, and if not treated, they can lead to other problems. Remember: once you have finished the rehab process, when rebuilding, you must to start from the beginning and build back up to where you came from.

Please e-mail your questions to felycesfitness@rogers.com.

Israel then, now and forever

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

On Yom Hazikaron (Memorial Day in Israel), the fourth day of the month of Iyar, we remember all those who have fallen on behalf of the Jewish state.

As we approach this heartrending day, ask yourself the following questions. What are your feelings about the 23,000 Israeli forces killed in wars and the citizens who died as a result of terrorism?

Do you appreciate the bravery of those in the Israel Defence Forces, the Jewish Brigade and the Yishuv – those who gave of themselves for your security and that of the Jewish People?

Do you appreciate, at a gut level, the soldiers in the Haganah and Irgun (pre-state forces), many of whom were Holocaust survivors and had just stepped off boats from Europe, who fought hand to hand with the enemy? Or the students on the bus whose last smile or cellphone call occurred just before an explosion that would snuff out their lives?

When a two-minute siren is heard at 11 a.m. in Israel marking the opening of the official memorial ceremonies, do you whisper a message of thanks to the Israeli mothers and fathers who waved goodbye, sometimes forever, to their cherished sons and daughters as they returned to their base to fight for us? Is this day special? Is it marked in your calendar?

Fortunately, there are many Toronto Jewish community members who do indeed recognize the sacrifice our Israeli brothers and sisters have made; however, there are others who now question the importance of the State of Israel and care little about such days as Yom Hazikaron. Many of these individuals can be found on our campuses buying into the yammering of professors who claim Israel is the most oppressive state in the world. These are our Jewish children. Oh how mistaken they are! How they will awaken when Israel must defend itself against evil nations like Iran that want to extirpate us!

On Yom Hazikaron, challenge them. Be patient but confront them. Ask those who question Israel's right to defend itself what they would do if crazy people living next store wanted to burn their house down. Answer patiently. Tell them that to be a Jew is difficult and the consequences of missing the importance of Israel are dangerous.

Then ask yourself – when Yom Ha'atzmaut enters on the fifth day of Iyar, the anniversary of the proclamation of the State of Israel in 1948, how much do you celebrate? Do you cheer? Do you clink your glass and call out a l'chaim for Israel for having fought on every front and then working to ensure that our homeland is a special place, a world-class country?

As Jews, we don't create hoopla around the battles we won, or jump with glee for the decorated soldiers who killed the enemy in battle. That is not our way. We do, however, embrace our wondrous victories, like the State of Israel that continues to stand tall and proud, despite the calls for its demise by major publications around the world. And we thank God.

To our Israeli family, we say those who predict that you will not exist do not appreciate your spirit and powerful drive to breathe. We will support you as we did then – and forever. We will do so through our prayers, our sojourns in the Holy Land, the purchase of real estate in your towns as a place of investment where we can launch our businesses, and through tzedakah.

Maximize these two days, by questioning those who do not fully grasp Israel as our lifeblood and by remembering those who fought so we could be free Jews. *Am Yisrael chai*. The nation of Israel lives.

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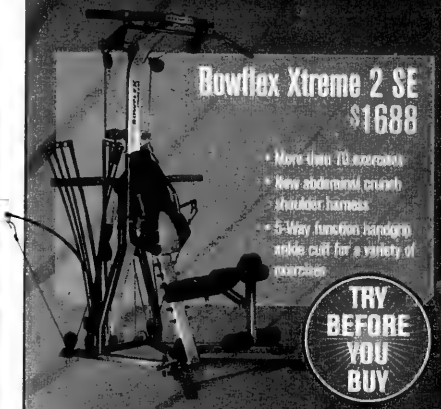

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This Week

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National

Israel is jihadists' main target: journalist. *Page 6*

Young Israelis make beautiful music. *Page 18*

No Place Like Home

Special supplement inside. *Section B*

Arts & Travel

Steel Toes tackles racism head on. *Page 39*

Successful actor remembers where she started. *Page 40*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions....10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 16
Family Moments 21
What's New 22
Obituaries and Notices 24
On Campus 24
Seniors Scene....26
Just Between Us 28
Health & Lifestyles 32
Israel & the Jewish World 33
Heebonics....37
Books & Authors....38
Arts & Travel....39

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PM enjoys Israel's birthday party

Prime Minister Stephen Harper greets members of the children's choir that sang at the community's Yom Ha'tzmaut rally last week in Toronto. *Please see related story on page 3.* *[Caley Taylor photo]*

Israel on alert as clashes rage in Lebanon

By YOAV STERN and BARAK RAVID
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Israel's defence establishment has raised its intelligence alert in case Hezbollah decides to exploit its hold on Lebanon to wage an armed conflict south of the Litani River, the scene of the most intense fighting with Israel in the 2006 Lebanon war, Israeli Army Radio reported Monday.

Nevertheless, Israeli security officials are downplaying concerns of an imminent direct conflict with the Lebanon-based militant group, the radio said.

Hezbollah guerrillas seized west Beirut over the weekend and sectarian clashes had raged across Lebanon between the group and pro-government fighters loyal to western-backed Prime Minister Fouad Siniora for six consecutive days.

Heavy fighting broke out in the northern city of Tripoli on Monday, Lebanese security officials said. Officials said machine gun fire and rockets were being used in battles between government supporters and pro-Syrian gunmen. Earlier fighting in Tripoli had stopped Sunday morning. But it broke out again Monday after Lebanese troops pulled out from the area.

Lebanese paramedics also said Monday that at least 36 people were killed in clashes in a mountainous region near Beirut, bringing the death toll to 81 since the fighting began on May 7.

The scenes of skirmishes in the streets of Beirut, a once-elegant city that's still scarred from a civil war in the 1970s, sent shockwaves through the Middle East.

Continued on page 33

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Israel hopes to lead the charge to electric c... 34

The News in Brief

CANADA

Rock Pioneer Dies

TORONTO — The first man to play rock 'n' roll on Canadian radio has died. Phil Stone, who aired Bill Haley's *Rock Around the Clock* on Toronto's CHUM in May 1957, died May 1 at 94. The Glasgow-born Stone came to Canada in 1927 and served as a public relations officer in World War II. He joined CHUM in the 1940s, and also wrote columns for local papers. In 1959, he became CHUM's vice-president, and later taught radio at Humber College, his son, *Ottawa Citizen* reporter Jay Stone, wrote in a tribute.

Shuls Open Doors

TORONTO — Four shuls will be among the more than 140 buildings featured in this year's Doors Open Toronto, May 24 and 25. The Kiever and Anshei Minsk synagogues in the historic Kensington Market area, as well as Congregation Knesseth Israel in Toronto's Junction area and the newly renovated home of Congregation Darchei Noam, the city's only Reconstructionist shul, will take part in the ninth annual event, which lets people tour landmark structures for free. Places of worship and national historic sites are being featured this year.

WORLD

Greetings From Space

NEW YORK — Astronaut Garrett Reisman sent greetings from space to Israel on its 60th birthday. Reisman, 40, a New Jersey engineer, is the international space station's first Jewish crew member. He's been in space since March 11. "Every time the station flies over the State of Israel, I try to find a window… it never fails to move me when I see [its] familiar outline," he said.

New OU Head Named

NEW YORK — The rabbi of the largest U.S. Orthodox shul outside the New York area was named to lead the Orthodox Union. Rabbi Steven Weil, 42, of Beth Jacob Congregation in Beverly Hills, Calif., will succeed Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb as the umbrella group's executive vice-president on July 1, 2009. The graduate of Yeshiva University's rabbinical seminary has a master's in business from New York University. His congregation has 750 member families.

Parents Win Trip

NEW YORK — Taglit-Birthright Israel awarded free trips to Israel to 16 parents of program alumni. It announced the winners May 8 of its "Let My Parents Go" contest. North American Birthright alumni were asked to submit video applications on why their parents should be given a free trip. Since 2000, Birthright has sent more than 160,000 Jews aged 18 to 26 on free 10-day trips to Israel. The videos of 60 parents were posted on Birthright's website, and the public chose the winners, all of whom are American.

Boycott Rejected

NEW YORK — Three Orthodox groups rejected calls for Jewish tourists to boycott the Beijing Olympics. The Orthodox Union, Agudath Israel of America and the National Council of Young Israel issued statements in the days after a recent call by 185 Jewish leaders – mostly clergy – to boycott the Games. The call was initiated by two Orthodox rabbis in New York, Haskel Lookstein and Irving Greenberg, who drew parallels to Germany's use of the 1936 Olympics to whitewash Nazism and noted that China is preparing a kosher kitchen for tourists. The Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Committee have also rejected the boycott. Other U.S. Jewish groups, including the Reform movement, want President George W. Bush to boycott the opening ceremony, which they say will have symbolic value but won't harm athletes.

Uganda Gets Rabbi

LOS ANGELES — Rabbi Gershom Sizomu will become the first officially ordained rabbi of Uganda's Abayudaya Jews. Rabbi Sizomu, like his father and grandfather, has served as the isolated African community's spiritual leader. After five years at American Jewish University in Los Angeles, he will become a Conservative rabbi May 19. Some 1,000 Abayudaya Jews live in five Ugandan villages. The group, which has been isolated from the Jewish world since its 1919 founding, based its traditions on a literal reading of the Old Testament until western rabbis visited in the mid-1990s. Most converted in 2004.

Innovative Projects To Get Grant Money

VANCOUVER — Thirty-five young Jewish activists from around the world will get seed money from a Vancouver-based agency for new innovative communal projects.

The grants, mostly $3,000 to $5,000, were announced late last month by the Center for Leadership Initiatives and will use money from a $100,000 grant pool provided by U.S. philanthropist Lynn Schusterman.

The projects are in the fields of Jewish culture, Internet content, environmental activism, tikkun olam, youth programming and Israel advocacy. They range from a course on "Torah and Modern Science" in several Russian cities and a street clean-up campaign in Jerusalem to a program to train Latin American students to represent Israel at model United Nations missions.

The grantees are former participants in the ROI global summit, a four-day workshop for young Jewish innovators sponsored by the centre and Birthright Israel that has taken place the last two summers in Jerusalem. Some 120 people are expected at this year's summit, which gives participants space and resources to develop projects aimed at furthering Jewish identity among youth, said Rabbi Yonatan Gordis, the centre's executive director. This first round of grants aims to jump-start some of the best projects.

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Harper expresses 'unshakable support' for Israel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper told 7,000 people celebrating Israel's 60th birthday that the Jewish State has Canada's "unshakable support" because those who threaten Israel also threaten Canada.

"Unfortunately, Israel at 60 remains a country under threat, threatened by groups and regimes who deny, to this very day, its right to exist. And why? Make no mistake. Look beyond the thinly veiled rationalizations – because they hate Israel, just as much as they hate the Jewish people. Our government believes that those who threaten Israel also threaten Canada," Harper said May 8 at the Israel @ 60 event at the Ricoh Coliseum, eliciting enthusiastic applause and a standing ovation.

Harper, who is often criticized for his strong pro-Israel stance, didn't hold anything back as he spoke of Israel as being a symbol of triumph, hope and faith.

"After 1945, our battered world desperately needed to be lifted out of the forces of darkness and despair. After so much pain and suffering, we needed comfort and optimism… In short, we needed to be inspired, and it was the people that suffered most that provided that inspiration," Harper said.

"In the 60 years that followed, Israel has blossomed into one of the most successful countries on earth," he said, adding that Israel is a "miracle in the desert," committed to democracy and human rights.

Continued on page 20

RAISING THE FLAG: MPP Tony Ruprecht addresses a crowd of celebrants at Queen's Park as the Israeli flag was raised in honour of Yom Ha'atzmaut. At right is Israel's consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, Amir Gissin.

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Greater Toronto Area

Eitz Chaim celebrates 90 years

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Eitz Chaim Schools will celebrate its 90th anniversary at a dinner at Copper Creek Golf Club May 20.

The second-oldest Jewish day school in Toronto, Eitz Chaim – like Associated Hebrew Schools, which dates back 100 years – began its existence as a supplementary school. It became a day school in the 1940s.

The Orthodox school's modest beginnings in 1917 consisted of a single teacher in a one-room cheder for boys.

Today there are 850 students from nursery to Grade 8 spread among three campuses – a girls' school in Thornhill, a boys' school on Patricia Avenue, and a second girls' school on Viewmount Avenue, the school's first day school location.

But Eitz Chaim's dean, Rabbi Isser Pliner, told *The CJN* he thinks that "the school probably has not drifted too far away from its original mission – to be a place where children are provided with an opportunity to have a [Torah] way of life inculcated."

In its early days, when the school was first known as the *Polishe Talmud Torah*, it had a heterogenous student body, but today – with the proliferation of schools serving many different segments of the community – Eitz Chaim serves families who are "committed to a lifestyle of Torah Judaism," Rabbi Pliner said.

Three years ago, following a merger with Thornhill Talmud Torah – a school that was started by Eitz Chaim parents – Eitz Chaim instituted a "Maharal" stream for boys, which involves extra study in the summer and uses a "more traditional method" of teaching Jewish subjects, focusing on knowledge of the texts per se with much review of the material.

"The point is that the children should internalize it," said Rabbi Pliner.

He noted that the Maharal students are integrated into all school programming. "At the end of the day they're Eitz Chaim kids and Eitz Chaim families."

The rabbi, who headed a school in Pittsburgh before moving to Toronto six years ago, said that Eitz Chaim "still sees itself in the centre of its [Orthodox] community, but the community's centre has moved to the right. If it remained the way it was 30 or 40 years ago, it wouldn't be in the centre. It would be left-wing."

Rabbi Pliner said the school is a "very modern, progressive, professionally run school" with "a very strong secular program," special education resource programs, state-of-the-art libraries, and most recently, the beginning use of SMART Boards, interactive technology that opens new learning possibilities in the classroom.

He said the school, which is serving its fourth generation of students in some cases, has been a "trendsetter" in developing seven-foot-high replicas of Gemarah pages for use on the wall in beginning boys' Gemarah classes. (Girls do not learn Gemarah at the school.)

In the 1920s Eitz Chaim took what at the time was also a progressive step, opening a separate girls' class and hiring a female teacher for them.

Pauline Esco, née Spiegel, who was born in Poland and arrived in Canada at age 8 in 1936, remembers learning how to read Hebrew at D'Arcy Talmud Torah some 70 years ago when she was about 10 years old. "We started from the bottom: aleph bet and everything.

"There are great memories. The teacher [Celia Levitan, later Frisch] was wonderful. She had a lot of patience. But we didn't get the training they do now [at Jewish day schools]. After school the kids were tired mentally and physically. You were anxious to get home for supper. There were no day schools at that time."

The school "taught us something, and it remained with us," said Esco, who grew up in a traditional Jewish home. Going to synagogue on Shabbat is "part of me," she added.

By the time Esco was a student, the school had moved from its first downtown home, the Elm Street Shul, where classes were held after public school on weekdays for six hours and for another six hours on Sundays. Classes ran throughout the school year as well as in the summer.

There were subsequent homes downtown before the school purchased a building on D'Arcy Street. The latter building was rebuilt after a 1927 fire, and classes went from four hours to two hours but maintained a strong emphasis on Talmud, according to a history provided by the school.

The history, which will be reproduced in a journal for the dinner, is enhanced by reminiscences written by the school's first principal, Rabbi Leibish Noble, who remained involved with the school for 40 years. His comments, translated from the original Yiddish, first appeared in a 25th anniversary journal in 1943, said Gloria Silver, the school's development co-ordinator.

For further information about the dinner, call the dinner hotline at 416-225-1187, ext. 31 or e-mail dinner@eitzchaim.com. The event is a fundraiser honouring the Joseph & Faye Tanenbaum Charitable Foundation, and will feature guest speaker Rabbi Shmuel Kamenetsky of the Talmudical Yeshiva of Philadelphia, an Eitz Chaim alumnus.

From the editor's desk **WILL RETURN**

See JN

SOLDIERS, OFFICERS AND COMMANDERS

David Ben-Gurion, centre (wearing a scarf), Israel's first prime minister, stands in the Negev Desert with a group of young soldiers in the days before the state was declared. Standing beside Ben-Gurion to his immediate left is Yigal Alon, the commander of the Palmach, Israel's commando strike force. Between Ben-Gurion and Alon is a young Yitzhak Rabin, an officer in the Palmach forces.
[Keren Hayesod photo]

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Israel is jihadists' main target, journalist says

Palestinians have created 'largest terror base in the world'

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Islamic jihadists have targeted Israel as the key front-line state in the war of terror they are waging against the West, according to the deputy managing editor of the *Jerusalem Post*, Caroline Glick.

Speaking at Holy Blossom Temple last week, she said Muslim radicals regard Israel as the first western nation to be eliminated in their campaign to establish "global domination."

They hate Israel because it's a Jewish state and an outpost of freedom, said Glick, an American from Chicago who made aliyah in 1991 and then served as an assistant foreign policy adviser to Benjamin Netanyahu when he was Israel's prime minister.

Glick, the author *The Shackled Warrior: Israel and the Global Jihad*, published two months ago by Gefen, said the current Israeli government refuses to acknowledge the Islamic threat.

Israel can defeat its Islamic enemies, but only if it looks "at reality in the eye" and rebuts the increasingly heard argument that Muslim rage is driven by Israeli settlements in the territories and Israel's refusal to make concessions to the Palestinians.

Glick, a syndicated columnist and a former officer in the Israel Defence Forces, belittled the claim that the absence of a Palestinian state explains why Islamists have launched a jihad.

The Palestinians have been offered statehood since the 1930s, but have rejected each offer, she observed.

Given the international funds they have received in recent years, the Palestinians could already have built a state.

Instead, they have constructed "the largest terror base in the world," she said, referring to the Gaza Strip, which Israel evacuated in 2005.

If the Palestinians really sought statehood, they would not have elected a Hamas government in 2006.

She denounced Hamas as "a genocidal terror organization" intent on wiping out Israel, and she accused Hamas of building a Taliban-style state instead of "a new Singapore" in Gaza.

In a diatribe aimed at Palestinian leaders, Glick charged that they're dedicated to destroying Israel rather than building a civil society.

Blasting Saudi Arabia for financing jihadist forces and spreading Muslim anti-Semitism, Glick singled out Iran as the country behind the war of terrorism.

She added that senior Al Qaeda officials operate openly in Iran.

Iran fights Israel through surrogates, Hamas in Gaza and the West Bank and Hezbollah in Lebanon, she noted.

For all intents and purposes, Hezbollah is Iran's "foreign legion," while Hamas is "an Iranian proxy" financed to the tune of some $100 million annually, she added. "This is the system that Israel is fighting."

Turning to Syria, Iran's ally, Glick said it has ceased to be an independent nation and is now "an Iranian colony" whose military is essentially under Iran's control.

Caroline Glick

Without Iran's annual subsidy of $1 billion, Syria would be "an economic basket case."

The secret Syrian nuclear reactor destroyed by Israel last September was financed by Iran, she said.

During a question-and-answer session, Glick argued that Israel has nothing to fear from Christian Zionists whose goal is to convert Jews to Christianity.

"We should be nice to them," she said, minimizing their long-term objective.

Saying that Israel desperately needs fresh elections so that it can embark on a new direction, Glick named Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu and Moshe Ya'alon, the former Israeli chief of staff, as credible alternatives to the incumbent Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert.

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Gratifying and grateful

The commemoration of Israel's 60th birthday began last week. Celebrations and special observances of this magical milestone event will be held throughout the coming year in communities around the world and especially, of course, in the Jewish state itself.

It is fitting however, that we make special mention of the large and heartening community rallies that were held across the country last week and commend the organizers and the participants for uninhibited, enthusiastic displays of love and support for the people of Israel, and the achievements of that remarkable, tiny country during the past six decades.

But we must also note with particular gratitude Canada's signal support for the Jewish state.

Before thousands of demonstratively appreciative celebrants in Toronto last week, Prime Minister Stephen Harper once again expressed his government's "unshakable support" for Israel. "Our government believes that those who threaten Israel also threaten Canada," Harper said. "Israel has blossomed into one of the most successful countries on earth," the prime minister added.

In Montreal, the leader of the Opposition, Stéphane Dion, told some 15,000 celebrants that "Israel is a country that has enriched our global community with its vibrant culture, its powers of invention, and its commitment to freedom, democracy, and prosperity."

In Ottawa, the House of Commons unanimously agreed to a motion tabled by Mount Royal MP Irwin Cotler, and seconded by 20 members of parliament (the maximum allowed), that reaffirms and re-articulates the unique bond between Canada and Israel.

The full text of the resolution is worthy of note: "That the House: (a) recognize the historic significance of the 60th anniversary of the reconstitution of the sovereign and independent State of Israel as a homeland for the Jewish people; (b) reaffirm its support for Israel as Israel pursues peace with its neighbours; (c) reaffirm its support for Israel's right to defend itself against threats to its existence and security; (d) commend the people of Israel for their achievements in building a new state and a pluralistic, democratic society in the face of hostilities; (e) reaffirm the bonds of friendship and co-operation between Canada and Israel, and commit to strengthening those bonds; and (f) extend the warmest congratulations and best wishes to the State of Israel and the Israeli people for a secure and prosperous future at peace with her neighbours."

In a world often made disheartening and confusing by concerted efforts to delegitimize and demonize the Jewish state, it is very gratifying and heartwarming to hear and to read such deeply rooted statements of support for Israel such as those expressed last week by the government and the parliament of Canada.

* * *

In last week's editorial, we wrote that Yigael Yadin was Israel's first chief of staff. In fact, he was the second.

Ya'akov Dori was the first.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

A total of 13,176 immigrants came to Israel in 1982, up 14 per cent over 1981, with the main source of olim being western countries. Immigration from the Soviet Union, the largest reservoir of potential immigrants, remained very low, the Knesset was told as it opened its summer session with a debate on aliyah.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones GOOD NEWS BAD NEWS...
THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT SOMEONE IN AN ARAB GULF STATE HAS FINALLY CALLED FOR ENDING ANTI-ISRAELI INCITEMENT.
REALLY?
YES! SOMEONE IN AN ARAB GULF STATE HAD THE COURAGE TO SAY THAT THE ENEMY IS IRAN, AND NOT ISRAEL!
AT LAST!
AND THE BAD NEWS?
THAT SOMEONE WAS...
ISRAEL'S FOREIGN MINISTER
WHILE ON A VISIT TO QATAR.

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Machal volunteer recalls 1948

Now, 60 years later, I recall the "welcome" I received on landing in Haifa as a volunteer to serve in the War of Independence, with several others who were posing as tourists on June 6, 1948.

I fell into conversation with a British major who said, "You're bloody crazy coming here at this time. Don't you know what's going on?" As calmly as possible, I replied that we were on a world tour that included passing through the new Israel. I will never forget how, pointing toward Haifa port, he gloated and said, "That's where the Arabs are slaughtering the f—ing Jews. We're pulling out, but it won't take two weeks before the Jews will beg us to rescue them."

No sooner had Israel declared independence on May 15, 1948, than five Arab armies invaded the nascent state.

About 3,500 overseas volunteers came from 43 different countries to assist in Israel's struggle for survival. They were referred to collectively as "Machal," an acronym of the Hebrew equivalent of "volunteers from abroad."

Several Machal groups came to Israel together with displaced persons on overcrowded refugee ships. One group sailed in the Dolores, a boat designed to accommodate 50 people, but carried 149. South African Machal volunteer, the late Dr. Alan Price, assisted by Evelyn Bernstein, delivered a baby in the captain's cabin. With the assistance of Joe Woolf, Price succeeded in tracing and meeting this "baby," who was then living in Kiryat Bialik, during Israel's 50th birthday celebrations.

It is indeed a privilege to celebrate the 60th birthday of the miraculously re-created Israel, after 2,000 years without a state of our own.

Maurice Ostroff
Herzliya, Israel

* * *

March of the Living, 2008

My daughter, Ashley Bitton, and her two first cousins, Myles Schwartz and Josh Raisin, recently left on the March of the Living, 2008. They represent three of the 13 grandchildren of Holocaust survivors Jack and Roma Buchman.

Two days before liberation in 1945, my father's mother was murdered by the Nazis in front of his eyes. My father was 13. His family was able to preserve her remains and have her buried.

Before my daughter and her cousins left for Poland, my father described to them where his mother, Pola Buchman, was buried and asked, if there was time, could they visit their great-grandmother's grave.

After an eight-hour plane ride to Warsaw, with a six-hour time difference, these teenagers began to tour immediately. Their first stop was at the Gensha Cemetery. The three young people wandered around looking for their great-grandmother's name. When they stood by her grave, they were suddenly enveloped by the entire group. They held hands as they sobbed and told the story of the great-grandmother whom they never knew. Together with the group, our children recited *Kaddish*. Yesterday was their grandfather's 76th birthday. What a profound gift they gave to him 60 years later!

Annette Mincer
Toronto

* * *

Let the Nazis start hiding!

My family, including myself, managed to flee Austria one day before German troops invaded our beautiful country.

There I was in November 1943, hiding in the small town of Wasseiges in Belgium, equipped with false identification. I even had a job at the local sugar mill. My parents had been taken by the Gestapo three months earlier, not knowing about the death camps. I, of course, expected them to return.

That's when things started to go wrong again. The Belgian resistance had cut some of the German telephone wires. Normally, for any act of sabotage, the Germans would shoot 10 hostages from the nearest town, but the officer in charge must have been a bit more humane. He came to see the mayor of our town and ordered that those wires were to be guarded night and day, or else.

My services were volunteered. With two other fellows, I sat under those wires during many a night, and because it was cold and windy, we built a wall against the wind from oblong straw bundles and made a fire. Once our straw wall caught fire and nearly burned those wires down.

I had a few more close calls, but about a year later, while riding my bike on a forest road, I encountered a strange, topless vehicle with two soldiers who asked me in English, "Are there any Germans here." My English was just good enough to say "no." So that jeep with its two Americans drove off.

After four years of hiding from the Nazis, with probably my life at stake, that 30 seconds facing that jeep had turned the tables on the Nazis. Let them start hiding. I had survived.

Walter Absil
Montreal

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Shalit

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Modern Orthodoxy decides to fight back

By RABBI MARTIN LOCKSHIN

In 2006, the *Canadian Jewish News* ran a series of articles on modern Orthodox Judaism. Many readers saw those articles as evidence of the decline of modern Orthodoxy and its gradual replacement by more haredi types of Orthodox Judaism.

Those so inclined might find even more evidence now that modern Orthodoxy is in trouble. A number of issues have arisen recently, but none is of more concern than conflicts concerning conversion.

Here in Israel, where I am spending my sabbatical from York University, rabbinic courts have state sanction and rabbis are often appointed to them as political favours. As haredi political parties have grown in size and the National Religious Party has shrunk, state rabbinic courts are increasingly run by rabbis who are inimical to the values of modernity and unconcerned about the issues of Israeli society at large.

One of the most vexing social problems in Israel is that under the Law of Return, a large number of people have immigrated here who have some Jewish lineage, but are not halachically Jewish. The structure of the state is such that haredim do not have control over immigration, but they do have control of the marriage, divorce and, to a large extent, burial systems. Since civil marriage does not exist in Israel, there are now presumably hundreds of thousands of Israeli citizens who cannot marry or divorce legally and cannot be buried in many of the country's cemeteries.

While a more global solution to this problem is needed, a few modern Orthodox rabbis in Israel have been taking small but significant steps to solve the problem. The Conversion Authority, run by Rabbi Haim Druckman, the rosh yeshivah of Yeshivat Or Etzion, simplifies the conversion process for these Israeli citizens. They study about Judaism and must show commitment to observance, yet many of them do not adopt full observance in an Orthodox manner. But as Zvi Zohar and Avi Sagi have proven in a number of books and articles in Hebrew, and most recently in an English book (*Transforming Identity: The Ritual Transition from Gentile to Jew*, 2008), the claim that conversion is conditional on total observance is neither the universal nor even the majority opinion in halachic literature. Rabbi Druckman and his colleagues have ruled that for people who throw in their lot with the Jewish people, move to Israel and agree that they and their children will risk their lives in the Israel Defence Forces protecting Jews from their enemies, conversion can be based on incomplete observance of the laws of Orthodox Judaism.

A number of months ago, a messy divorce case in the Israeli city of Ashdod set off an incredible chain of events. The wife had converted to Judaism through Rabbi Druckman's court 15 years earlier. The husband argued in the local (haredi-controlled) rabbinic court that he should not be required to make any settlement with his estranged wife or give her a religious divorce (*get*), since they were never really married under Jewish law. He argued that she was still a gentile, as she had never really converted with sincerity. The local rabbinic court ruled that her conversion with Rabbi Druckman should be retroactively annulled, that she was still a gentile, that her husband was unattached and that their three children were also gentiles (since their mother was a gentile).

The case was appealed to the high rabbinic court in Jerusalem, led by the haredi Rabbi Avraham Sherman. In a 38-page ruling Rabbi Sherman's court upheld the ruling of the lower court and went further: it ruled that all conversions done by Rabbi Druckman's courts were to be considered null and void. In fact, all converts who come to be married in Israel should be scrutinized. If they do not have the "look" of a religious Jew, their conversion papers, from any religious court in any country, would not be considered sufficient grounds to allow them to marry.

From left, Yose Benarroch, Avigail Zohar and the author, Rabbi Martin Lockshin, hold a sign that reads: "It is time for a rabbinate that takes everyone into account." The three carried the sign at a demonstration last week near the Knesset while the Knesset committee on law and the constitution were deliberating on the latest conversion scandal. [Ruth Lockshin photo]

Such an approach is shocking, to put it mildly. As Sagi and Zohar's book proves, the idea of retroactively annulling conversions and of considering all conversions conditional on observance for the rest of the converts' lives is not supported by the force of the halachic literature over the ages. It is a bludgeon being used for political ends.

Orthodox conversion is also a hot issue in North America. Recently the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA), the premier organization of "centrist Orthodox" rabbis, announced serious changes in its policies.

No longer will the RCA stand behind the conversions done by their members in local communities, unless they're done by members who were specifically appointed as conversion-worthy rabbis by rabbis Herschel Shachter and Mordechai Willig, roshei yeshivah at Yeshiva University in New York. (Rabbi Shachter is no stranger to controversy concerning modern Orthodoxy – among other notorious statements, he called the modern Orthodox organization, Edah, "a sort of internal Amalek," referring to the Jews' prototypical enemy, whom the Torah commands all generations to eradicate.)

A rather short list of conversion-worthy rabbis has since been circulated, along with a new set of standards for such conversions, which represent a significant departure from past practice. To give but one example, until recently, it was possible to find RCA rabbis who would convert the adopted baby of two Jewish parents even if the parents were not Sabbath observant. Following the new RCA standards, that is no longer possible. Many people, myself included, see this as one of a series of regrettable moves by the RCA to the right of the religious spectrum.

The RCA has vociferously defended its tightening of conversion standards and its move to centralization as crucial steps toward ensuring that its converts will be recognized in Israel. But now, after Rabbi Sherman's ruling, it's hard to imagine that the RCA can count on that. If Rabbi Druckman's converts can be thrown out by Rabbi Sherman's high rabbinical court, why should any RCA rabbi think that his converts are safe?

So there are many reasons to feel that modern Orthodoxy is under attack. But perhaps the attack is responsible in part for some exciting recent developments.

In the last week of April, the founding conference of the International Rabbinic Fellowship took place in Florida. I had the pleasure of being one of 85 Orthodox rabbis who gathered to discuss how modern Orthodoxy can be revived and can make a contribution to the Jewish people.

The inspiring conference was organized by Rabbi Marc Angel, a former president of the RCA and author of some 20 books on Jewish law and philosophy, and by Rabbi Avi Weiss, rabbi of the Hebrew Institute of Riverdale, a well-known political activist and author most recently of *Spiritual Activism*. One of the sponsors of the conference was Rabbi Angel's Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals (www.jewishideas.org).

Most of the rabbis at the conference were RCA members who have no plans to resign from the RCA, but have sadly concluded that a different framework is required to advance our modern Orthodox agenda. Six rabbis came from Israel for this conference, including the roshei yeshivah of two Israeli yeshivot. Seventeen of the North American rabbis present (including two from Canada) were graduates of the new "open Orthodox" Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, whose graduates are not welcome in the RCA. (According to the *Jewish Week* of May 1, 2008, Rabbi Schacter "threatened to resign from the RCA if any Chovevei Torah rabbis were admitted to the group.")

As a veteran of conferences, I must say that I found the Rabbinic Fellowship refreshing even from a structural perspective. All sessions were held in the same room, with rabbis sitting at tables arranged in a square. There was no head table or dais. Formal presentations were limited to 15 or 20 minutes, and the majority of time in each session was dedicated to open group discussion. This structure reflects one of the crucial values of the Fellowship – a non-authoritarian approach in which each rabbi has autonomy to do what is appropriate for his community without necessarily answering to an authority figure far away.

Not surprisingly, the 85 rabbis did not agree on everything. But they discussed the important issues of Judaism today in a friendly, respectful atmosphere that was free of intimidation. On many crucial issues, there was agreement: on the need to work hard to create an intellectually vibrant Orthodoxy, to be responsive to issues related to women and to put an alternative system of conversion in place. They also agreed that Orthodox rabbis should speak out and be activists on issues other than Israel or the details of Jewish law, since Judaism has much to say about other problems in the world. There was also a great desire to have Orthodox synagogues and institutions where all Jews would feel welcome, even those who choose to live non-Orthodox lives.

The timing of the conference could hardly have been better. The first public act of the Fellowship was to excoriate the high rabbinical court in Jerusalem for its cynical ruling, promulgated on the day that the conference ended. (Four days later, the RCA also issued a strong statement condemning Rabbi Sherman's court.)

I personally found it exhilarating that there were so many Orthodox rabbis who shared the modern Orthodox agenda and who were willing and eager to work to advance these ideas. Who knows? Perhaps the flagrant behaviour of the high rabbinic court in Jerusalem will be enough to wake people up to the need for an alternative form of Orthodox Judaism.

(For more information on the Rabbinic Fellowship, contact Rabbi Angel at mdangel@jewishideas.org).

Martin Lockshin is a member of the Rabbinical Council of America and is active in the International Rabbinic Fellowship. He is professor of Jewish studies at York University and is currently on sabbatical in Jerusalem.

Please see related story on page 35

Differing on campus realities

We live in a culture in which survey results tend to command more attention than they're worth, often at the expense of truth and common sense. A penchant for tidily packaged, quantifiable "evidence" gets in the way of recognizing the obvious or questioning what the pundits would have us believe.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

Take the situation at Canadian universities, for example. In early February, Israeli Apartheid Week commanded our attention, morphing this year into a strategically more ominous format than ever before. Its aftermath, right up until the end of the current school year, has been unsettling, with incident after ugly incident of intimidation directed at anyone who stands up against the wanton vilification of Israel and its supporters.

For those who are actually on campus and who have had to deal with the day-to-day onslaughts, a new and troubling reality has emerged. No longer can we rely on the tenets of free speech to defend the interests of the entirety of students and faculty, particularly the Jewish minority. Instead, we have witnessed abuses of free speech that university administrations seem unable to confront.

Of even greater concern is that what now passes as freedom of expression even seems to take precedence over mechanisms that most universities use to ensure the well-being of their students.

At McMaster University, the faculty association is now requesting a review of what it regards as inconsistencies between restrictions expressed in the Student Code of Conduct and the university's "overarching" statement on academic freedom. The "restrictions" referred to are, by the way, the very devices that, according to the code, protect students against actions that "may be considered intimidating, harassing or offensive."

The Canadian campus environment, rampant as it is with Israel haters, has seldom been as hostile to Jewish students and faculty – and there can be little doubt that the abomination of Israeli Apartheid Week has provided the ideological fuel for what's happened. Far from receding, this cancer has spread and become more virulent.

What remains incongruous, however, is that our mainstream Jewish leadership apparently opted for a low-key approach right from the outset, hoping that the problems we've been facing would somehow abate if only we avoid drawing attention to them.

This attitude has not changed. Just a few weeks ago, an audience in Hamilton was told that, based on available research, Israeli Apartheid Week activities had been shown to be in decline this past year. And the same message has been touted repeatedly by others in our advocacy agencies.

Surveys say it, so therefore it must be true, right? Well, not necessarily. The facts on the ground speak thunderously for themselves, as recent events have clearly demonstrated. How much louder does the wake-up call need to be?

No strangers to the cost of war

The following is an excerpt from the address by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert at the state memorial ceremony for Israel's fallen soldiers on Mount Herzl, on Yom Hazikaron, May 7.

The memorial siren was heard throughout the country, and the hustle and bustle of life in the State of Israel stopped for one clear, crystallized moment of unity with the memory of Israel's fallen soldiers, and compassion and solidarity with the bereaved families.

At military cemeteries and military plots, many are now gathering – good, loyal citizens of the State of Israel stand bowed and quiet, with sorrow in their eyes...

On this special day, all the barriers fade, and the sense of unity and shared destiny is stronger than at any other time. Memorial Day for Israel's Fallen Soldiers is a sad day, but void of any discord, and very Israeli. Anyone who identifies with this country, its flag and values, anyone whose home is Israel, anyone who is a partner to the essence of life in Israel, even if he is, at this moment, at the other end of the universe, will feel, deep down in his heart, the spirit of this day and will sense the pain. There is almost no one in Israel who is a stranger to the cost of war, no one who will today not remember a family member, a friend or acquaintance from among the fallen...

Each and every one of you, dear families, has a permanent address, one that belongs only to you, among the rows of stone. A humble, uniform stone, indistinguishable by rank, be it a private or a major-general, a small square stone, carved out of rock, carrying identification details. Only you, family members, share the world of your loved one who was lost. You see before you his image, his face, his smile, fragments of moving pictures from different times – a baby growing into a child, a boy, a man, a soldier... The silent stone is adorned with flowers and is moist from the tears, and the longings are endless.

I will not speak words of solace, as there is no remedy for the grief. I will, however, express the nation's unbounded gratitude for the spirit of heroism and sacrifice that your loved ones demonstrated by coming to the defence of this people and this country. Our entire national existence, and the safety and well-being of Israeli citizens, depend upon our willingness to defend ourselves, fight for our just principles and vital interests, respond against our aggressors and foil our enemies' schemes. Your sons and daughters, Israel's fallen soldiers, gave their lives for the most supreme goal, and we, citizens of this country on whose watch they fell, will forever carry in our hearts a debt of honour and glory towards them, and an honest sense of humility and love for you...

Our war is indeed long, and the State of Israel's 60 years of existence, as well as what preceded it, are all represented here among the marble stones. However, it is peace, not war, that we yearn for and crave. Our forefathers' decree and our legacy, "seek and pursue peace," is translated by us into political action and a willingness to make essential compromises, as this is also the decree of the fallen and the decree of the pain and agony in the hearts of the bereaved families. Another decree of the fallen, which is to us the decree of life, is that we will defend the security of the State of Israel with all our might, without any hesitation or capitulation.

Among the casualties of war, those injured in body and soul, are many of the IDF's wounded and disabled soldiers. We wish them recovery and rehabilitation. We will make every possible and responsible effort to bring our kidnapped and missing soldiers home soon.

Today our flags fly at half mast, and as the evening dawns and we enter the gates of our 60th Independence Day, we will know that the value of our State of Israel is as high as the cost, the immeasurable cost of its revival and defence.

May the souls of Israel's fallen soldiers be forever bound to our lives, and may their memory be blessed.

Why Israel will survive and thrive

The latest fashion in Israel-bashing, coinciding with the 60th anniversary of Israel's independence, takes the form of pronouncements predicting the demise of the Jewish state. *Maclean's*, for example, has weighed in with a deliberately provocative headline, claiming to examine "Why Israel can't survive," and the *Atlantic Monthly*, only slightly less offensively, asks "Is Israel finished?"

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

The good news is that these articles and their authors will be long forgotten when Israel celebrates its 120th anniversary.

Journalists, academics, diplomats and just about everyone else have bad track records in explaining and forecasting international politics, and this is particularly true when it comes to Israel and the Middle East. Most become instant experts after a few weeks, or perhaps months, in a place whose language they don't understand, and whose history is far too complex for them to grasp. They rely on a few carefully selected "experts," with their own particular spin, and follow the rest of the pack.

When it comes to Israel, most pundits get stuck on the surface, without digging deeper to understand the essential nature of Zionism – maintaining the hard-won restoration of Jewish national sovereignty and equality among the nations of the world. In 1948, the experts, including the major military and political leaders of that time, confidently predicted a quick end to the newborn State of Israel, which they said would quickly be crushed by the Arab armies. The 600,000 Israelis who defeated these attacks, at the very high cost of more than 6,000 deaths – one per cent of the entire population – recognized that there was no other option for the Jewish people.

Fifty years later, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat made the same mistake, believing the newspaper articles, including Israel's own self-deprecating and politically correct talking heads, that propounded "post-Zionism." Yes, Israelis appeared (and still seem to be) very divided and seemed to have become absorbed in European (and North American) consumer culture. But when the Palestinian mass terror attacks mounted, everyone reported for duty, and, under former prime minister Ariel Sharon's leadership, the Israel Defence Forces did what was necessary to restore security and defeat this campaign.

This is not to say that Israel doesn't face serious challenges over the next 60 years – we still have more than our share, and many of them are of our own making.

An outdated electoral system has produced a generation of corrupt and incompetent politicians, and both the process and the personalities are likely to be replaced in the next few years. From the outside, the Middle East remains a very hostile and violent region. Iran and its allies – Hezbollah and Hamas – are the latest variation on the late Egyptian president Gamel Abdel Nasser's threat to "push the Jews into the sea." Nearby, the chaos in Iraq threatens to spill over into Jordan, while the Egyptian military regime, which is Israel's other (problematic) peace partner, may be on the verge of internal collapse. But these are all threats that Israel can deter, defeat or preempt.

The *Maclean's* article, like most overly clichéd journalistic and diplomatic accounts, focuses on the Palestinians, the "occupation," demography and what is presented as the inevitable clash between Israel as a Jewish and a democratic state. But as often happens in such ideologically targeted analyses, the dynamics of history are erased, and what Palestinians refer to as the "one-state solution" is presented as inevitable. The author, Michael Petrou, has selected a few people for quotation in order to "prove" his pre-determined conclusion. And in the process, he has created a very misleading tableau.

In reality, for many years, Israelis have recognized that the "one-state solution," and the potential for a majority Palestinian population in 60 years, is a political attempt to "wipe Israel off the map." As in the case of the threat posed by a nuclear Iran, we know that our survival depends on a strategy that will avoid Palestinian "rejectionism," through a combination of hard-nosed diplomacy and unilateral actions, such as the construction of the West Bank separation barrier.

After 2,000 years of exile, the Jewish people have no intention of losing our very hard-won independence, sovereign equality among the nations, and the ability to control our own destiny.

Now, as in 1948, there is no other option.

The Kirshner File

A magisterial account of the 1948 Arab-Israeli war

On Nov. 30, 1947, in response to a historic United Nations resolution passed the day before calling for the partition of Palestine into two sovereign states, one Jewish and the other Arab, Palestinian Arabs launched a series of violent attacks on Jews throughout the country. These were the opening shots of a war that started as a limited Arab-Jewish civil war and escalated into a full-scale conflict almost six months later when five Arab armies invaded Palestine to exterminate the new Jewish state of Israel.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Benny Morris, an Israeli historian, has written a magisterial account of the War of Independence, *1948: The First Arab-Israeli War* (Yale University Press). Morris, a specialist on the struggle between Zionism and Palestinian nationalism, has produced a densely researched, richly textured, nuanced book brimming with discerning analysis and telling details. Although he writes from a pro-Zionist point of view, he tries to be scrupulously fair, and *1948* is thus the antithesis of propaganda. It will be mandatory reading for the foreseeable future, at least until Arab archives are opened to historians.

As he points out, the considered judgment of experts in Britain, the mandatory power in Palestine, was that the Jews could not prevail and "would be thrown out." The Palestinians had a 2-1 population advantage and enjoyed the advantage of high ground and pan-Arab support. The British, however, glossed over Jewish strengths. The Yishuv, the Jewish community of Palestine, was better prepared in terms of national organization, trained military manpower, morale and motivation and command and control.

During the first phase of the fighting, from November 1947 to March 1948, the Arabs took and held the initiative, while the Haganah – the main Jewish force – was on the defensive. There were really no front lines, pitched battles or conquests of territory. Much of the fighting took place in and around Jerusalem, Tel Aviv-Jaffa and Haifa, in areas earmarked for Jewish statehood, and was dispersed, disorganized and highly localized.

Prior to its withdrawal on May 15, Britain, with about 100,000 troops in Palestine, generally hewed to a policy of impartiality and non-intervention.

The tide turned in April when the Haganah, bolstered by arms shipments from Czechoslovakia and a successful recruitment drive, went on the offensive.

The Jewish leadership, headed by David Ben-Gurion, decreed that no Jewish settlement should be evacuated and should be held to the last fighter. As well, Ben-Gurion refused to define the new state's borders, arguing that it would be demarcated by events on the ground. Under the UN partition plan, the Jews, constituting 55 per cent of Palestine's pre-war population, were allotted 56 per cent of the land.

Palestinian military power was based on local militias in 400 of 800 Arab villages and towns. Villages and towns in the West Bank barely contributed to the war effort and were untouched by hostilities. Some Arab villages, particularly those with Druze inhabitants on Mount Carmel and the western Galilee, threw in their lot with the Jews, believing that they would win.

Both sides were reinforced by foreign volunteers. Upward of 8,000 Arabs from Egypt, Syria and Iraq joined the Arab Liberation Army, the largest, best-organized Palestinian force, led by Fawzi al-Qawugji. They were augmented by several dozen British deserters, Bosnian Muslims and a handful of former Nazi intelligence, army and SS officers. On the Jewish side, 3,000 to 4,000 volunteers, the vast majority of whom were Jewish, flocked in from all corners of the globe, including Canada and the United States.

Morris dwells at length on the Palestinian refugee problem. Within 24 hours of the eruption of fighting, Arab families in big towns began leaving, usually bound for neighbouring Arab countries. By March 1948, he notes, most wealthy and middle-class Palestinians had left Jaffa, Haifa, western Jerusalem and the heavily Jewish coastal plain. Many Arabs assumed that they would return once the war wound down. He estimates that 75,000 to 100,000 fled or were displaced during the first stage of the war.

Morris concludes that there was no systematic master plan to expel Arabs, though outright expulsions occurred. Jewish commanders were given carte blanche to conquer Arab villages and decide each village's fate – destruction and expulsion or occupation.

In one notable case, the Jewish mayor of Haifa, Shabtai Levy, begged Arab inhabitants to stay, but to no avail, leaving only 5,000 Arabs in the city.

By the spring of 1948, after 5½ months of battles, the Jews had the upper hand, having captured land that the United Nations had assigned to the Palestinians. According to Morris, these defeats, plus the exodus of Arabs from their homes and the massacre at Deir Yassin, prompted Arab states to intervene. Despite their bluster, Arab leaders, with the striking exception of King Abdullah of Transjordan, did almost nothing to prepare for the great battle ahead. Abdullah's goal was not to destroy Israel but to seize the West Bank. He reportedly said, "The Jews are too strong, it is a mistake to make war."

The invading Arab armies consisted of some 25,000 combat troops: 5,500 Egyptians, 4,500 Jordanians, 2,750 Syrians, 2,700 Iraqis and 2,000 Lebanese, supplemented by Arab air force personnel and Palestinian irregulars. Contingents from Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Yemen and Sudan contributed a further 68,000 soldiers. None of the armies, save the Arab Legion from Jordan, had ever fought in a war. The Arab armies were severely underequipped and left large numbers of their soldiers at home to guard against internal rebellion and upheaval.

The 1947 United Nations Palestine partition plan

Israel fielded 65,000 troops, or 13 per cent of its population, by July. It amassed 108,000 troops by January 1949, when the war effectively ended.

Shortly after the May 14 Arab invasion, the UN Security Council imposed a global arms embargo on the combatants. Morris says it hurt the Arabs more than the Jews because the Arab side had not expected an embargo and failed to stockpile weaponry, ammunition and spare parts. Jews, in the meantime, scoured the globe for arms, buying them from both states and private dealers.

Apart from establishing a Jewish state and surviving the Arab onslaught, the Yishuv's war aims were two-fold: to capture additional territory and thereby create more defensible borders and to reduce the proportion of its Arab residents. Under the partition plan, the Jewish state would have had 600,000 Jews and 500,000 Arabs, including bedouins.

During the first four weeks of the war, the strategic initiative passed into Israel's hands and Israel added to its territorial holdings. Yet Israel lost the Jewish quarter in eastern Jerusalem; failed in counterattacks in Latrun, Isdud and Jenin; and lost the Etzion bloc and Kibbutz Mishmar Hayarden. At the last moment, Lebanon opted out of the invasion, probably due to Maronite Christian disaffection with Arab League policy on Zionism, but deployed its army defensively.

In the rest of his book, Morris discusses Israel's battlefield triumphs – the conquest of Lod, Ramla, Be'er Sheva and the Negev – the little-known air and naval wars; Israel's short-lived invasion of Lebanon; the armistice agreements with four Arab belligerents; Israel's seminal and controversial decision not to allow back Palestinian refugees; and the atrocities committed by both sides.

The 1948 war gave Israel hardly any respite, and for the past 60 years, Israel has fought a succession of skirmishes and wars, with no end in sight. Peace may be possible one day, but for now, Israel fights for its survival.

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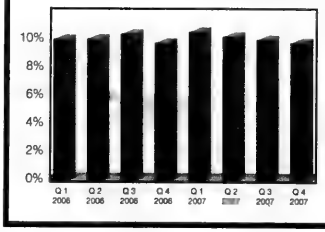

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Israel Bonds honours War of Independence vet

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Sixty years after Gabi Weisfeld fought in Israel's War of Independence, she is being honoured with State of Israel Bond's Golda Meir Leadership Award.

She will receive the award, presented to women who have distinguished themselves in their chosen field and in support of Israel, on May 21 at Bonds' annual Golda Meir Luncheon, to be held at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. Following the luncheon, guests will attend a performance of *My Fair Lady*.

Raquel Benzacar Savatti, director of Bonds' women's division, said that it's "very special" to honour a woman who fought for Israel's survival 60 years ago.

Weisfeld was born in Germany but immigrated to Palestine at age two with her family, where she later joined the Haganah. She moved with her first husband, Robert Abrahami, to New York in 1956, and eventually to Toronto in 1962, where she taught Hebrew and became involved in Canadian Hadassah-WIZO.

Abrahami died in 1967, and in 1971, Gabi married Louis Weisfeld, a garment manufacturer, real estate developer and philanthropist who dedicated a number of projects to Bar-Ilan University.

Since Louis' death in 1996, Weisfeld has continued her commitment to Israel and, among a number of projects, has established the Gabi and Louis Weisfeld Fellowship for IDF Combat Veterans at Bar-Ilan, and established the Bar-Ilan school of social work in her and her late husband's name.

She serves on the university's international board of trustees, is the national president of Canadian Friends of Bar Ilan University, and is a benefactor of Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Gabi Weisfeld

Weisfeld said she feels blessed to have her own name connected to that of Golda Meir. "After the War of Independence, we moved to Ashkelon, where my daughter was the first Jewish child to be born in the area in 2,000 years. I have a picture of Golda Meir, then minister of labour, handing the keys to our new house to my husband."

She is also honoured to accept the award, "because in one sense, Israel is my home. We as the Jewish people have to have a homeland, and it takes more than just living there to help," she said.

"It is important that Jews around the world consider Israel to be their spiritual home."

She has been attached to State of Israel Bonds, she said, since her first husband, Abrahami, was a spokesperson for the organization. "He travelled from city to city in the United States and raised more than $30 million in bonds. That was the start of my Bonds connection."

Benzacar Savatti said Bonds chooses honorees who can serve as a good example to other women. "Gabi doesn't only give now. She gave as a young person when she had [little.] We need [other] young people to be inspired by women like her."

For information on the event 416-789-3351.

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SCIENTIFIC AURA: **Zoe Sebastien, a Grade 7 student at Bialik Hebrew Day School, won first prize at the recent TanenbaumCHAT Science Challenge, in which 30 teams from different Toronto Jewish day schools in Toronto, including six from Bialik, took part. Her unusual project was called "What's Your Aura?"**

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McGuinty honours nine survivors

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty last week joined the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem in a Holocaust memorial service at Queen's Park that paid tribute to nine survivors who have contributed significantly to their communities.

Michael Chan, the minister of citizenship and immigration, and Liberal MPP Monte Kwinter, presented scrolls of recognition May 5 to the survivors, who immigrated to and built new lives in Ontario, and made outstanding contributions.

The survivors honoured at the event were Tamara Erlich, Al Gelfant, Sol Kafka, Jerry Kapelus, Shifra Knobel, Mike Mayer, Johanan Steinberg, Jack Weinbaum and Severin Weingort.

Kapelus survived Buchenwald, and was liberated along with Nobel Peace Prize laureate Eli Wiesel and Rabbi Israel Meir Lau, former Ashkenazi chief rabbi of Israel.

As an adult, Kapelus ran a women's clothing store and later worked for London Life insurance.

"I felt quite excited and honoured," Kapelus said. "I did not expect it. It came as a pleasant surprise."

He described the mixed emotions of the event. "Some of the memories came back of some of the bad times we went through. The good emotions were that we survived. The therapists at the time told us we'd all grow up to be psychopaths, criminals and killers, because of the horrors we went through. We proved them wrong. We all grew up to be good citizens. Those of us who survived the Buchenwald camp, we even meet up every five years, in a different spot in the world."

In 1995, the premier of Ontario began recognizing Holocaust survivors for their contributions to the province, said Gillian Weintraub, event organizer for Yad Vashem.

Honorees are nominated by friends and family.

"It was a very solemn event," Weintraub said. "Some of the survivors may not like to hear their stories as public record. But it's important for future generations and to make sure that nobody forgets. One of the ways that people don't forget is by repeating those stories."

Kwinter offered public accolades in the legislature to the honorees and spoke about the importance of history's lessons.

"We also remember those targeted for their race, disability or sexual orientation," Kwinter said. "Tragically, other genocides followed the Holocaust, such as Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia."

He also stressed the significance of liberty and democracy.

"We must continue our spirit of keeping alive the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, approved by the United Nations in the shadow of the Holocaust," Kwinter told a half-full legislature. "We must never take our freedom for granted."

Thornhill MPP Peter Shurman, who represents the most Jewish riding in Ontario, described how his father, a German Jewish refugee, arrived in Canada after fleeing Nazi Germany, coming to Canada by way of England.

"Because in Canada, he was free to be a Jew. In Canada we are all free to practise our religions and live any way we choose."

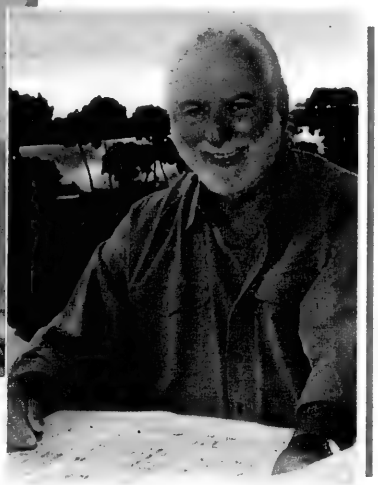
Shurman also stressed the importance of educating future generations.

Halton MPP Ted Chudleigh said the Holocaust holds many lessons for today. "It revealed the evil capacity of humankind. We must be watchful that this should never happen again. We learned how bystanders shared the responsibility of the Holocaust."

Pictured last week at Queen's Park are, from left, Yaron Ashkenazi, executive director, Canadian Society for Yad Vashem; Israeli Consul General Amir Gissin; MPP Monte Kwinter; Immigration Minister Michael Chan; Severin Weingort; Jack Weinbaum; Johanan Steinberg; Mike Mayer; Premier Dalton McGuinty; Sol Kafka; Shifra Knobel; Tamara Erlich; Al Gelfant; Jerry Kapelus and Hank Rosenbaum, president of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem. [Elliot Sylman photo, courtesy Yad Vashem]

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto:
New board oversees one million

Gail Bernstein, executive director, UJA Federation's Joint Campus Management Board.



Leo Goldhar, chair, UJA Federation's Joint Campus Management Board.

By Daniel Horowitz

In 2007, UJA Federation's Joint Campus Management Board, a vital new business initiative headed up by chair Leo Goldhar and executive director Gail Bernstein, was born. The board consists of two individual yet intertwined arms: Jewish Community Campuses and Jewish Community Properties.

Jewish Community Campuses oversees the day-to-day operation and integration of five separate structures – all part of UJA Federation's flourishing Tomorrow Campaign – which is building and revitalizing Jewish life on three campuses spread throughout the Greater Toronto Area. These include the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre in the downtown district; the Prosserman Jewish Community Centre, Koffler Centre of the Arts, Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage at the Sherman Campus; and York Region's Schwartz/Reisman Centre (SRC) at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus.

Ron Eilath

The second arm of the management board - Jewish Community Properties – headed up by executive director David Sadowski – is responsible for facilities management and the construction of new properties, as well as renovations to existing ones.

"The Joint Campus Management Board will oversee the development, construction, facilities management and operations of approximately one million square feet of community space with an estimated value of four-hundred million dollars," says UJA Federation chief financial officer, Ron Eilath. "The scope of this project has even resulted in the necessity of us creating our own in-house construction company under the knowledgeable guidance of our construction manager, Murray Hamilton. This is a serious, substantial business reorganization, which has attracted some top business professionals who have decided to leave senior executive positions in private industry, to join us and be part of this exciting chapter in Toronto's history."

The directors of all five entities will work together to discover the best and most efficient ways in which the three campuses can interact by creating synergies that will influence content and programming. The Koffler Centre of the Arts, for example, will have artistic and cultural reach beyond its mid-town location, offering cross-campus initiatives that will be accessible to those living in the downtown core or north in Thornhill Woods. The same will apply, for example, with the Schwartz/Reisman Centre which may run various events at the Miles Nadal JCC, or vice versa, so that Jewish populations across the GTA can experience a multitude of programs and services. By integrating the three campuses, shared economies of scale will ensure that there is little, if any, duplication of services being offered, while lowering administrative costs. With greater interaction between the campuses, best practices will be shared and the level of excellence will increase, as in the case of Centre Camp, which will eventually run at all three locations, operating through one central registration system.

David Sadowski

"As chair of the Joint Campus Management Board, I have the opportunity to oversee all of UJA Federation's capital projects and to make a difference in how they're managed," says Goldhar, a Tomorrow Campaign pioneer who, in 1999, along with Lou Greenbaum, helped UJA Federation acquire the land on which the Lebovic Campus now stands. "It's vital that when you're talking about something with the breadth and scope of the Tomorrow Campaign, there is transparency and that it's managed responsibly and professionally. One factor in me taking on this role was having the chance to work with Gail Bernstein. She has the experience and talents necessary to manage all these projects the way they need to be managed."

"When I started here in July of 2007, I was given the mandate of taking five separate organizations and knitting them together," says Bernstein, a Detroit native who bid farewell to a successful 16-year career as CEO and General Manager of Toronto's International Centre, to join UJA Federation. "Because of the top-drawer professionals that I was working with at these organizations, that synergy began surprisingly quickly

Building for the Future
square feet of community space

and easily. These people are all top-level team players who, despite working as individuals for years, quickly grasped their new roles as part of a team. They started interacting with one another's program managers, executive directors and marketing people – aided greatly by UJA's own creative department – and despite the new methodology involved, it all came together."

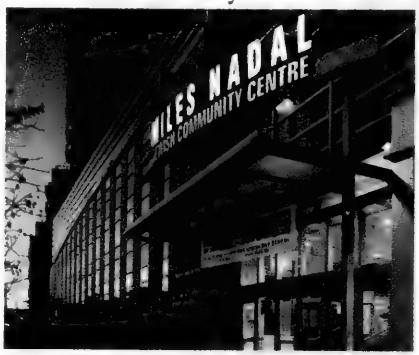
According to Bernstein, another key to the success of UJA's Joint Campus Management Board is Goldhar.

"I am so thrilled to work with Leo; he brings so much to the table," she says. "Leo's real estate acumen and incredible knowledge are invaluable in dealing with both the real estate issues and the business issues. Remember, this is somewhat of a unique situation because while these facilities are community centres, they're also expected to run on a sound, strong business footing and that's where Leo's background really comes into play."

"As valuable as all these key properties and these impressive new buildings are, what's far more important to all of us is what will be happening on those properties and within those buildings," says UJA Federation president & CEO, Ted Sokolsky. "This is not just about real estate and construction; it's about celebrating life. We're not interested in running a monolithic, bureaucratic organization; we're interested in the best synergies coming together, creating effective and efficient behind-the-scenes support yet at the same time allowing each campus local autonomy and governance that will enable them to deliver services and programs that best suit the uniqueness of those neighbourhoods."

"I've travelled to many, many Jewish communities across North America and the world, and I'm proud to say that when the Tomorrow Campaign has completed its work, Toronto will stand alone as the world's pre-eminent Jewish community outside of Israel, and I'm thrilled to be part of it all," adds Goldhar.

The Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre



With close to 4,000 members, the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, located at Bloor and Spadina, has revitalized Toronto's downtown core, transforming a tired, urban corner into a thriving hub of Jewish life. The Centre, a proud model of what the Tomorrow Campaign can accomplish, has also overhauled the way UJA Federation delivers community services and programs. The Miles Nadal JCC has ushered in a new era of independence and accountability for Jewish communities throughout the GTA as, for the first time in our community's history, we have a modern fitness centre that is financially self-sufficient.

Sherman Campus

Slated for completion in the fall of 2011, Sherman Campus will be a dynamic and unprecedented centre of Jewish community services, home to organizations and agencies and an eclectic group of educational, athletic, cultural and recreational activities.

The state-of-the-art new campus will include the Koffler Centre of the Arts; the new Leah Posluns Theatre; the National Centre for Jewish Heritage; the Prosserman JCC, including the Sports Complex & the Gales Family Pavilion; and a renovated and enhanced Lipa Green Building.

Peter Cohen and Peter Menkes co-chair the Sherman Campus Committee.

The Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus

Located in the heart of York Region, in the City of Vaughan – the municipality with the fastest growing Jewish population in North America – the extraordinary 50-acre Lebovic Campus is already surpassing all expectations, quickly changing the landscape of Jewish life north of Steeles Avenue.

The first building on the site, TanenbaumCHAT's Kimel Family Education Centre, opened its doors in time for the school year this past September. With an enrolment of over 650 students already, this state-of-the-art, 110,000 square foot complex – featuring the Meyer/Finkelstein Music Program – is quickly becoming the envy of Jewish students and educators everywhere. Slated to open in 2011 is the magnificent Schwartz/Reisman Centre – a 95,000 square foot facility committed to excellence and to the best of Jewish values – housing the Phil Granovsky Sports & Recreation Pavilion, the Gorman Shore Goodman Early Childhood Education centre and a creative arts centre.

Also calling the Lebovic Campus home in the near future will be a Mount Sinai ambulatory healthcare facility, a state-of-the-art fitness facility that will house up to 8,000 members, a theatre, the Leo & Sala Goldhar Conference & Celebration Centre, two banquet halls, the Sydney & Florence Cooper Family Sports Hall, soccer fields, a baseball diamond, walking paths, the Brown/Lederman Outdoor Pool, a creative arts centre, a nursery school for up to 200 youngsters, seniors facilities, the Reena Community Residence, comprised of 60 units for developmentally challenged community members, United Synagogue Day School/Beit Rayim and Temple Kol Ami.

A cornerstone of the Lebovic Campus will be the modern Community Services Pavilion which will house the organizations and agencies that make up the wide mosaic of vital social, healthcare and other community services that will be offered on the campus including Jewish Family & Child which will be housed in the Levine/Robins Community Services office, Canada-Israel Experience, Jewish Immigrant Aid Service and Reena. Together, these agencies will provide a "one-stop" experience for all those requiring their services.

Warren Kimel and Joseph Lebovic chair the Campus Steering Committee. Lou Greenbaum and Sheldon Goodman chair the Construction Committee.

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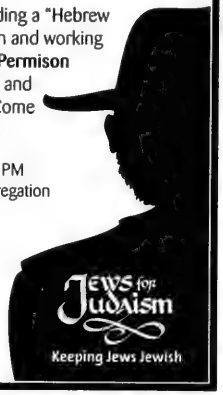

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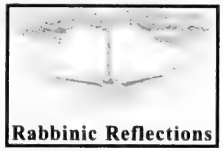
Jewish Life

Make giving automatic

By RABBI SCHACHAR ORENSTEIN

Who wants to be a millionaire? It appears that many people do, judging by the huge hit television game show by the same name and David Bach's best-selling personal finance book *The Automatic Millionaire*, which has sold more than one million copies.



Rabbinic Reflections

Bach's premise can be boiled down to: forget about budgeting. Arrange to have contributions automatically transferred into some kind of savings plan, either through payroll deductions at work or an automatic investment plan run by the bank. Governments and others have been harnessing these tools to take our money, but now we have the ability to use these automatic processes to our advantage, or as he puts it, "to pay ourselves first."

Unexpectedly, Bach has titled the last chapter of his popular book, "Make a Difference with Automatic Tithing," and in doing so, he brings the biblical concept of tithing – *ma'aser*, giving 10 per cent – into our technological age.

We find a number of forms of tithing in the Bible. The Torah tells us to "take a tithe of all the seed crops that come forth in the field each year" (Dvarim 14:22) to distribute to the poor during the third and sixth years of every sabbatical cycle. We also have another form of tithing, called *ma'aser kesafim*, financial tithing, based on Jacob saying to God, "Of all that You give me, I will set aside a tenth to You" (Bereshit 28:22).

Rabbi Shimon Taub, in his comprehensive *Guide to the Laws of Tzedakah and Maaser*, offers a helpful suggestion for following the practice of tithing in our day: "It is advisable that as soon as people earn money, they should immediately separate *ma'aser*. For instance, people who receive a paycheck should immediately deduct ten percent as *ma'aser*. One reason is because once the money is designated as *ma'aser*, funds people no longer consider it as their own, therefore making it easier to give it away... It is expedient to have a special tzedakah account so that the money that is separated as *ma'aser* can be placed there."

Whether or not to tithe is a very personal decision. There is also a question as to whether Jewish law considers tithing today to be an obligation, *chovah*, or only a custom, *minhag*. Either way, Rabbi Yochanan encourages the practice by stating, "What is the meaning of the verse '*Asser ta'asser*' (Devarim 14:22)? Separate a tenth so that you will become wealthy!" (Babylonian Talmud, Taanit 9a).

Bach echoes this notion when he writes, sounding perhaps more like a rabbi than a renowned financial planner, "Although you should give simply for the sake of giving, the reality is that abundance tends to flow back to those who give. The more you give, the more comes back to you."

Rather than waiting for a pull at their heartstrings, our agricultural ancestors had many automatic processes of giving to others in addition to tithing. The Torah tells us, "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not finish reaping the corner of your field, and you shall not gather the gleanings of your harvest... for the poor and the stranger shall you leave them" (Vayikra 19:9-10). Automatic societal processes during sabbatical and jubilee years also helped provide for the poor. In our times, our ways of giving to those in need, tzedakah, can similarly be done automatically and even in one step.

Though they are not necessarily mutually exclusive goals, I personally give much greater importance and priority to doing the Divine Will than to becoming a millionaire. Since coming across Bach's ideas a few years ago, I have put his automatic giving ideas into practice. I have set up automatic giving to some of my favourite organizations and charities and have been enjoying the automatic monthly mitzvahs ever since.

Rabbi Schachar Orenstein is associate rabbi at Montreal's Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue.

Israel at 60: take the long view

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

Many Jews think more about Israel than about Judaism, because we are 60 years removed from the unthinkable. The great slogan of post-Holocaust Jewry – "never forget" – is like running into the room yelling about the game having started and finding everyone is already glued to the TV. Because the world won't let us forget. Because no matter how many people die elsewhere – in the hundreds, in the thousands – if someone sneezes in the West Bank, that's tomorrow's headline.

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So how you think about peace, war, death, underdogs, overlords, Jews, Arabs, "the other"; how you think about force and deterrence and hate and politics and anti-Semitism and Jewish guilt and Jewish entitlement and Jewish mission and Jewish ethics – that's Israel. How you think about salvation and damnation and forgiveness and cruelty and compassion – that's Israel.

I found that in thousands of discussions on ethical issues that I have had with students, eventually some analogy will be threaded back to the Holocaust or Israel.

One day I asked, "Do you think that Israel should strike back at terrorism, even if it means the deaths of many innocent civilians? Is there a limit to the number? Should we destroy their families' houses? Should we make them pay disproportionately? What is disproportional when you fight terror?"

Randy said (all names here are pseudonyms): "We learned about that in the Torah, with Abraham's son, Ishmael. Rashi says that the angels want God to kill him because he is going to be trouble for the Jews later on. But God asks 'Is he a bad guy now?' and the angels say 'No.' So God spares him."

"And is this a good thing?" asked Yoni bitterly. "Ishmael's kids are now suicide bombers."

"But not at the time," said Shauna.

"Oh, so just wait for them to kill you? Not at the time? That's stupid," said Yoni. "Why should I let the bad guys win? Only an idiot waits to get killed."

"Yoni, Yoni!" Shauna almost shouts at her classmate. "If I showed you a man on the street today, an ordinary-looking guy, and I told you that for many years he would live an ordinary life – you know, nothing special – but many years from now, he was going to murder someone, would you kill him now?"

"I don't know," Yoni answered. "Maybe."

He looked like a man who was being tricked out of what he knows to be right. I know how he feels.

Answers to the dilemmas that face the Jewish state at 60 are in fairly short supply.

One can manufacture them in a burst of bravado, but the reality is that the issues are complex and, in some cases, fairly intractable.

I recently heard a telling anecdote about Rabbi Shlomo Aviner, who has been involved in acquiring houses in the Muslim quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, with the ultimate goal of buying out all the houses.

"How long do you think that will take?" someone asked him skeptically. "A very short amount of time," he replied sincerely. "Maybe 300 years."

In Jewish history, the long run is the correct time frame, that being the closest thing we have to God's calendar.

Jewish Life

Author responds to 'New Atheists'

I Don't Believe in Atheists **by Chris Hedges; Simon & Schuster.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

This outspoken and eloquent book argues that the assertive crop of so-called New Atheists are as mistaken and dangerous as religious fundamentalists.

Chris Hedges has never shrunk from conflict. He spent seven years as Middle East bureau chief for the *New York Times*, covering the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. He attacked the American military-industrial complex in his book *War Is a Force That Gives Us Meaning* and enraged the Christian right with last year's forthright bestseller, *American Fascists*.

Those who incur the author's wrath include Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, who are prominent among those who attack belief in God and religion.

Hedges maintains that the New Atheists mistakenly blame religion for the ills of the world when the true danger lies in the human heart and its capacity for evil.

"Evil will always be with us," he writes. "Science and human reason, like institutional religion, have delivered as much suffering as comfort. The victims of the death camps, those killed at Hiroshima, the tens of millions who died in Soviet gulags, or those millions of innocents maimed and killed in Vietnam, Angola, Sierra Leone, Afghanistan or Iraq and a host of other wars, know the awful truth: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves."

The New Atheists are convinced that once we free ourselves from religion we will be able to march forward to a sunlit Utopia. This is the simplistic vision of human advancement shared by all fundamentalists who are incapable of dealing intellectually, and perhaps emotionally, with human contradictions, limitations and ambiguities.

For the author, the question is whether we concern ourselves with – or are utterly indifferent to – the sanctity and ultimate transcendence of human existence. "God is that mysterious force – and you can give it many names as other religions do – which works upon us and through us to seek and achieve truth, beauty and goodness. God is perhaps best understood as our ultimate concern, that in which we should place our highest hopes, confidence and trust.

Hedges is not opposed to anti-religious opinions. Free spirits have been a positive force in opposing bigotry, hypocrisy and foolish and outmoded belief. Often, "the pain of living has also turned honest and compassionate men and women against God," he writes. "These atheists do not believe in collective moral progress or science and reason as our ticket to salvation. They are not trying to perfect the human race. Rather, they cannot reconcile human suffering with the concept of God. This is an honest struggle. This disbelief is a form of despair, not self-exaltation."

For those who rely on scientists and their accomplishments to usher in a new world of understanding and peace, the author warns: "There are scientists in the United States – a huge proportion of whom work for defence-related industries – constructing sophisticated weapons systems that have the capacity to exterminate millions of people. Is this a rational enterprise? Is it beneficial to humankind? Is it a reason for us to place our faith for the future of the human race in reason and science?"

I Don't Believe in Atheists is an intelligent – often passionate – work, aimed at the shortcomings of both religious and secular extremism. Contentious and challenging, it provides added ammunition to a many-sided controversy that shows no signs of abatement.

Back to iTunes U

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

A few months ago, I spent some time at iTunes U, an amazing assortment of audio and video files that can be downloaded free.

ITunes is the free Apple software best known as the program used to download music onto iPods. Recently, a number of universities have begun to take advantage of this technology to distribute recordings of university courses and lectures to their student body and to the general public. Before college lets out for the summer, I wanted to check what's new at iTunes U. I found some great new material, including some public radio documentaries and interviews that would make for entertaining spring and summer listening.

First, a short recap. If you'd like to "attend" iTunes U, first you'll need to download iTunes. It's available for both Macs and PCs – and it's free. **[apple.com/itunes/download]** Then you can visit the iTunes U section and start browsing through the hundreds of lectures. **[tinyurl.com/2ha9ae]** Or just check out my recommendations by typing the address into a browser like Internet Explorer, Firefox or Safari. After you hit enter, your iTunes program should automatically open to the correct page. You can listen – and sometimes view – all of these lectures right on your computer and do not need to own an iPod. However, an iPod is handy if you'd like to listen on the go.

You can start by enjoying an interview with Tovah Feldshuh, who in 2004 was appearing on Broadway in the one-woman show *Golda's Balcony*. Her delightful feature interview includes some lovely anecdotes and excerpts from the play about Israel's fourth prime minister, Golda Meir. Feldshuh does a darn good Kissinger, too! **[tinyurl.com/3zyp5s]** Feldshuh's is one of almost 200 others from the Downstage Center series of interviews with theatre artists, producers and others in the field. And when you gather a couple of hundred of stage luminaries, you're bound to find a assortment of fascinating Jewish stars, including Joel Grey, Bebe Neuwirth, Liev Schreiber and Eve Ensler. **[tinyurl.com/45yx7v]**

Since I last visited iTunes U, I was amazed to see all the new Jewish content that had been uploaded. The single largest addition is from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which has created a mini-site of incredible audio material that you can download, including:

- 1943: The Jewish World at Ground Zero;
- Auschwitz through the Lens of the SS (a stunning eight-minute video);
- what to do about Darfur, a debate.

There are even multi-part courses on law, music, film, medicine and sports history and the Holocaust. **[tinyurl.com/4eyg3a]**

I wish they were longer, but you can now download four video clips from the TV documentary series *The Jewish Americans*. There is a piece about the Detroit Tiger's Hank Greenberg and how he brought pride to a generation of Jewish Americans. Other video excerpts include Tug of War, clips with people wrestling with whether they're Jewish Americans, American Jews – or none of the above; and an all-too-brief interview with author Julius Lester, in the clip the No. 1 Anti-Semite in the Country. **[tinyurl.com/4znn2a]**

More than half a century after he died, physicist Albert Einstein continues to amaze and mystify. Einstein and the Mind of God is a 12-part radio series that delves "into Einstein's Jewish identity, his passionate engagement around issues of war and race, and… Einstein's way of thinking about mystery, eternity and the mind of God." Download and ponder almost three hours of radio documentaries and interviews about the genius. **[tinyurl.com/3q5ya3]**

And speaking of Einstein, check out the interviews with Pete Seeger. What's the connection between the father of theory of relativity and the veteran folksinger? Seeger recounts a incredible story about Yiddish novelist Sholem Asch and his son, Moe, who travelled to Princeton in 1939 to record Einstein urging American Jews to help get their brethren out of Europe. Later that day, Einstein chatted with young Moe and encouraged him to pursue his interest in recording American folksingers. Moe Asch went on to found Folkway Records, famous for recording Seeger, Leadbelly and Woody Guthrie. **[tinyurl.com/435lon]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Notice to Visitors to Pardes Shalom Cemetery

Arrangements have been made by Pardes Shalom to provide complimentary transportation to the cemetery this Spring, for those who require it.

Bus service will be provided on **Sunday, May 25**.

A bus identified by a sign **"PARDES SHALOM"** will depart from the front entrance of the Bathurst Jewish Centre, 4588 Bathurst St., at 10 a.m.

The bus will make a stop at the parking lot of Betel Centre, located on Steeles Ave. W., at 10:15 a.m., to pick up passengers before proceeding to the cemetery.

Hours as of March 9

Sunday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
No entry after 4:30 p.m.

Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
No entry after 3:30 p.m.

For further information, and to register, please call the cemetery office 416-635-2883, ext. 224 - Esther, or ext. 300 - Barb.

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Saturday, May 24:
***Jews in Germany*, an Oxymoron?**
•Shabbat morning sermon. Services begin at 8:45 a.m.
The Jews in Poland – Living in the Shadows
•Following morning service
Muslims, Jews and Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Europe
•During Seudah-Shelisheet. Minha service at 8:10 p.m.

Sunday, May 25:
The Middle East at the Crossroads
•Breakfast following service at 9:00 a.m.
Sponsored by Beth Tzedec Men's Club

Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St., Toronto

בית צדק

Dr. Berk is the guest speaker for the Sam & Sarah Kerzner Holocaust Studies Institute

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Greater Toronto Area

Young Israeli musicians make beautiful sounds

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

A joint project of Canadian and Israeli organizations recently brought five young classical musicians to Toronto from Jerusalem.

Music students, aged 11 to 15, from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance, performed here from May 4 to 7. They were accompanied by the director of the conservatory at the academy, conductor Rashi Levaot.

Their first performance in Canada was at Stephen Lewis Secondary School, in Vaughan, Ont., to about 200 public school children.

Later that day, they performed for adults at the Unicorn Dream Dinner, a fundraiser for the Max and Beatrice Wolfe Centre for Children's Grief and Palliative Care at Mount Sinai Hospital. The dinner's focus was to highlight the achievements of Israeli arts and culture.

The students also played live on Toronto's Classical 96.3 radio.

The dean of the Glenn Gould Professional School in Toronto, pianist James Anagnoson, gave the students a tour of the soon-to-be-completed TELUS Centre for music education and performance.

The Canadian Friends of Hebrew University and the consulates of Israel in Toronto and Miami, to celebrate Israel @ 60, sponsored the students' trip.

Adrienne Cohen, the chair of the Jerusalem Academy Student Tour of Toronto, said that the visit was part of the Israeli Foreign Ministry's "Brand Israel" program, to improve Israel's image and to get people to think of the country outside the narrow prism of the Arab-Israeli conflict.

For most of the young musicians, this was their first trip to Canada, and it was yet another chance to showcase their talents.

Violinist Daniel Asharov, 15, has been studying the violin from the age of six. He won the Sharett Competition for solo performance four times in the past seven years and has performed in concerts in New York in 2006 and in Capetown in 2007 with the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra.

Saxophonist Ron Agron, 16, started his music studies at the age of 12, and in his short career, he has already won acclaim in Israel. In 2007, he won the outstanding musician award from the America-Israel Cultural Foundation. He has been a soloist with the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra.

Fourteen-year-old pianist Itai Meyer has been studying at the Jerusalem Conservatory of Music and Dance since the age of nine. He is modest about his musical talent. "There's no difference between people," he said. "Everyone can be successful at things if they try."

Siblings pianist Michael Cohen-Weissert, 15, and cellist Elia Cohen-Weissert, 14, grew up on the Greek island of Sifnos, where they began their musical studies.

Michael has received the America-Israel Cultural Foundation Piano and Chamber Music Scholarship, the youngest composer ever to receive the scholarship. At the age of 12, Michael won the first prize in the National Broadcasting Authority Competition for young artists, performing with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra.

Israeli music students from the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance performed in Toronto recently. Top, from left, are Daniel Asherov, Elia Cohen-Weissert, Michael Cohen-Weissert and conductor Rashi Levaot. Bottom, from left, are Ron Agron and Itai Meir. [Dave Gordon photo]

Elia has also received the America-Israel Cultural Foundation scholarship, both as a solo artist and as a chamber musician. At age 12, she performed with the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra.

She admitted that she was initially anxious about her debut to North American peers. "It was scary to perform," she said.

She adds that she wanted to play cello from a very early age. "I chose this, and I want to be a soloist."

Music, runs in the family: her mother, from Germany, is a pianist, and her father, originally from Romania, is a professional guitarist.

"It's beautiful that we came, and I hope that they [the audience] finds the music beautiful. I hope they will enjoy listening to classical music," Elia said.

The audiences at the young musicians' concerts were enthusiastic.

Gaur Bhupesh, 15, a student at Stephen Lewis, was impressed. "It was a really good performance. Amazing," he said.

Bhupesh doesn't speak any Hebrew but found a shared language with the Israeli students. "We are all the same with our own unique skills," he said. "Students are students wherever you go."

Ilan Ramon and the three Torahs

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Two Torahs have been in outer space – one carried by an Israeli, the other by a Canadian. Both had been saved by Holocaust survivors, and at a recent ceremony at Beth Tikvah Synagogue to commemorate Yom Hashoah, they were linked to a third Torah now being written to honour the congregation's Rabbi Wayne Allen.

A film made by Israel's Channel One called *The First Israeli in Space: The Story of Colonel Ilan Ramon, Israel's First Astronaut* was shown at the event. In January 2003, Ramon was a crew member of the space shuttle Columbia, which exploded on re-entry to Earth, minutes before its scheduled landing.

Ramon had brought a Torah, about four inches long, with him into space. It was thought to be about 100 years old, and had been smuggled into the Bergen-Belsen death camp. The Torah was used by Rabbi Dasberg of Holland to give secret bar mitzvah lessons to 13-year-old Joachim "Yoya" Joseph.

Rabbi Dasberg gave the Torah to the Joseph, knowing the boy's chances of survival were greater than his own. Joseph survived, made aliyah, and ultimately became an astrophysicist at Tel Aviv University. He later became a mentor to Ramon, himself the son of a Holocaust survivor. Ramon asked if he could bring the Torah with him into space, in part as a symbol of the Jewish people's ability to survive.

The second Torah that was carried into space belongs to Henry Fenichel, a physicist from Cincinnati, also a Holocaust survivor. His miniature Torah – a gift from cousins who had escaped Nazi Germany – took off into space three years after Ramon's flight. Fenichel explained at last week's event how he and his Torah became involved with space travel.

In 1944, Fenichel was deported from Holland to Bergen-Belsen, where he was held for six months until he was freed in a prisoner exchange for German civilians living in Palestine. Fenichel, only six at the time, lost his father in Auschwitz, and when leaving the camp, travelled with his mother for 10 gruelling days by train to Palestine.

"There are so many amazing stories to tell," he told the audience of 300, "and I would like people to connect to their past, their heritage, and know the symbolism of these Torahs and what they represent."

Henry Fenichel and the Torah

Rona Ramon, Ilan's widow, and Joachim Joseph first learned of Fenichel's Torah in April 2006 in a joint video conference from Israel for schoolchildren in Cincinnati. Fenichel spoke to the 150 schoolchildren in the U.S. city, where he expressed his desire to teach of the legacy of Yoya's Torah.

After learning of the Torah that was similar to the one Ramon had taken on the Columbia, Rona Ramon asked Fenichel to allow his scroll to be carried by Canadian astronaut Steve MacLean on the shuttle Atlantis in September 2006, as a tribute to her husband.

MacLean, who had been friends with Ilan Ramon, spoke in a video message at the recent Yom Hashoah commemoration. The mini-Torah is "more than a religious symbol," he said. "It is a symbol of hope. It was a privilege for me to do that."

Fenichel's Torah took some 186 trips around the Earth in the shuttle, travelling about 4.8 million miles, MacLean said, going from what he described as "the depths of despair to the heights of hope."

MacLean also recalled some private time he had with the Ramon family, in the eastern part of Texas before Ilan's fatal journey. "He told me when he came back from space, he would work toward Middle East peace," Maclean said.

In addition to the tribute to Ramon at Beth Tikvah, a ceremony was held for a new Torah being written to honour Rabbi Wayne Allen's 21st anniversary with the congregation.

The new Torah's writing began on Dec. 2, 2007. It is expected to be completed on Nov. 23 this year. Some 175 families have thus far bought letters, words or lines, said Heather Shapero, the event organizer.

We met in January. We're getting a place together in November.

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Peres addresses Toronto gathering

Continued from page 3

Harper, who has yet to visit Israel, said his determination to make the "pilgrimage" to Israel was redoubled after a recent visit to Auschwitz.

"I want to see first-hand what the survivors of the Holocaust and their descendants have accomplished. Theirs is truly an achievement of resilience and renewal unsurpassed by anyone," he said.

"As we gather tonight to celebrate 60 years of the state of Israel, let us all as Canadians, do whatever we can do, to help Israelis and their neighbours in their quest for a better future."

Before Harper's speech, MC Ivan Reitman, the Toronto-raised director of blockbuster Hollywood films, including *Ghostbusters* and *Twins*, told the audience – his "extended mishpachah"– that he learned about the importance of Israel from his parents, who were Holocaust survivors.

"Isn't it wonderful to be able to celebrate the miracle of Israel's 60th birthday, the incredible resolve and determination of the people of Israel? [Israelis] have created a vibrant and democratic nation despite unrelenting challenges. Regardless of where we live in the Diaspora, we can always call Israel home," Reitman said.

The Yom Ha'atzmaut event, co-chaired by Fred Waks and Sara Zagdanski, and organized by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, included performances by the Combined Jewish Day Schools Choir, the Renanim Youth Singers with Kol Neshama, the Israel Defense Forces Ensemble, Israeli ballet dancers, and the Israeli hip-hop band Hadag Nachash.

The sold-out crowd waved Canadian and Israeli flags, sang along with the performers and even broke into a horah.

Israeli President Shimon Peres, who addressed the gathering via a recorded video message, praised the state's accomplishments in agriculture, medicine and security.

"We have the right to be proud, but we don't have the permission to be satisfied," Peres said.

Toronto's Jewish community celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut at the Ricoh Colliseum last week. [Photo by Caley Taylor]

Israel consul general Amir Gissin, who was spending his first Yom Ha'atzmaut in Toronto, said he was at a loss for words.

"Driving today up Bathurst Street, half the cars have Israeli flags. You have made Toronto the closest place to Israel tonight."

UJA allocates $20,000 for Burma

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has allocated $20,000 (US) to fund IsraAID's mission to Burma in the wake of the May 3 cyclone there.

Federation is also accepting donations at jewishtoronto.net.

Current reports have estimated that upward of 100,000 people may have died from the effects of Tropical Cyclone Nagris, which has also left hundreds of thousands homeless.

The money will go toward a team of 10 medical personnel and water specialists to be deployed to Burma. IsraAID is a co-ordinating body of Israeli and Jewish NGOs in Israel that are active in development and relief work and has provided humanitarian aid worldwide.

Federation has previously supported IsraAID'S work after the Peru earthquake; work on the border of Darfur; relief aid following the earthquake in Pakistan; relief aid to hurricane Katrina evacuees in New Orleans and aid to Somali camps in Kenya.

In addition, both the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and B'nai B'rith International have opened disaster relief funds to send aid to the Southeast Asian country.

The JDC's international development program, which responds to natural and man-made disasters with immediate relief and long-term assistance, collects funds on a non-sectarian basis. The JDC is helping some of the region's estimated 10 Jews.

B'nai B'rith will allocate $10,000 to help IsraAID send its team.

Donations to the JDC can be made at www.jdc.org or by phone at 212-687-6200.

Donations to B'nai B'rith can be made online at www.bnaibrith.org/support/disaster_relief.cfm.

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Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlysimchas.com will appear as space allows.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., #205 North York, ON. M3B 3K4

or email to: cblackman@cjnews.com

Aydan Joshua Flores-Wadowski, congratulations on finishing your first swim class. Love, Mommy, Daddy and family.

Mazel tov to Khachik Jan on his birthday! Many more healthy and wonderful years from your friends.

You're a big boy now, Matthew! Happy fifth birthday, from your parents, Paul & Sharron Lungen, brother Geoffrey, and all your relatives.

Happy fourth birthday Eden Cohen! Love, Bubbie & Zaidie and Saba & Savta.

Happy second birthday Daphne Cohen! Love, Bubbie & Zaidie and Saba & Savta.

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Mazel tov on the engagement of Michal Kalinsky & Yoni Frankel.

Mazel tov to Sofie Blaugrund & Eli Copperman on their recent engagement.

Mazel tov to Geula & Yishai Feldman on the pidyon haben of Yaggel Yitzchak Feldman.

Mazel tov to Vicki Lukacs & Ari Mendelson on their recent engagement.

Mazel tov on the engagement of Robert Shechter & Rochelle Frankel.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Thursday, May 15, is the deadline for the May 29 issue and Monday, May 26, is the deadline for the June 5 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, May 15

JEWS OF GHANA

Join Congregation Darchei Noam and film co-producer **Adam McKinney** for the screening of *We are All One: The Jews of Sefwi Wiawso, Ghana* followed by discussion. 7:30 p.m. 416-638-4783

BENMERGUI ON ISRAEL

The Winchevsky Centre presents **Ralph Benmergui** discussing his recent trip to Israel where he produced a television series. 8 p.m. 416-789-5502

Monday, May 19

CRAFT AND GIFT SHOW

BAYT Sisterhood is holding its annual Craft and Gift Show with unique items from hats, jewelry, purses and toys to kitchenware, skin-care products and clothing. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Info, 905-731-0351.

STATEHOOD AND RELIGION

Shaar Shalom Synagogue celebrates Israel@60 with a lecture by **Dr. Eric Lawee**, of York University, on "Divine State or Act of Satan: Religious Response to Zionism." 8 p.m. 905-889-4975

Tuesday, May 20

LUNCH & LEARN

Beth Tikvah hosts **Dr. Aurel Braun**, professor of international relations and political science, exploring "Why Israeli/Jewish Publicity and Public Relations Has Been So Ineffective," as much of what we think we know about Israel is false. 12:15 p.m. $20. By reservation only, 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

PLAY: *ONE OF A KIND*

Canadian Friends of Hebrew University presents a one-night performance of *One of a Kind*, a play written by **Yossi Vassa** and **Shai Ben Attar**, telling the story of a 10-year-old Ethiopian boy's journey to Israel. This event is geared for parents and children ages 10 and older. $12, includes pre-show pizza and drinks. 6 p.m. at the Leah Posluns Theatre. Proceeds from the event will establish a scholarship for an Ethiopian student studying at The Hebrew University. Tickets, www.cfhu.org or 416 485-8000.

HOLD ON TO YOUR HAT

Adath Israel Sisterhood hosts **Fran Saltzman** and her milliner, **Gail Osaduke**, speaking about the history of hats and their construction of hats. Then try some on. 7:30 p.m. $5. R.S.V.P. 416-493-1325.

CHUG HATANACH

Dr. Seymour Epstein will lead a study group in a discussion of *The Book of Haggai*, chapter 1. 8 p.m. at Beth David Congregation.

Wednesday, May 21

ISRAEL ZANGWILL

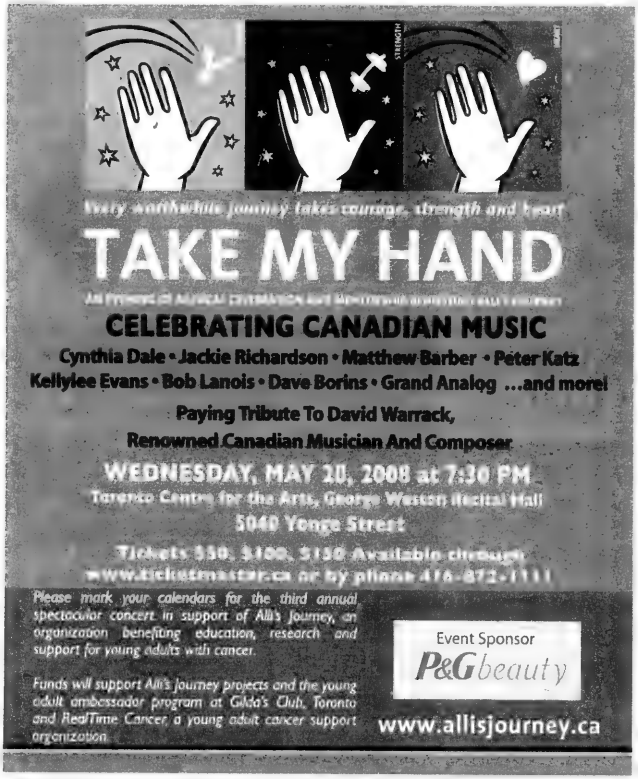
Temple Sinai and Beth Tikvah Synagogue Sisterhood present **Dr. Meri-Jane Rochelson**, professor of English at Florida International University, on "**Israel Zangwill**: The First Transatlantic Jewish Celebrity." Zangwill was known as the Jewish Dickens at the start of the 20th century. 7 p.m. at Temple Sinai Congregation. Temple Sinai and Beth Tikvah members free, others $5. Registration required, 416-487-3281 or education@templesinai.net.

Other News

JOURNEY TO JUDAISM

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation offers "A Messianic Rabbi's Journey To Judaism." After 19 years of leading a 'Hebrew Christian' congregation and working to convert Jews, **Hillel Permison** renounced

Continued on page 23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Sponsored by Nathan and Lindy Jacobson

What's New

Continued from page 22

Christianity and returned to Judaism. Come hear his amazing story. Thursday, May 22, 8 p.m. Free. 416-789-3213

JEWS IN EUROPE

Beth Tzedec Congregation hosts **Prof. Stephen Berk** for the weekend of May 24-25, discussing "Life After Death and in the Face of Death: European Jews and Israel Encounter a Post-Holocaust World." Shabbat pulpit lecture, "Jews in Germany: An Oxymoron?" Lecture following service, "The Jews in Poland: Living in the Shadows." Following 8:10 p.m. Minchah at Seudah Shlishit, "Muslims, Jews and Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Europe." Sunday, 10 a.m. "The Middle East at the Crossroads." 416-781-3511

WALK WITH ISRAEL

Join the community for the "Walk With Israel" Sunday, May 25, rain or shine, kick off starts at 9:30 a.m. at Coronation Park, Lakeshore Blvd. W. and Strachan Ave. Info, www.walkwithisrael.com.

CPR COURSES

Pride of Israel offers two Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) clinics, Sunday, May 25, 9 a.m.- 1 p.m. and 1: 30-5:30 p.m. Learn this important skill or refresh your knowledge. $45. Reserve, 416-226-0111, ext.10.

NESHAMA CARLEBACH

Celebrate Israel@60 as Adath Israel Congregation presents "**Neshama Carlebach** in Concert" Sunday, May 25, 7:30 p.m. $18. Tickets, 416-635-5340.

NEIL SEDAKA IN CONCERT

Beth Tzedec Congregation 2008 Concert Series Musical Magic continues on Tuesday, May 27, 7:30 p.m. with a concert by **Neil Sedaka**. Tickets, 416-781-3514, ext. 218.

LIVELY AFTER FIFTY

Members of the L.A.F. (Lively after Fifty) group of Jewish Women International are invited to the 10th anniversary reunion luncheon, Wednesday, May 28. Info, **Lucy**, 416-630-5318.

BOND WITH ISRAEL

Beth Emeth Synagogue hosts "Bond with Israel @ 60 Gala Concert" with the Nafsheinu Orchestra conducted by **Heshi Kuhnreich** featuring **Aaron Bensoussan** and **Avi Albrecht** MC'ed by **Herschel Fox**. Wednesday, May 28, 7:30 p.m. $36, reserved seating $54. Proceeds to purchase State of Israel Bonds. Tickets 416-633-3838.

TAKE MY HAND

Support Ali's Journey, benefiting education, research and support of young adults with cancer, and enjoy "Take My Hand," an evening of musical celebration celebrating Canadian talent. Wednesday, May 28, 7:30 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. Tickets, 416-872-1111.

AUDITIONS NOTICE

Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre is seeking actors for two plays at the Leah Posluns Theatre, *A Glimpse of the Light*, a musical by **Ben Finn**, Nov. 12-23, and *The Dybbuk* by **S. Anski**, Feb. 25-March 8, 2009. Auditions for both plays will take place May 27 and 29, 5:30-10 p.m. To book an audition send resume and photo to teatron@sympatico.ca or Teatron, 41 Warwick Ave, Toronto, M6C 1T7 or call 416-781-5527.

VENDORS WANTED

Na'amat Canada invites vendors to their Gift and Craft Sale held in conjunction with Israel@60 celebrations, Sunday, June 1 at Mel Lastman Square. Information, 416-636-5425(days) or **Rosaline Newell**(evenings), 905-881-8161.

ONE FAMILY FUND RIDE

Join the 4th Annual One Family Fund Ride for Israel June 8 for a ride through the countryside north of Toronto to raise funds for victims of terror and their families in Israel. Prizes and giveaways for all riders. Two routes, a 20 km route and a 50 km route. Info, 416-644-4955 or linda@onefamilyfund.ca

JF&C GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215 for info and registration.

For Men After Divorce. A 6-week group beginning Thursday, May 15, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Creating Fulfilling Relationships. A six-session group for single adults beginning Thursday, May 15, 7:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell The Kids, a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation on how to best meet your child's needs. Wednesday, May 21, 9:30 a.m.-12 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

Effective Parenting. A four-session group to learn what parents can do to raise a happy, motivated and well behaved child. For parents of children ages 2-11 years. Topics include, how to nurture self esteem, encourage problem-solving, increase communication and setting limits. Begins Wednesday May 28, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

One Family, Two Homes, three sessions for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children participate in separate age appropriate groups. Begins Thursday, May 29, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC an opportunity to meet friends and to enjoy stimulating programs, speakers, culture and more. Wednesdays, contact **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org for information.

Beth Tikvah Friendship Group screens *The Conspiracy of Kindness*, a film about Japanese diplomat, **Chium Sugihara**, who at great risk saved over 2,000 Jews during World War II. $3, non members $5. Thursday, May 15, 2 p.m. 416-221-3433.

The Association of Jewish Seniors' hosts **Rabbi Michael Skobac**, of Jews for Judaism, discussing "Jewish Spirituality and personal Growth." Thursday, May 15, 9:30 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Guests $2. For info call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Temple Sinai Social Club hosts **Jack Kugelmass** on "Moses and Golda: Would They Daven Together?" a humorous look at the Jewish community. Sunday, May 26, 7:30 p.m. $7, guests $10. RSVP 416-487-3281.

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom Social Club offers "Summer Theatre Trips" to see *Wonderful Town*, Wednesday, July 2, and *A Little Night Music*, Tuesday, August 12. $85, includes orchestra seats and transportation. Reserve, 416-633-3838.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Wednesday, May 28; Sunday dance, May 18. Info, Tuesday.-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Gordon Bean lectures on "Music in the Air: **Jerome Kern**, Master of Melody. Tuesday, May 20, 10 a.m. $3, non members $6.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Lag Ba'omer Concert with The Mickey Lewin Duo featuring **Mickey Lewin** and **John Marmora**, Friday, May 23, 1:30 p.m. in the assembly room.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Centre Camp is still hiring general and supervisory staff and a camp nurse. www.centrecamp.ca or ext. 378.

BJCC 6th Annual Golf Tournament Thursday, June 26 at Glen Eagle Golf Club. Call **Jim**, ext. 371, for information.

jVIAnetwork connects active vision impaired Jewish adults with a recreational and phys-ed program, varied outings and activities. For information call Bess, 905-508-2892.

Conversation Cafes, newcomers to Canada practice speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

The annual spring exhibition of select works of art by students in the Koffler Centre art classes includes painting, ceramics, and stone sculpture runs through Fri. May 23 in Loggia Gallery.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Harold Troper will lecture on "The Power of the Book: The Story Behind *None Is Too Many*. Tuesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m. Info, ext. 154, or randis@mnjcc.org.

Aramaic Workshop: A Taste of Babylonian Talmud, Wednesday, May 21 28, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Info,ext. 154, or randis@mnjcc.org.

2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition submission deadline is May 31. For information contact **Esther Arbeid**, ext. 606 or esthera@mnjcc.org

Cooking With **Itka**," cooking classes offering healthy, meatless lunches for kids. Entice your kids with food that they will love and take home innovative recipes. Sunday, June 1, 1-3 p.m. $18/ $36 per family. Info, **Randi Sokolsky**, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

Volunteers Wanted

VISITING PROGRAM

Circle of Care is in need of volunteers for their program which befriends lonely isolated seniors in the community. Share your interests and time with someone who needs you. Contact **Selena**, 416-635-6900, ext. 462 or slynch@circleofcare.com

The Bernard Betel Centre seeks volunteers to create lasting relationships between seniors and volunteers. With regular visits, in person or over the phone, isolated seniors experience improved physical, mental and emotional health. Requires 1-2 hours a week and you can choose the day that best suits you. Info, **Naomi Ziegler**, 416-225-2112, ext.127 or naomiz@betelcentre.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 26

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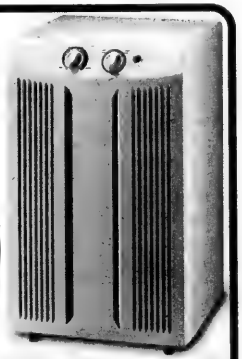

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Bridal Registry

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Hoffman, Ruth	April 26/08	Private
Lipshitz, Bessie	April 26/08	80 Inverlochy Blvd
Kershenbaum, Bessie	April 27/08	263 Winnett Ave
Shogilev, Ruth	April 29/08	3636 Bathurst St
Adler, Max	April 29/08	2 Geddes Crt
Slobodsky, Cecil Arthur	May 1/08	Finch Ave. W.
Stone, Philip	May 1/08	1 Clark Ave W
Goldberg, Sylvia	May 2/08	300 Ravineview Dr
Perry, Rose	May 2/08	130 Neptune Dr
Hoffman, Etta	May 3/08	32 Mill St
Uchitel, Gennady	May 3/08	Private
Rosenberg, Tillie	May 4/08	333 Clark Ave. W.
Kapeluto, Isidore	May 5/08	1111 Steeles Ave. W
Dubczanski, Eva	May 5/08	3560 Bathurst St
Seraya, Liza	May 6/08	4555 Bathurst St

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Wolf Basman	Apr 12/08	7 Townsgate Dr
Lynne Ackerman	Apr 24/08	72 Ava Cres
Reveka Kompaniyets	Apr 27/08	5935 Bathurst St
Eve Shapiro	Apr 25/08	10 Senlac Rd
Florence Moss	Apr 25/08	4 Cobblestone Dr
Helen Stein	Apr 25/08	89 Skymark Dr
Helen Kleiner	Apr 28/08	24 Goodwilll Ave
Tanya Warsh	Apr 29/08	129 Bedford Rd
David Levine	Apr 29/08	7601 Bathurst St
Miriam Robbins	May 1/08	115 Richview Ave
Morris Shapransky	May 2/08	4300 Bathurst St
Allan Marcus	May 2/08	7805 Bayview Ave
Herb Steiner	May 2/08	55 Carscadden Dr
Mary Slomen	May 2/08	2 Neptune Dr

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Tessa Rose	Apr 29/08	260 Heath St W
Sid Klein	May 2/08	2045 Finch Ave W

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
LILLIAN HERMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th, 1:30 p.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Bathurst, south of Steeles
Strashiver Society New Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
ERIC LEVITT ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 18, 1:00 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
B'nai Brith Section XX
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
EADIS VAUGHAN (GILLICK-KUSHNER) ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th, 11:00 a.m.
Roselawn Cemetery
Adath Israel Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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For all other notices, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date

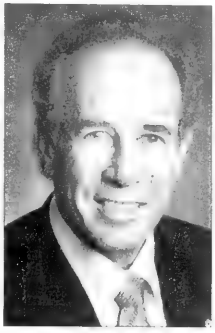
On Campus

Four Seasons CEO to be honoured by Hebrew U

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The Canadian Friends of Hebrew University is getting set to honour Canadian businessman and philanthropist Isadore Sharp with a tribute dinner next week.

Sharp, chairman and CEO of the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts, will be honoured May 22 by the Toronto chapter of CFHU because of his endowment of the Isadore Sharp Einstein Doctoral Scholarship at Hebrew University in Jerusalem.


Isadore Sharp

The endowment will go toward financial support for top doctoral students from a variety of faculties.

"These are the most elite scholarships because they are for doctoral students and the crème de la crème of the university. Really, in essence, what they are trying to do is ensure that the top academics in Israel stay in Israel and don't go elsewhere," said Lissie Sanders, CFHU's project manager.

Sanders said CFHU is expecting more than 800 people to attend the dinner, which is being held at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel. The event is nearly sold out, and CFHU is very close to reaching its goal of raising $4 million.

"It is an evening celebrating Isadore Sharp and his commitment to the university," Sanders said, adding that guests will be treated to a special musical guest, Miri Ben Ari, an Israeli-born and New York-based hip hop violinist who has performed with artists such as Kanye West and John Legend.

Sanders said that Sharp himself will say a few words about his commitment to the university, to academia and to Israel, while his family with honour him with a video presentation.

"He also has a cousin coming who is going to be speaking a little bit, who is a mathematician who studied Einstein's theory of relativity with some of Einstein's protégés," she said.

Sharp, the son of Polish immigrants, is a self-made man who, according to *Canadian Business Magazine*, is one of Canada's 100 richest men.

He graduated from what is now Ryerson University in 1952 with a degree in architecture, and nine years later, he opened the first Four Seasons hotel in downtown Toronto.

Since then, one hotel has grown into 75 in 31 countries, and more are in the development stage.

Through the years, Sharp and his wife, Rosalie, have made contributions to both Canadian and Israeli institutions and projects, such as Toronto's Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts, the Ontario College of Art and Design, Mount Sinai Hospital, and, of course, Hebrew U.

Sharp is also the director of the national Terry Fox Run, which he initiated in 1982, four years after he tragically lost one of his four sons to cancer.

"He's an interesting fellow, because most people know who he is because of his business reputation, but few people know really who he is, because he's not really out there like some other people," Sanders said.

"He is extremely accessible, he is very kind… and very warm."

For more information about the event, call 416-485-8000 ext. 122.

On Campus

Queen's prof remakes Jewish studies program

By JORDAN PRESS
Special to The CJN

KINGSTON — It has been an interesting year for Howard Tzvi Adelman.

The chair of the Jewish studies program at Queen's University in Kingston came to the school at the start of the 2007-08 academic year with an idea of where he wanted to take the program.

Instead of having the program be academically isolated, in a sense, from the rest of the university, Adelman decided to weave Jewish studies into the fabric of other departments and programs.

"One of the main things I was trying to do is create a stronger relationship with other academic departments," he said.

It worked.

So while students entering Queen's next year will still be able to enrol in Jewish studies, they will also be able to learn about the tenets of Judaism and the history of the Jewish people in other liberal arts courses at the 167-year-old post-secondary institution.

Jewish studies won't just be for those enrolled in the program anymore.

Adelman said there have already been expressions of interest from students in other academic disciplines interested in taking Jewish studies as a minor for their degree.

Howard Adelman

And as for the Jewish studies program, Adelman said, "I see future growth."

Adelman has taught Jewish studies in the United States and Israel. He was educated in the United States and received two degrees in Jewish studies, a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a master's degree from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He also holds a PhD from Brandeis University.

He joined Queen's in 2007, took over as chair of the department, and came in with a road map for where he wanted to go.

"My expectations, having been in the field for a while, were realistic," he said. "I knew what was needed."

But rather than giving students across the university a superficial sense of Judaism, Adelman and the department decided to give students a deeper sense of the texts and tenets that are the base of Jewish studies and integrate them into other disciplines.

Jewish studies has become embedded in other courses and departments such as philosophy and history.

So while studying the great philosophers, students also get the chance to study the philosophical basics of Judaism.

It took a year of academic and university reviews to approve all the changes, but, Adelman said, it all took place on time and on schedule.

"It's done," he said.

Adelman said he hopes more non-Jewish studies students will enrol in courses about Judaism and Jewish thought.

Next year, the department will still offer some seminars or "open subject courses" for Jewish studies students, Adelman said, but there won't be any specific Jewish studies courses.

For more information about the program, visit www.queensu.ca/jewishstudies.

MEMORIAL MARCH: Amir Gershon, Lev Naiman and Eli Weinstein, pictured front row from left, were three of 15 members of Alpha Epsilon Pi who took part in a march in downtown Toronto to commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day. Members of the Jewish fraternity from York University, Ryerson University, the University of Toronto and the University of Waterloo met at Dundas Square on May 1 wearing signs that said "Never Forget" and marched in silence while distributing flyers about the Holocaust. **[Will Pazner photo]**

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The Board of Directors and Staff of the
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Seniors Scene

Centenarian is a Drildzer stalwart

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

At age 100, Jack Stopper, who is known as Mr. Drildz, is a delight to talk to.

He has a remarkable recall of a century of history, as well as a keen sense of humour, despite some hearing difficulties.

He was interviewed at his home and workshop in Thornhill, where he has lived with his daughter, Rochelle Sufrin, for the past four years. He walks without a cane or a walker, and is able to climb several flights of steps.

Over a cup of tea, he was toasted with, "To 120," to which he replied, "I still have 20 years to live."

Stopper earned the nickname "Mr. Drildz" for his more than 70 years of leadership of the Drildzer Congregation and Society, formerly the Drildzer Young Men's Mutual Benefit Society.

Born in Chesterchov, Poland, on February 25, 1908, Stopper said his family moved to Drildz when he was a young child. He said he had a happy childhood, and later worked for his father, who operated a successful hat manufacturing business.

When Stopper was 22 years old, his father told him to leave Poland for Canada, as his aunt, who lived in Toronto, needed his help.

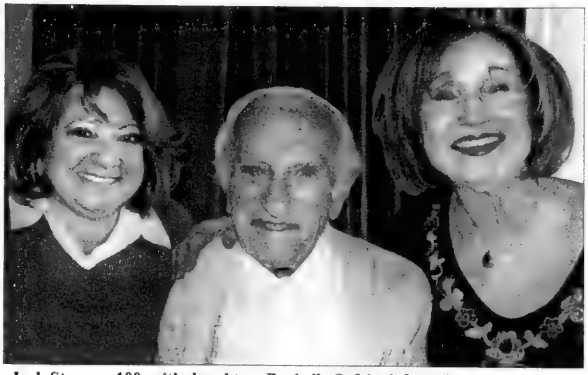
He couldn't understand why his father was sending him away, but after he arrived in Toronto in 1930, he found out that his parents didn't like the family of the girl he was seeing, "because they didn't have enough *yichos* [status]."

In Toronto, Stopper went to work in a hat and cap business, and later he owned and operated the Imperial Hat and Cap Company. In the basement of his home, he still has a cutting table, steaming blocks and antiquated sewing machines, and he still takes some limited orders for hats and caps.

But the passion of his life has been the Drildzer, which was formed in 1924. Four years after he arrived in Canada, in 1934 at age 26, a senior member of the organization, Chemele Bleeman, asked him to organize a young men's group, noting that most of the group's members were old, in their 70s and 80s.

"I didn't understand why they asked me, because I was the last person in the group to come to Canada as the immigration from Poland was closed down," he said.

He recalls that there were about 10 men in the organization. "In those days, we didn't count the women as members." He recalled that the women sat upstairs, and there was a hole in the floor to look downstairs where the men davened.



Jack Stopper, 100, with daughters Rochelle Sufrin, left, and Ruth Greenberg

The membership began to grow, and over the years, the Drildzers moved several times, from Huron and Baldwin streets, then to Markham and Ulster streets, and with the help of Louis Shields, who was not a Drildzer but generously supported the organization, the group purchased its present location on Wilson Avenue just west of Bathurst Street.

"Everyone had moved up north, so we had to move," Stopper explained.

Through the years, Stopper has served as president and as a senior officer.

He said there have been many changes over the years. "Now women are full members and are active on the executive.

"We only hold holiday and Sunday morning services, which are followed by a wonderful breakfast with a family feeling. Before, it would take nine months to plan a banquet with everyone having an opinion. Now we have committees and everything goes smoothly."

He loves to spend time with his family, his two daughters, Sufrin and Ruth Greenberg, as well as five grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Stopper still does things that would be amazing even for someone a quarter-century younger than he is.

"My father is still very active," Sufrin said. "He goes shopping with me and at the cottage, he rakes leaves and he uses a chainsaw to cut up the wood."

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Oakwood CI marks 100 years

After three years in the planning, Oakwood Collegiate Institute's (OCI) 100th anniversary celebration was a resounding success.

From April 30 to May 4, hundreds of former and current OCI students came out to celebrate, with some alumni travelling great distances to meet and mingle with friends and former classmates, some of whom they had not seen for more than 30 years.

Bruce Snell, left, a former music teacher at Oakwood Collegiate Institute, is seen at the 100th anniversary celebration with former student Michael Baker.

The weekend activities included a music night at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, where alumni and present-day students performed for an enthusiastic, full-to-capacity audience of 1,000.

There was a gala dinner and dance, a golf day, a pub night at the school, located on St. Clair Avenue at Oakwood Avenue, the opening of an archives room and the rededication of a war memorial.

"It was a lot of work, but it was also a lot of fun," said Charles Marmoreo (class of 1958), who is in structural steel drafting. "And we had a great deal of co-operation from many people."

Marmoreo, president of OCI's alumni association and John Iaboni (1970), a sportswriter for the *Toronto Sun*, co-chaired the 100th anniversary event.

Marmoreo spoke of his recollections of his years at Oakwood. He said that in the 1940s and 50s, many of the classes had a majority of Jewish students.

"Whenever Passover and other holidays came around, we went down to about two students in the class," he said.

Alumnus Louise (Rappaport) Starkman (1959) said alumni and current Oakwood students worked together and did a "phenomenal job" on the reunion, particularly in assembling class photos and memorabilia and setting up decade rooms.

She noted that the oldest graduate to attend was 97 years old "and he still participates in many activities."

She added: "The gala was spectacular and at the pub night, it was fun meeting former students as well as teachers, and sharing memories."

Over the years, the student mix at Oakwood has changed to include many people of Italian descent, and today it has a very ethnically mixed student population.

Starkman spoke of the outstanding teachers past and present in the departments of sciences, arts and sports. "The Oakwood teachers influenced whole generations of students."

Bruce Snell, a former music teacher attended the reunion. Starkman noted that former students such as Dr. Michael Baker, a professor and physician-in-chief at the University Health Network, played in the school's orchestra and continues to play music.

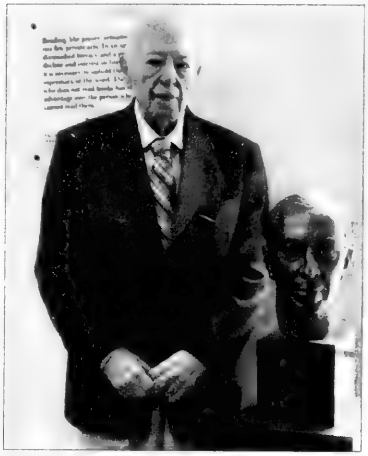
Baker said he is proud that his children, Jeffrey and Jennifer, attended Oakwood and were also scholarship winners.

There are many Jews among OCI's long list of outstanding graduates, Starkman said, including Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Silverman Abella; Dr. Gerald Baker, professor and head of oral surgery at Mount Sinai Hospital; Dr. Alan Bernstein, the director of the Global Effort to Coordinate HIV Vaccine Development for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; former provincial and federal cabinet minister Elinor Caplan; music producer Bob Ezrin; Murray Koffler, founder of Shoppers Drug Mart; filmmaker Ivan Reitman, and Judge Sidney Robbins. — C.G.

Rabbi Baskin marks 60 years in the rabbinate

By HOLLY GINSLER
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — Rabbi Bernard Baskin was Temple Anshe Sholom's longest serving rabbi, officiating at the Reform temple for 40 years. He holds the record in Hamilton's history for the longest tenure at one congregation. In 1989, he was appointed rabbi emeritus of Temple Anshe Sholom.



Rabbi Bernard Baskin stands beside a bust of himself that was created by sculptor Elizabeth Holbrook, in 1969.

A gala dinner, to be held at the Hamilton Convention Centre on May 22, will celebrate Rabbi Baskin's 60th year in the rabbinate. The event is a fundraiser for Temple Anshe Sholom.

A ticket for the gala includes a first-edition copy of *The Essential Bernard Baskin: Our Beloved Rabbi*, a collection of Rabbi Baskin's columns written over the last half century for the *Hamilton Spectator*.

Rabbi Baskin was born in New Jersey in 1920. He graduated from Brooklyn College in 1942 and from the Jewish Institute of Religion with a master's degree in Hebrew literature. Before his ordination in 1947, he served as an interim war-time rabbi in Denver. He was ordained in 1948, the same week that Israel declared its independence. He briefly worked in Baton Rouge, La. In 1949, Rabbi Baskin and his wife, Marjorie, moved to Hamilton, Ont., and never left.

When Rabbi Baskin arrived in 1949, Temple Anshe Sholom had a congregation of about 90 families. Under Baskin, the number rose to close to 450 families. "Both the Reform and Conservative groups benefited from the postwar change in Jewish attitudes," he says.

The first- and second-generation Jews living in Hamilton during the war were eastern European, traditional, and didn't feel an affinity for Reform Judaism. However, their children and the third generation of Jews living in Hamilton, Rabbi Baskin says, had more formal education and were looking for new possibilities, and became interested in a liberal approach to Judaism.

During Rabbi Baskin's tenure, a new synagogue was erected in west Hamilton to replace the former small building that had become inadequate. This contributed to the growth of the congregation.

Hamilton began to feel like home to Rabbi Baskin and Marjorie. Their three children, Judith, David and Susan, were born here.

When Rabbi Baskin became rabbi emeritus of Anshe Sholom, he and Marjorie, who died in 2005, went into the antiquarian book business. The books were mostly Judaica. "We did this for close to 20 years, which was fun and a source of interest," Rabbi Baskin says. "At one time or another, I had close to 10,000 books."

After his retirement, he also served in a part-time capacity at Temple Am Sholom in Barrie, Ont.

Over the years, Rabbi Baskin has been honoured by numerous Jewish and non-Jewish organizations, including B'nai Brith, Jewish National Fund, the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, Hebrew Union College and McMaster University.

The rabbi was also chosen as Hamilton's Big Brother of the year and received the Rotary Club's Paul Harris Fellow Award for achievement in public relations. In 1990, the city of Hamilton bestowed upon him its highest honour when it named him to its Gallery of Distinction.

From his early days in Hamilton, Rabbi Baskin was involved with interfaith activities and has spoken to many non-Jewish groups.

For more than 50 years, Rabbi Baskin has presented lectures on literature at McMaster University and the Hamilton Public Library. His annual Books and Ideas lecture series at Temple Anshe Sholom is very popular.

Rabbi Baskin says he has seen many changes in Reform Judaism over the years, including a significant increase in the number of Reform Jews, among them many women. He says this is partly due to women becoming better educated over the years. There have been women rabbis and presidents in the Reform movement for more than 30 years, he notes

Another change Rabbi Baskin has observed is that the Reform movement has become more traditional. Nowadays, there is more Hebrew in the service and most people cover their heads and have bar or bat mitzvahs, he says.

He adds that Reform Judaism has become more Zionist and he also sees greater involvement of Reform Jews in the general community.

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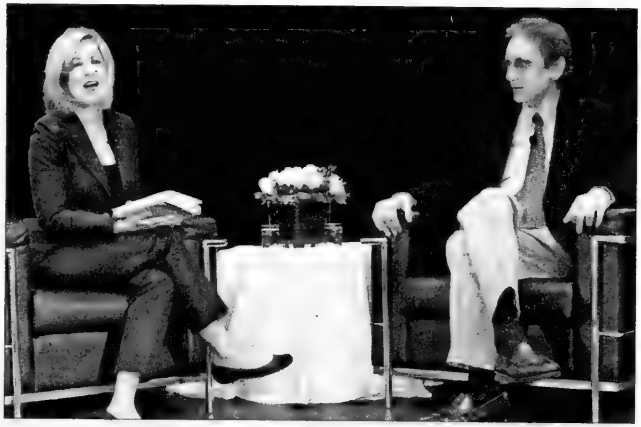


BRAINY TALK: Heather Reisman, CEO of Indigo Books and Music, was at Baycrest May 5 to host a conversation with John Ratey, a Harvard Medical School psychiatry professor and author of the acclaimed book *Spark: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and the Brain*, in which he argues that exercise is a key way to fight memory decline in later years.

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto

Annual Meeting of Members

will be held at the

Associated Hebrew Schools — The Next 100 Years — Our Promise • Our Children • Our Future

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue
100 Elder Street Toronto, Ontario
Thursday June 5, 2008 at 5:45 pm

On this milestone of One-hundred Years of Excellence, our members will meet for the following purposes:

1. To honour outgoing Officers & Members of the Board of Directors.
2. To receive the annual report of the President
3. To receive the financial report of the Corporation.
4. To appoint auditors.
5. To elect New Members of the Board of Directors.
6. To transact such further and other business as may properly come before the meeting, or any adjournments thereof.

DATED AT TORONTO, THIS 14th DAY OF MAY, 2008
Sally Zigler, Secretary

Coast to Coast

Kingston high schoolers create Shoah museum

By JORDAN PRESS
Special to The CJN

KINGSTON — Students in Pam Simon's literacy class at Queen Elizabeth Collegiate in Kingston have been doing a lot of work on the Holocaust lately.

They have interviewed survivors living in the city, and by the end of June, they will know where those testimonies will be housed.

The Limestone District School Board provided the students, aged 15 to 17, with a grant to establish a permanent museum and memorial to the dozen or so Holocaust survivors living in Kingston and the millions more who died in World War II.

Initially the museum will be housed in the school, but eventually, the hope is to move it to its own location somewhere in Kingston, Simon said.

"Our students are very proud of their contributions," said Simon, who will visit the sites of former concentration camps in Poland this summer.

"These kids have received little positive feedback in their lives, so the time they have spent with the survivors and their hours of dedication to this project are very important to them," she added.

"The students would love to go with me to Poland and Israel this summer. I wish we had funding for them."

Simon's interest in the Holocaust started a few years ago, when she wrote a play about Jewish speed dating. She decided to make one of the characters a Holocaust survivor, but without any personal connection to the genocide, she wasn't sure what to do with the character.

Like any good writer, she did some research and interviewed survivors.

The work piqued her interest enough that last year Simon decided to incorporate the Holocaust into her literacy course at Queen Elizabeth Collegiate, located in central Kingston.

Survivors interviewed for documentary

One of the books she chose for the class was *Hana's Suitcase*, the story of Hana and George Brady, two Jewish children from Czechoslovakia and the schoolchildren in present-day Japan who researched what became of the Brady siblings.

The Queen Elizabeth students were hooked. They wanted to know more about the Holocaust and started to visit websites and read books on the subject. They created an information package on the Holocaust for local schools and public libraries. They also decorated the back wall of Simon's classroom and made it into a small memorial to Holocaust victims.

But the students wanted to do more, Simon said.

"We decided that we needed to do something important for the survivors in our city," she said. "Hence, the birth of a documentary and a museum that would serve as both an educational centre and exhibit space."

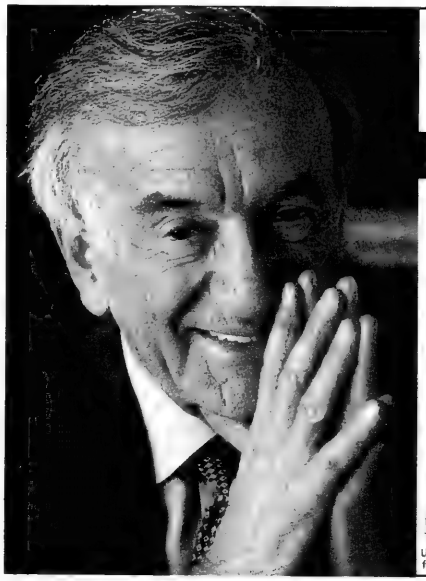
They are close to being finished. They have interviewed survivors living in Kingston and spoken with children of survivors. Some of the testimonies will be used as part of a 30-minute documentary that will be shown in the museum, once it's established. Copies will also be kept at the Beth Israel Synagogue in Kingston.

The students hope to open the museum and present the film to the public at a gala event in the fall.

It will mark a milestone for both the students and their teacher, Simon said.

"My students will be able to say that they contributed something important during their lifetimes. As their teacher, I was able to guide them toward a greater purpose and hopefully inspire them to continue their involvement in humanitarian causes."

Some members of the community have also gotten behind the project by making donations to it. Simon said the class is still looking for donations to go along with the grant from the school board.



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ש'שאר י'נ'ש

גידי קורן וחברים

אנחנו בני שישים

אני שייך לאותם בני מזל שגילם תמיד כמו גיל המדינה. או אין מה להגיד, גיל שישים הוא ציון דרך לא מבוטל-מצד אחד הגיעה ישראל להישגים בלתי יאומנו, ומצד שני היא עדיין נאבקת על קיומה נגד כוחות טרור מוסלמי קיצוני.

ועל זה כתב המשורר יהודה עמיחי, כשחגר שבור ופצוע ממלחמת העצמאות:

"מחצית האנשים בעולם
אוהבים את המחצית השניה,
מחצית האנשים בעולם
שונאים את השניה,
האם בגלל אֵלה ואֵלה אֲנַי
ללכת ולנדוד
ולהשתנות בלי הרף..."

השיר הזה נכלל בתקליט "אם זר קוצים" של להקת האחים והאחיות שיצא החודש. אבל ששאר בינינו.

על הכמיהה לשפיות

שישים שנה של דמוקרטיה בחבל עולם בעייתי ואלים כמו המזרח התיכון הם לא דבר של מה בכך. במאמר שפורסם לפני שבוע בשבועון מקליין הקנדי סבר הכותב שלישראל אין סיכוי רב לשרוד את האתגר הדמוגרפי של העולם הערבי שמסביבה בעשרים השנה הבאות. למעשה אהוד אולמארט אמר דבר מאוד דומה: על ישראל להיפרד במהירות מן הגדה המערבית, כי המשך השליטה בעם זר לא יאפשר לישראל להיות יהודית ולבטח לא יאפשר לה להיות דמוקרטית. רוב יהודי העולם חיים כיום במדינות דמוקרטיות ועוזבים מדינות טוטאליטאריות. סביר שגם הרוב היהודי בישראל לא יסבול מדינת משטרה ששולטת בעם אחר.

עם יד על הלב: בעיני האתגר הכי רציני של ישראל בשנת השישים לקיומה זה איך לשמור על שפיות. החיים באזור מטורף שבו אינך יודע מתי יתפוצץ האוטובוס הבא, מתי אוהדי ביתר"ר ירושלים ישרפו את האיצטדיון, ומתי גורם משיחי זה או אחר יהרוג ערבים--חיים כאלה גורמים לעלייה במפלס ההזוי, המשיחי, הבלתי מציאותי. רק תַּקְפְּרִי כמה רבני לחשים ורנטגן מציעים ריפוי מסרטן וממחלות חשוכות מרפא-וכמה אנשי דעת ותרבות הולכים אליהם "ליתר בטחון". זה הכל ביטוי לבלתי שפוי, להזוי, שמשתלט על אנשים שחיים באזור מטורף כרוניק. הבעייה היא שבדי להתקיים-חייבת ישראל להיות בפוקוס כל הזמן-להפריד את ההזוי מהאמיתי, את הדמיוני מהשפוי.

ודווקא בגלל זה אני הולך להגיד משהו לא כל כך פופולארי: לדעתי אהוד אולמארט מוכיח את עצמו כמנהיג מתון ושפוי, איש שיודע לעבוד עם אנשים, שלא פוחד לשנות את דעותיו הפוליטיות תוך אחיזה במדיניות שפויה, ושאיתו מתלהם. בהשוואה לקודמיו מימין ומשמאל-יש בכך חידוש מעניין. נכון-הוא לא פופולארי במשאלי עם-אך הוא עושה עבודה שקטה וטובה. דיעה דומה השמיע בראיון גדול ידיעות אחרונות חיים רמון, שעבד עם מנהיגים רבים בעבר. אבל ששאר בינינו.

The Visitor

אחד הסרטים הטובים ביותר שתראו בחייכם החל השבוע. סיפורו של פרופסור אמריקאי שמגלה בדירתו בניו יורק, שהיתה ריקה שנים רבות, זוג מהגרים צעירים בלתי חוקיים. במקום לזרוק אותם קיבינימט הוא עורר להם ונוצר ביניהם קשר מדהים שמשנה את חיו ומלמד אותו תוך שבועיים מה שלא למד במשך חיים שלמים. זהו אחד מאותם סרטים מושלמים שגורם לך לשיר מבפנים. רוצו רוצו. אחד עשרה בסולם קורן.

Coast to Coast

Cabbie fights taxi ban on mezuzot

MONTREAL — A taxi driver is seeking $5,000 from the city of Montreal because he opposes a bylaw that prohibits him from displaying personal mementos in his car.

Arieh Perecowicz says the Montreal Taxi Bureau rule is "discriminatory" and violates his freedom of expression guaranteed by the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms. He earlier filed a complaint with the Quebec Human Right Commission.

Perecowicz, who has driven a cab for 42 years, has been fined a total of $764 since December 2006 for having a picture of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem Schneerson, two mezuzot, family photos, a Remembrance Day poppy and a Canadian flag in his taxi.

He is also asking Montreal Municipal Court to delay ruling on the four fines he is contesting until the Human Rights Commission looks at his complaint.

The bylaw, adopted in 2003, prohibits any "object or inscription that is not required for the taxi to be in service."

In his complaint to the Human Rights Commission, he says: "The objects in my vehicle do not in any way diminish the rights of any passenger and do not interfere with the proper operation of my taxi."

Last fall, Perecowicz expressed his concerns that his rights were being infringed upon before the Bouchard-Taylor commission on the reasonable accommodation of religious minorities, when the hearings were held in St. Hyacinthe.

Israeli ambassador's comments come under fire

Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker stirred the wrath of critics last week over remarks suggesting Canada's growing Muslim population might in future shift the country's foreign policy away from Israel.

His comments came as Prime Minister Stephen Harper delivered a strongly worded address in support of Israel during its 60th anniversary celebrations.

Alan Baker

Ambassador Baker told the *Globe and Mail* that Muslim communities had influenced foreign policy in European countries such as France. "The question is, how do you treat the results of this fact? Do you expect from these greater numbers that they will absorb themselves into Canadian society as Canadians or that they'll try to push Canadians to adopt their own values and principles? And this is the gist of the problem."

He also criticized a Muslim Toronto-area Liberal MP, Omar Alghabra, for "hostility toward Israel," later amending his description of Alghabra to "less than friendly."

And he pointed to the disruptions of pro-Israel speakers on university campuses.

Khaled Mouammar, national president of the Canadian Arab Federation, said Baker was fostering "bigotry." He demanded a public apology and said "since being posted to Canada, Mr. Baker has been treating Canada as a colony of Israel and acting as extraordinary and plenipotentiary ambassador."

He called on the government to "rebuke" the ambassador.

Alghabra said Baker's comments were "shocking and inappropriate," as well as divisive.

Liberal foreign affairs critic, MP Bob Rae, said, "Ambassador Baker should reflect on his comments because I don't think they were either accurate or constructive."

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We thank all applicants for their interest, but only those selected for an interview are contacted

Yom Hazikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut

Canada counts itself among Israel's best friends: Bernier

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — Canada's support for Israel is strong and unequivocal, said Minister of Foreign Affairs Maxime Bernier at a celebration of Israel's 60th birthday.

Bernier was speaking at a reception hosted by Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker for members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of Jewish community organizations.

Describing his recent trip to Israel, Bernier said that an aerial survey of the country gave him "an opportunity to better understand the security challenges that you are facing."

He added: "Canada and Israel share the same values – freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law. This is why we are proud to stand with Israel… and we are proud to count ourselves among Israel's best friends."

The reception was held May 7 at the National Gallery of Canada, which, as Baker noted, was designed by world-renowned architect Moshe Safdie, an Israeli Canadian.

A community-wide Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration took place the following evening at the Ottawa Civic Centre.

Outside the building, protesters held signs in a silent vigil to commemorate what Palestinians refer to as the "Nakba" (catastrophe). Pamphlets were distributed to passersby, outlining why Israel's 60th birthday is not a cause of celebration for Palestinians.

Inside the building, the atmosphere was festive and celebratory. This reporter encountered a Lebanese Christian friend who had come to the celebration with Jewish friends.

Chaired by Penny Torontow, the event attracted hundreds of people who enjoyed an array of Israeli foods, took part in various children's activities and gambled at the "Dizengoff Casino."

"We want everyone from kids to grandparents to experience first-hand the energy and jostling of being on a crowded street or park on Yom Ha'atzmaut. When you enter the hall, you will see circus acts, balloon art and jugglers, hear the sounds of Israeli music and smell the food being prepared at kiosks, just as you would walking around Israel on Yom Ha'atzmaut," Torontow said in her program message.

The official part of the event was opened by a colour guard (flag spinning) by the Ottawa War Veterans, who were followed by a procession of children from various Jewish schools. After the singing of the national anthems of Canada and Israel, and messages from Baker and event chair Torontow, everyone was invited to wander around and enjoy the event.

The InJoy Orchestra, led by Gilat Rapaport, performed traditional and contemporary music, bringing many to the dance floor for Israeli dancing.

A number of other events are planned in the coming weeks in celebration of Israel's 60th birthday, including a gala reception and concert by the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra May 20.

The Anne & Max Tanenbaum CHAT Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto
האקדמיה העברית ע"ש טננבאום

www.tanenbaumchat.org

The Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (TanenbaumCHAT) is a private co-educational G9-G12 high school, serving the Greater Toronto Jewish Community for over four decades. TanenbaumCHAT has an outstanding academic reputation. We are one system operating two parallel campuses.

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E: fwoznica@tanenbaumchat.org
F: 905-787-8773

Applicants must be members in good standing with the Ontario College of Teachers – with Intermediate / Senior qualifications. Evidence of commitment to extra-curricular activities is required. Demonstrated curriculum leadership an asset.

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We appreciate your interest but we regret we can contact only those selected for an interview.

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Yom Hazikaron / Yom Ha'atzmaut

Fallen soldiers commemorated

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

An estimated 1,000 people gathered at Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue on May 6, the eve of Yom Hazikaron, for the Israeli consulate's annual Memorial Day ceremony for Israel's fallen soldiers.

Amir Gissin, Israel's consul general of Israel in Toronto, said in a Hebrew-language address that tens of thousands of Israelis would wake up in Israel the next day to travel to military cemeteries.

In his own immediate family, he said, his mother would drive to the Negev to visit the grave of her brother, who was killed in Israel's War of Independence, while Gissin's brother would head to Rishon Lezion to visit a cousin's grave.

But no one in the family would be able to get to Zichron Ya'akov, where another cousin, Ehud Efrati, was buried late last year after being killed on reserve duty.

For Israeli families, grief is very personal, but it's also collective, as it was at the memorial ceremony, Gissin told *The CJN* the next day.

He told the mostly Hebrew-speaking audience at the service that their answer to those who question Israel's right to exist is to be "better in the sense that we should be worthy of the unbelievable personal price that the Israeli fallen soldiers have paid" and to ensure that the State of Israel continues to develop.

Beth David's Rabbi Philip Scheim spoke of Mati Sukenik, who died in Israel's War of Independence.

In Nov. 1947, Sukenik heard on the radio that the United Nations had just voted in favour of partitioning Palestine into a Jewish and an Arab State, the rabbi said.

He went to his father, archeologist Eliezer Sukenik, to tell him the news, just as the elder Sukenik was working on a particular section of the Dead Sea Scrolls that he would later name the Scroll of Thanksgiving.

"In this 60th anniversary year," said Rabbi Scheim, "we have... re-entered the land of Israel on the shoulders of our ancestors who refused to relinquish an ancient dream, and on the shoulders of the brave men and women, young and old, whose bravery, whose sacrifice gave a long-struggling nation renewed reason to hope, and even to celebrate."

The event, MCed by Shelly Levy and Robert Sarner, also included readings in Hebrew and English, prayers, music, and the laying of a wreath by youth movement members. Capt. (Res.) Yaron Ashkenazi read a message from Israel Defence Forces Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi (no relation).

From left, Yitzhak Argaman, Reuven Zemer and Israel David perform the Hebrew song *We Left Quietly*.
[Frances Kraft photo]

Ceremony remembers dead on eve of Israel's 60th

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — On the eve of Israel's milestone 60th birthday last week, hundreds from the community honoured the memory of the 23,000 Israeli men, women and children who were "plucked from life by war and terror."

That was the phrase used by educator Shimshon Hamerman, who, along with Betty Elkaim, was the master of ceremonies at the annual hour-long Yom Hazikaron ceremony remembering the soldiers and citizens who paid the ultimate price so the Jewish state could live.

At the outdoor commemoration in front of 1 Cummings Square, students bearing Israel's colours stood atop the steps of the Segal Centre for Performing Arts at The Saidye, Machal war veterans Ralph Charad and Sydney Cadloff lowered the Israeli flag, and those in attendance observed a moment of silence.

"Remembrance means never to forget," noted Hamerman, adding that it works two ways: prospective memory, such as in the biblical exhortation to think about Shabbat every day, and retrospective memory, as in the duty to remember the past.

Those killed were "innocent souls who sacrificed their lives so that each and every Jew should have a place called home," Hamerman said.

Israel's consul general, Yoram Elron, said the birth and survival of Israel "could never have happened had it not been for their sacrifice." Israel's best and brightest were lost, he said, and that loss is contemplated in silent sorrow by Jews everywhere. "Let them continue to be an inspiration to us all."

FEDERATION CJA president Marc Gold noted that the solemn interlude of Yom Hazikaron took place between the mournfulness of Yom Hashoah and joy of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel Independence Day.

The thousands dead "remind us of what a tremendous loss of life and potential" the last six decades have wrought, he said.

The ceremony was also marked by the participation of a number of relatives of Israeli soldiers killed in action and by terrorists.

Effy Givon, whose brother Etty Givon died in combat in 1970, lit the memorial candle, while *Kaddish* was recited by Safir Schnaiderman, whose father, Alexander, died in 1985 when a suicide bomber detonated next to his army vehicle.

Hamerman later said to remember the "soldiers, volunteers, civilians, and our brother and sisters" who sacrificed their lives. Let us also remember, he said, "the resistance heroes, Canadian Machal volunteers, Montrealers who fought in Israel, and members of security forces and terror victims."

During another portion of the ceremony, six relatives of fallen soldiers and victims of terror, accompanied by students or community leaders, laid wreaths: Hana Dror, for her father, Menachem Shimshon Frenkel, killed in 1948; Daliah Gladstone, for her husband, Moshe Aharonov, killed in 1967; Mordechai Lugassi, for his brother Tziona, killed in 1975; Montrealer David Friedberg, for his brother Yehoshua Friedberg, killed in 1993; Moishe Cohen, for his grandfather Yaniv Bar-On, killed in 2006; Isaac Dahan for his brother Gabriel, killed in 1956; and Avi Sulimani of Sderot, for his brother Yacov, killed in 1973.

The ceremony was also interspersed with student readings, song performances by the visiting Tzerie choir of Be'er Sheva and Meitarim choir of Sderot, and the recitation of Psalm 21 and the *K'El Maleh Rachamim*.

Earlier in the day, 26 Jewish school students presented Elron and relatives of the six soldiers honoured at the commemoration, with documentaries about them.

Following the ceremony at Cummings Square, an evening of Israeli songs was held at the Gelber Conference Centre.

OU head pleads for Jewish unity

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Tzvi Hersh Weinreb delivered a pointed message about Jewish unity to a sanctuary full of people gathered for Mizrachi Canada's annual Yom Hazikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut program last week at Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation in Thornhill.

The executive vice-president of the Orthodox Union, who has a PhD in psychology, said that just as Jews transition from the darkness of Yom Hazikaron, the memorial day for fallen soldiers, to the light of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day, we must transition from "a darkness within us… that is eating away at the soul of the Jewish people."

Discord, despair and cynicism – which he described as "three monsters" – are "crippling us as a nation, as local communities, and as individual Jews," said Rabbi Weinreb.

He referred to gaps between religious and secular Jews, right-wing and left-wing Jews, chassidim of differing factions, and those who wear one colour kippah and those who wear a different one.

"It is a poison that eats away at us body and soul."

Rabbi Weinreb believes the Jewish community has become pessimistic. "Where is a prophet today who gives a hopeful message for the Jewish future?" he asked.

Cynicism, Rabbi Weinreb said, is at the core of the difficulties. "When we see the accomplishments of others, particularly of a different shade of religiosity than ours, we say, 'So what? I'm not impressed.'

"Yom Ha'atzmaut, particularly this 60th [one], gives us the opportunity to grab these three monsters, to slay these three dragons, and to transform the discord into unity and harmony, the despair into hope, and the cynicism into idealism and dreaming again."

Rabbi Weinreb said that *Ahavat Yisrael* – love of one's fellow Jew – is commonly espoused but rarely practised, "especially when the going is tough, or when the person is different.

"Harmony – at least, tolerance – is a goal we must achieve."

He urged people to see the beauty of others' accomplishments "even if we don't understand that beauty," and to not forget "the dreams of our grandmothers… the pushkes that helped build the land of Israel.

"Let us not become cynical, no matter who are our leaders," he said. "We must continue to dream. We must reverse discord with unity, despair with hope and cynicism with dreams of the future."

The event, which was followed by celebratory dancing in the synagogue's social hall, also included prayers, a medley of Israeli music, and remarks from Amir Gissin, Israel's consul general in Toronto; Solly Sacks, director of World Mizrachi; and Rabbi Baruch Taub, spiritual leader of the synagogue.

Former envoy credits 'hard work, blood, tears and dedication'

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — "Nothing short of a miracle" was the theme repeated again and again in Halifax May 8 by speakers at Israel@60, a celebration of Israel's 60th birthday.

Yet Alon Pinkas, former Israeli consul general to New York and a longtime adviser to Israeli presidents, premiers and military leaders, as well as a *Jerusalem Post* columnist and investment adviser, told 300 members of the Halifax Jewish community, that Israel's success "has nothing to do with miracles.

"It was hard work, blood, tears and dedication that turned a country that was proclaimed an independent state in 1948, with 600,000 Jews and 1.6 million British pounds, living among 130 million Arabs, into what it is today."

He joked. "You'd be thrown out of Las Vegas if you asked for odds and wanted to bet on Israel's success against that 60 years ago."

Referring to negative media coverage of Israel, he asked "Why is it an issue that Israel can continue to exist, that Israel can survive another 60 years?"

He said Israel is a normal place. "The people are not what the world perceives as Arab-killing, khaki-wearing pioneers. Israel is different people from different places working to foster the country's reputation as a leader in economics, science, technology. It's the only country where the people are threatened and imperilled, but continue to fight back – because it *is* a country, with a flag, independence and something to live for."

Held at Pier 21, the Halifax gateway for immigrants from 1921 to 1973, the large reception and dining room was festively decorated, and tributes to Israel's success were depicted on a large screen.

After speakers from the Jewish National Fund and United Israel Appeal Federations Canada praised Israel's triumphs, Marcia Cantor, executive director of State of Israel Bonds for Ottawa and Atlantic Canada, implored the audience to try to destroy the negative image portrayed of Israel by the mainstream media.

Yet Pinkas cautioned that the increase in the Palestinian birthrate compared to that of Israelis should be cause for concern.

"Israel is faced with its greatest dilemma since [founding prime minister David] Ben-Gurion decided whether to develop the state. If Palestinians are granted the vote, by 2020, Israelis will be outnumbered," he said.

Thousands rally to celebrate in Montreal

BY JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Thousands gathered in downtown Montreal for a joyous mid-day celebration of the State of Israel's 60th anniversary last Thursday.

Place du Canada was filled with Israeli flags, big and small, waving in the gentle breeze, as a band played favourite Hebrew songs. An attempt was made to break the Guinness world record for the largest horah, and the assembled, estimated at 15,000 by the organizers, made a valiant effort, led by veteran Israeli folkdance teacher Peter Smolash.

More than 80 school buses brought participants in from the Montreal area, as well as from Kingston. Organized groups also came in from Ottawa and Sherbrooke.

In the midst of the spirited stepping were Public Security Minister Stockwell Day and Liberal leader Stéphane Dion, the two guest speakers, both of whom opened their greetings in Hebrew.

Day said that Israel is "a beacon of hope and light" in the Middle East and that his government will stand firmly with the state as "storm clouds gather on the horizon" once again.

He said there are those today who, as in 1948, want to destroy the dream that Jews held for 2,000 years of returning to Jerusalem.

"Israel stood firm in its belief in the promise of its own land, fought and won," he said, to cheers. "This time, when the music stops, we have to continue to stand together with Israel."

He denounced those who say Israel has no right to exist and any comparison between Zionism and apartheid.

Dion underlined Canada's historic friendship with Israel and praised the courage and tenacity of the Jewish people, who despite having been victims of the worst atrocities, continue to strongly uphold democratic values.

"There can be no peace without security, and peace is not the absence of war, it is the concord of the people… Israelis and Palestinians."

Dion said "the world needs Israel," and noted that eight Nobel prizes have been awarded to Israelis, and that others have made great achievements in fields from literature to solar energy development.

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The secret to contentment

It's better to want what you have than to have what you want.

I met a lovely woman from Israel, Amira Liwer, who was here with her husband, Dr. Yoram Liwer, the CEO of the Mynei Hyeshua Medical Center in Bnei Brak, a hospital whose philosophy is that "every minute of human life is valuable."

Life Coach Corner

Judy Siblin-Librach

Hearing about this hospital made a strong impression on me. But Mrs. Liwer made an equally strong impression on me. In her humility, kindness and quiet grace, she reminded me of my beloved late grandmother.

When I asked her to tell me more about the 48 qualities and traits that one needs in order to really understand, absorb and identify with the Torah, she kindly offered to help. From Israel, she sent me some books, accompanied by a beautiful letter. One of the books, *Visions of the Fathers* by Rabbi Abraham J. Twerski, a medical doctor, addresses those 48 qualities.

The 48 qualities are very similar to life- coaching values and ideas. The one that struck me the most was "being happy with one's lot." Again, this reminded me of my late grandmother and of how she was always happy with the simplest things in life. As long as her family was around her, she was always at peace and self-contented, and her riches were a houseful of plants and flowers, and lots of love in her home and her heart, and at her Shabbat table.

Being happy with one's lot in life – how can we achieve that?

According to Rabbi Twerski, "The more a person understands that his *neshamah* is Divine and that he can unite with God, the less he will be concerned with earthly needs. Being happy with one's lot leads to greater acquisition of Torah, which in turn increases the happiness with one's lot. The true Torah scholar experiences a positive self-reinforcing cycle."

Self-contentment also comes from being infinitely positive and having a positive outlook on life. Often a good attitude rubs off on those around us. Try being infinitely positive for just one week and notice what changes around you and inside of you. And when it comes to health and well-being, we have to begin by being at peace with ourselves, our choices and our "lot' in life.

I spoke to Rabbi Adina Lewittes, who had wonderful things to say about self-acceptance and contentment.

"Rav Soloveitchik taught something very important about this subject. He taught that holiness is found not in the answers or neatly fitting pieces of our lives, but rather in paradox – in the places where things don't always fit together," she says.

"The challenge of human existence is to build a life with all the often conflicting and dissonant pieces of who we are, and hold them all together in one indivisible whole… When we can embrace ourselves and others with all our rights and wrongs, our successes and failures, with all our contradictions and imperfections, we will have taken a step towards wholeness, towards *shlemut*, towards peaceful self-acceptance."

A close friend of mine, Ellen, says being happy with her lot in life is the motto she lives by.

"Everybody has a 'peckle,' as my grandmother used to say," Ellen notes. "There is no point in being jealous of someone and how much they have or possess, or what good luck they acquire, because everybody has a 'peckle,' or a burden, and you don't know what's going on in anybody else's life. So to be happy with your lot in life is to be happy with everything you've got. Someone is always going to have more than you," she says.

My friend derives satisfaction and happiness from the close relationships in her life, with her friends, her family and her husband. Simplicity, humility and modesty are characteristics of some of the most self-contented people I have ever known – all of whom are happy with their lot in life, whatever it may be.

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@ican.net

Mosaic festival returns June 1

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The second annual Jewish Mosaic Festival is set to run at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre on June 1.

The all-day event highlights multiculturalism within the Jewish community by showcasing cultural practices and artifacts of Judaica from around the world.

Highlights include children's programs, Judaica, fashion, food and music, as well as a display area representing different countries. Basketball players can also sign up in advance for a three-on-three tournament representing their country of origin.

One exhibition, Route to Your Roots, includes an "antique roadshow," in which Dorion Liebgott, curator of the Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum at Beth Tzedec Congregation, and Sharon Berlin, of Cartouche Art and Antique Consulting, will look at visitors' family treasures and photos.

In a photography exhibit titled Out of the Frame, teens document their experiences immigrating to Canada, and visitors have the chance to share their family history by adding photos, stories, recipes and responses to the exhibit.

Another exhibit, Makom: Seeking Sacred Space, looks at how sacred space is created, experienced, preserved and transformed over time. It features photos of former synagogues in Montreal by David Kaufman and a series by David Cowles on former synagogues in North Africa.

One room will be set aside for people who have adopted children from around the world to meet each other.

The day will culminate in a one-hour coffee house with entertainment, followed by a talk by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, director of Kolel, the Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning, and Susan Jackson, executive director of the Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage.

Among the countries being represented are Argentina, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic/Slovakia, Ethiopia, India, Iraq, Israel, Morocco, Peru, Poland, Romania, Russia, Tunisia, Turkey, Uruguay, Yemen, Algeria and Iran.

Joanna Sasson Morrison, co-ordinator of community development services at Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, and a festival committee member, said that a major part of the festival will be the sharing of stories. "The entire festival is from a personal point of view. We're bringing together segments of the community that often feel isolated."

Janet Klein Slavens, supervisor of adult services and special needs at the BJCC and also a festival committee member, said that the representatives of each country planned their own exhibit.

All daytime events are free, and the evening program is $10. To sign up for the basketball tournament and buy nighttime event tickets, call 416-636-1880 ext. 0

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Olmert probe focuses on his time as trade minister

By JONATHAN LIS
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JERUSALEM — The alleged illegal receipt by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of hundreds of thousands of dollars from American businessman and fundraiser Morris Talansky is currently being investigated by police.

The Israeli prime minister is accused of receiving bribes from Talansky when he served as mayor of Jerusalem and as minister of industry, trade and labour.

The probe is now focused on Olmert's tenure as industry and trade minister in the Sharon government – not on the mayoral election campaigns for which he said he had received funding from Talansky, sources involved in the probe told *Ha'aretz*.

However, *Ha'aretz* has learned that the debts of an organization that campaigned for Olmert's election as mayor of Jerusalem were covered out of funds received from Talansky.

Olmert said Friday that the investigation deals with donations to the 1999 and 2002 campaigns for the Jerusalem mayoralty and the Likud party primary.

The prime minister further said the funds were also intended to cover losses. He said he met Talansky 20 years ago and acknowledged receiving funds from him. Olmert added that they were campaign contributions he got when he twice ran for mayor of Jerusalem and that he never kept any money for himself or took bribes.

However, the sources said investigators were primarily gathering incriminating evidence about Olmert's activities circa 2005.

Last Thursday, Olmert said he will resign if he is indicted in a new criminal investigation. Olmert made the statement from his Jerusalem residence after an Israeli court lifted a gag order on the case at the request of police.

Ehud Olmert

In his statement, Olmert said he received campaign donations for his mayoral campaign and his bid to head the Likud party from Talansky of Woodmere, N.Y., who has been questioned by Israeli police. Olmert said the funds were raised legally for his campaigns.

It remains unclear what, if anything, Olmert did in return for the funds.

Israeli officials stressed that Talansky's questioning should not be construed as implying that an indictment will be served to Olmert. Talansky was asked to provide a preliminary statement because he happened to be in the country and it may be needed if an indictment is eventually served.

The police decided to ask for a lifting of the gag order on the Israeli media following a three-hour meeting of the investigating police team with Attorney General Menahem Mazuz and State Attorney Moshe Lador.

The gag order had lost its significance, police said, because of foreign media reports. The *New York Post* released Talansky's name on its website.

With files from JTA

Israel concerned over possibly upgraded rockets

Continued from page 1

For Israel, which suffered surprise setbacks in its offensive against Hezbollah two years ago, it dawned that the radical Shiite movement may be proving resilient enough to eventually seize control of Lebanon.

The Israeli defence establishment is particularly concerned about Hezbollah's relationship with Iran and the possibility that it is upgrading its rocket arsenal with Tehran's help.

Essentially that would mean Iran flanks Israel from the north and the south, where it already established a foothold by bankrolling the Gaza Strip's rejectionist Hamas rulers.

It's not just future border wars that Jerusalem fears, but also the prospect of Iran trying to fend off efforts to foil its nuclear program by ordering retaliatory attacks by Hezbollah and Hamas against Israel.

On Sunday, former Israel Defence Forces chief of staff Amnon Lipkin-Shahak said Hezbollah's persistent attempts to take over Lebanon could eventually benefit Israel in its struggle against the militant group.

"If an armed conflict erupts, it will be simpler to strike Lebanon when Hezbollah is the legitimate ruler," Shahak told the Army Radio.

For Siniora, the short-term solution to dealing with Hezbollah appears to be appeasement. Though the embattled prime minister said Saturday that Lebanon "will not fall to the putschists," he did, in fact, yield to the group's demands.

The recent violence erupted after the Siniora government vowed to dismantle a Hezbollah-run phone network and remove a surveillance camera planted by the militia at Beirut's airport. Hezbollah backed down only after the Lebanese army said it would refuse to implement Siniora's edicts, which had been billed as preserving the country's sovereignty.

Also on Sunday, Israel's deputy prime minister, Haim Ramon, told the cabinet that Lebanon must be seen as a "Hezbollah state," after the Shiite guerrilla group seized control over the western part of the Lebanese capital over the weekend.

"Lebanon has no government. It is a fiction, there is only Hezbollah," Ramon said during the weekly cabinet meeting. "Hezbollah is directly responsible for everything that happens [in Lebanon], and the organization completely controls the state."

Later in the cabinet meeting, minister Ami Ayalon called for an emergency meeting of the political-security cabinet to discuss the ongoing crisis in Lebanon and Gaza.

Ayalon said that "the critical situation in the north" and the impending lull in the fighting in Gaza require a special session.

Also during the meeting, the chief of military intelligence, Amos Yadlin, said Lebanon has been embroiled in a political crisis since former Lebanese president Emile Lahoud completed his term and stepped down last fall.

Referring to Lebanon's inability to appoint a new president since then, Yadlin said "there is a consensus regarding the identity of a president, and that is Lebanese army commander, Gen. Michel Suleiman, but the objective of the extreme camp goes far beyond the selection of a president. They want to restore the balance of power in Lebanon to what it was before the anti-Syrian revolution."

According to Yadlin, "in the beginning, Hezbollah tried to do it in democratic ways, and later via non-violent demonstrations, and they failed, and that is why they advanced to a move involving a military force."

Minister of Religious Services Yitzhak Cohen said that "Israel must immediately ask the [United Nations] Security Council to hold renewed discussions over resolution 1701."

He was referring to the resolution that ended the 34-day conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006, maintaining a fragile ceasefire.

According to Cohen, "the Lebanese army proved to be a doormat, stepped on by Hezbollah."

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Israel is following the violence in Lebanon closely, but will refrain from intervening.

Deputy Defence Minister Matan Vilnai told Army Radio Sunday that Israel is prepared for the possibility that the situation in Lebanon will deteriorate into another civil war.

Vilnai also said the current sectarian fighting could end with a Hezbollah takeover of the government.

"We need to keep our eyes peeled and be especially sensitive regarding all that is happening there," Vilnai told Army Radio.

"We shouldn't get involved. We need to watch and should follow this very closely even when we are dealing with other fronts," he said, referring to continued fighting against the Iranian-backed Islamist group Hamas, which has controlled Gaza since last June.

"Israel is especially concerned about the situation in Lebanon in light of Hamas' control of Gaza," Vilnai said.

"Hamas and Hezbollah, as Iranian proxies, are mutually dependent," he said.

Cabinet minister Meir Sheetrit said Israel should not yet take any action, but warned that things could change if Hezbollah takes over Lebanon.

"I think it's very dangerous, the [possible] situation in which Iran is in fact sitting on our border, and controlling Lebanon," Sheetrit said. "It's really dangerous in the long term because now its plain to everyone that… Hezbollah is just the long arm of Iran, and that's the way we should relate to it."

For the time being, Jerusalem has decided not to issue any official comment on the confrontations between Hezbollah and the Lebanese government. But various officials have expressed concern over the escalation and the possible implications for Israel's northern border.

Dan Gillerman, Israel's ambassador to the United Nations, voiced hope that the United States and France – Lebanon's former colonial ruler – might be able to find a diplomatic solution.

Such pressure on Iran and Syria might bring about "some sort of accord, some sort of calm," he told Israel Radio.

"There aren't many options. To say that I'm optimistic would be an exaggeration."

With files from JTA

ON CHEMO?

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Think-tank launches Israel @ 60 ad contest

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Would-be Spielbergs, Kubricks and Coens take note: your directorial skills are being requested to help promote and defend Israel on this, its 60th anniversary.

The Israel Project – a Washington-based, non-profit think-tank dedicated to advocating for the Jewish state – is running a contest that will reward novice directors, writers and artists with $20,000 in prize money for those who display "a passion for showing the real Israel."

The Israel @ 60 contest was conceived by Israel Project staff to "combat the increasing exploitation of the Internet by terrorist groups and others, seeking to celebrate the killing of innocents… and reclaim the Internet as a safe space" to demonstrate the peaceful and democratic nature of Israel, said Israel Project president Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi.

Israel Project president Jennifer Laszlo Mizrahi

The contest, open to U.S., Canadian and international contestants over 16, is divided into three submission categories: a 30-second TV advertisement, a 30-second to seven-minute video and an 8- by 11-inch printable flyer.

Submissions in English, Spanish, German, French, Arabic and Russian will be accepted.

And the winner of the English TV ad will have his or her spot air on CNN during the U.S. Democratic and Republican national conventions later this year.

The contest opened in March and submissions are being accepted until June 30. Winners will be announced July 31 after judging by project staff.

Video entries are being posted to a YouTube site (www.youtube.com/group/ israel60) set up by the project where fans will be asked to submit votes on their favourites. The votes will be used to help the judges find a winner.

As of last week, the YouTube site had just two video postings and only seven members.

"All major terrorist organizations… maintain modern websites where they boast, in a variety of languages, of their attacks on civilians. People should be able to surf the 'Net without hitting sites that glorify murder, recruit suicide attackers and promulgate anti-Israel propaganda," Laszlo Mizrahi said. "We hope that this contest will spark the creativity of the pro-Israel community around the world to put forward its enthusiasm and ideas."

For more information, visit www.theisraelproject.org/contest.

Commander of Exodus dies at 90

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — Yossi Harel, the commander of the legendary ship Exodus, died last month, on April 26, at the age of 90.

Harel, who sailed the azure waters of the Mediterranean four times on clandestine journeys between 1945 and 1948, brought a total of 24,000 Holocaust survivors to the shores of what would soon become the State of Israel.

Harel was remembered as a hero by his former comrades, the Jewish refugees he helped bring to Israel and the leaders of the country.

He was "modest, a brave fighter and a hero who did not seek acts of heroism," said Shaul Biber, a fellow former fighter in the Palmach, Israel's commando strike force.

When he secretly set sail from France on the Exodus, a rickety former Chesapeake Bay steamer originally called the President Warwick, Harel could not have known that the voyage would become legendary.

The boat left on July 11, 1947, with 4,553 Jewish refugees on board and headed toward Palestine until it was intercepted by British navy vessels. The British commanders ordered that the refugees not be allowed into Palestine, then under British control, and be sent back to Europe.

Yossi Harel, commander of the Exodus, brought 24,000 Holocaust survivors to Israel between 1945 and 1948.

But the defiant Harel and his skipper planned a daring escape from under the nose of the British destroyer that was escorting them. They shut off the ship's lights in the dead of night and swiftly changed the ship's course, heading for Palestine.

The British intercepted the Exodus, hitting the ship's bow and attempting to board the boat. Passengers tried to repel the British forces by hurling potatoes and canned goods at them. A British soldier and three Jews were killed in the clashes, including an American volunteer sailor from San Francisco, before Harel ordered his passengers to surrender.

The refugees were taken to Haifa and put on ships headed back to Europe.

Among those who witnessed the dramatic scene of the refugees disembarking from the Exodus in Haifa only to be loaded onto three other ships headed back for the continent were members of the United Nations Special Committee on Palestine.

The officials said later that seeing the unfortunate journey of those refugees up close spurred them to push for a resolution to the question of Palestine and the Jews who wanted to make it their home.

For its role in galvanizing world opinion in favour of a Jewish state, the Exodus became known as the ship that helped launch the Jewish state.

The dimensions of its story, including the return of the refugees to Europe and their eventual landing in Germany, was covered widely by the international media. The story was mythologized in the 1958 novel *Exodus*, by Leon Uris, as well as a hit film starring Paul Newman in a loose portrayal of Harel.

For Jews and non-Jews, the book and film painted a romantic, heroic picture of the Zionist cause, doing wonders for the young state's image.

Years later, in the Soviet Union, illegal copies of the book were circulated among young Jews, turning them into avid Zionists. Among them were the leaders of the movement to free Soviet Jews and allow their immigration to Israel.

Harel, who was 28 when he was the Exodus commander, went on to a career in the Israeli army's intelligence corps in the early years of the state. He later went into business and reportedly also worked for the Mossad.

During a visit to Los Angeles in 1948, he met an American woman who would become his wife.

"I saw a man in uniform facing me, impressive and handsome, and I fell in love with him immediately," Julie Harel was quoted this week by the Israeli daily *Ma'ariv*. "We were married and since then we were never apart. It's hard for me to imagine life without him.

"His life," she said, "was interwoven with the history of the State of Israel."

Israel getting charged up over electric cars

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — In a land of high gas prices and no oil resources, Israel is positioning itself to lead the world into the age of the electric car.

With $200 million in funding from private investors and enthusiastic support from the Israeli government, a young Israeli high-tech multimillionaire, Shai Agassi, is laying the groundwork for Israel to become the first test case for the gasoline-free electric car.

His company is planning to establish a network of battery-recharging areas across Israel by 2011. Renault-Nissan will begin introducing electric cars to the Israeli market as soon as next year.

"What we are doing is something that should have happened already," said Dafna Agassi, the marketing director of the Israel office of Shai Agassi's Project Better Place, which is based in California.

"The consumer pays for gas, and the prices are going up every day. The solution is here – it's the electric car."

Given Israel's small size, dearth of oil resources and location in an oil-rich yet hostile neighbourhood, the Jewish state is an ideal testing ground for the electric auto.

Eager to reduce the country's dependence on gasoline and reduce car-generated pollution, the Israeli government already has pledged to offer significant tax incentives for buyers of electronic cars. If successful, the electric car venture could make Israel the world's leader in the industry.

That's precisely what Agassi and the Israeli government want.

"Think about what happened with Finland and Nokia – it sprung an entire industry," Dafna Agassi said of the mobile phone phenomenon. "We are starting the field here. Imagine bringing this to other countries and the potential impact is huge."

The cars will run on lithium-iron batteries, provided by Project Better Place, that should last for about 124 miles before needing to be recharged. This should suit the typical Israeli driver, who on average drives fewer than 45 miles a day. For longer trips, battery swap stations will serve as a safety net, the company said.

"Environmentally, I thought it's the best idea I've ever heard of, and secondly, it made a lot of financial sense," said Idan Ofer, a leading Israeli businessman and the project's main investor.

Ofer spoke to JTA by phone from his SUV, which he said he plans to trade in for an electric car next year.

By "deploying faster than any other country on the planet," Israel will map out and discover the best ways to implement the electric-car system, he said. Project Better Place can then take that know-how to other countries and traffic-clogged cities.

Ofer said he plans to bring the idea to China, where he has shares in a local car company.

Renault-Nissan will be the first to bring its electric cars to Israel, but the market soon will open to other companies.

"Zero emission, zero noise," Renault-Nissan Chief Executive Carlos Ghosn said when he was in Jerusalem last January to inaugurate the project. "It will be the most environmentally friendly mass-produced car on the market."

Although electric cars are expected to reduce emissions and make Israeli cities quieter, they will still use fossil fuels. For the time being, the power stations that supply energy to the recharging points will run mostly on coal and oil.

"As I understand it, it has no relation to alternative energy," said Micha Asscher, a professor of physical chemistry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. "It's a nice idea that our cars will gradually be driven by electric power – for the quiet and less pollution in the cities – but it is not alternative energy."

By contrast, in Denmark – which signed on to the project after Israel – power stations are fuelled at least in part by wind power.

According to Ofer, whose family holdings include oil refineries, Israel is making a gradual transition to more environmentally friendly sources of energy for its power stations, including the country's most plentiful resource – solar power.

Conversion controversy rears head in Israel

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A decision by a haredi rabbinic appeal court in Israel has called into question the legitimacy of thousands of conversions by a respected Israeli halachic authority and prompted a heated and strongly worded rebuke from an Orthodox rabbis' group.

At the same time, two rabbis associated with the Toronto Vaad Harabonim (Orthodox rabbinical council) say the Israeli decision will likely have no impact on conversions approved by the council's beit din (rabbinical court).

In Montreal, meanwhile, the Israeli decision received the full support of the Orthodox Jewish Community Council, whose spokesperson, Rabbi Saul Emanuel, said "we will honour and respect this judgement."

The case in question, addressed by Rabbi Martin Lockshin in this week's *CJN* Perspectives essay, concerns an Ashdod man who claimed he need not divorce or grant a settlement to his wife because her conversion 15 years before by Rabbi Chaim Druckman was flawed and insincere.

The local rabbinic court agreed and annulled the marriage, ruling his wife was still a gentile, as were their three children. That decision was upheld on appeal by Rabbi Avraham Sherman, whose ruling brought into question all conversions by Rabbi Druckman and the Conversion Authority.

The Authority was established under former prime minister Ariel Sharon to manage a huge backlog of cases prompted by the immigration of thousands of Russian gentiles. Rabbi Lockshin said some people might see the case as one that illustrates the decline of modern Orthodoxy and its replacement by haredi Judaism.

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks, president of the Toronto Vaad Harabonim, took a narrower approach. He said the Israeli ruling appears to be limited to the facts of the case and to conversions performed by Rabbi Druckman and his state-sanctioned Conversion Authority.

Rabbi Moshe Stern, a long-standing member of the Toronto beit din, said conversions performed by Toronto's Orthodox rabbinic court have never been challenged by the rabbinate in Israel or by other religious authorities. However, Rabbi Stern said he was "saddened" by a controversy that is pitting an Orthodox court against a highly respected rabbi.

"Rabbi Druckman is an honorable, Orthodox, well-respected, well-known Torah scholar and teacher who heads a well-known yeshivah," he said. "Knowing Rabbi Druckman, what he stands for, his commitment to Israel and the Torah, I personally would not reject a conversion he was part of."

In New York, the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA), which speaks for 1,000 Orthodox rabbis in North America and Israel, issued a blistering news release calling the Israeli court's decision "entirely beyond the pale of acceptable halachic practice."

The ruling by the Bet Din Elyon and its language and tone "violate numerous Torah laws regarding converts and their families, create a massive desecration of God's name, insult outstanding rabbinic leaders and halachic scholars in Israel and are a reprehensible cause of widespread conflict and animosity within the Jewish people and beyond. The RCA is appalled that such a ruling has been issued by that court," the news release stated.

The RCA called on Israel's chief rabbis "to reaffirm their support of the Conversion Authority and its leadership in clear and unambiguous terms at the earliest possible time. Until that will happen, each passing day will cause reprehensible anguish to halachic converts, irreparable harm to the fabric of the Jewish people and a considerable debasement of the good name of Torah, Halachah and tradition."

In his analysis, Rabbi Lockshin sees a political dimension to the halachic disputes: "State rabbinic courts are increasingly run by rabbis who are inimical to the values of modernity and unconcerned about the issues of Israeli society at large," he asserts.

He suggests there is no halachic precedent for retroactively annulling conversion and doing so "is a bludgeon being used for political ends."

Rabbi Emanuel, executive director of the Jewish Community Council of Montreal (Vaad Ha'ir), said the Israeli decision "is in conformity with the legal scholars of Israel, and we will follow those rulings."

He said the Montreal rabbinic court would "question" any conversions by Rabbi Druckman "and based on the judgement that was given, they would not be looked at very favourably."

He noted, however, examining conversions carried out in Israel rarely occurs. More often, it is Montreal conversions that must past muster in Israel.

Rabbi Tradburks believes Rabbi Sherman acted with "honesty and integrity" in weighing all the facts before making the determination he did.

Rabbi Tradburks acknowledged that some might see the case as one in which "the haredi community is trying to disenfranchise the national religious community," and is doing so for political reasons.

"I may not like the decision… and some legal aspects of it can be disputed, but I'm uncomfortable in politicizing the case," he said. "I don't like the impugning of political motives.

"It is not a political effort by haredim to impugn the conversions of Orthodox strands of Judaism. It was strictly decided on the facts."

At the same time, he continued, "I feel bad that a great leader like Rabbi Druckman has been besmirched."

He said the rabbinic judge faced "a conundrum" – deciding the case on its own merits while putting to the side the implications the decision would have on other conversions.

"The immigration of hundreds of thousands of [non-Jewish] Russians has caused a real dilemma, for which I'm not sure there is a solution. If you do conversions with leniency, this is what is going to happen," he said.

Population tops 7 million

The population of Israel, which celebrated its 60th birthday last week, has reached almost 7.3 million, the statistics office announced. With 7.28 million inhabitants, Israel's population is nine times higher than when the Jewish state was founded in May 1948. Over the past year 156,400 babies were born, and 18,000 immigrants arrived, leading to a 1.8 per cent population increase. Some 5.5 million Israelis are Jews and 1.5 million are Arabs, while 53 per cent of the population lives in the Tel Aviv metropolitan area.

Rav Kook a key builder

Rabbi Avraham Issac Kook was most influential in building the State of Israel, a new poll says. The religious Zionist leader, who served as the first Ashkenazi chief rabbi before the Jewish state was even established, topped a survey that asked Israelis to rank Jewish leaders according to their contribution to the state. David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister, was second in the Ynet-Gesher Society poll, conducted for Israel's 60th birthday. The late Lubavitcher rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, and Zionism founder Theodor Herzl came third and fourth. The phone survey contacted thousands of adult, Jewish, Hebrew-speaking Israelis. No margin of error was provided.

Israelis die in Bolivia

Five Israeli hikers on a post-army trip died in a car crash in Bolivia. Two tourist jeeps collided late Thursday in Salar de Uyuni, a remote Bolivian salt flat, bursting into flames before their passengers could escape. Thirteen people were killed, including four young Israeli women who had been friends since childhood and were travelling together after their military service. Another Israeli, a young man who had U.S. citizenship, also died.

No three-way summit

There will be no U.S.-Israeli-Palestinian summit during U.S. President George W. Bush's Middle East tour. "This did not seem the time for a big high-level, three-way event with the president and the prime minister [Ehud Olmert] and [PA] President [Mahmoud] Abbas," Stephen Hadley, Bush's national security adviser, said in a briefing outlining Bush's visit. "It just doesn't feel right as the best way to advance the negotiations." Bush leaves May 13 for Israel where, he plans to join in 60th anniversary celebrations, including a tour of Masada and an address to the Knesset. In addition to Israel and Egypt, he will visit Saudi Arabia during his tour.

Reform shul gets funds

The Reform movement in Israel celebrated its first state-funded synagogue. The new synagogue, located in Modi'in, halfway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, was dedicated last week. It was given the name *Yozma*, meaning "initiative." It's also an acronym standing for "Contemporary Judaism, the nation's heritage." It's the first Reform shul in Israel to be established with government funding.

More Iranian invective

As Israel celebrated 60 years of independence, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called it a "stinking corpse" that's doomed to disappear. "Those who think they can revive the stinking corpse of the usurping and fake Israeli regime by throwing a birthday party are seriously mistaken," Ahmadinejad was quoted as saying by the official IRNA news agency.

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Such other business as may properly come before the Meeting

Barbara L. Farber, President

1948...They Were There

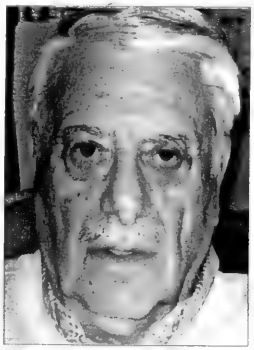
Fledgling nation fired his passion

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Joseph (Joe) Warner flipped through the laminated pages of his album, glancing at old black-and-white photographs of himself in various poses and moods. On the first page was a passport-size picture of Warner, looking solemn, dashing and young with a fuzzy mustache, a goatee and what appears to be a military uniform. On the next few pages were photographs of Warner and his gung-ho comrades-in-arms in an exotic, besieged country far from his familiar surroundings in Canada. The remaining photographs were eclectic, showing the barren coastline of of an underdeveloped land, a British Tegart fort pockmarked with holes in its whitewashed walls, artillery pieces sitting in a desert landscape, a fishing boat bobbing in the Mediterranean Sea, friends kibbitzing around and fetching, smiling women.

Those were the days.

The photographs, at once serious and jocular, remind Warner, 82, of a time and a place etched deeply into his consciousness. In 1948, shortly after Israel declared independence and thereby brought the wrath of the Arab world upon itself, Warner – a Jewish boy from Toronto who joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1943 after a stint as an apprentice pharmacist – volunteered to fight for the struggling Jewish state.



Joe Warner today
[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

One of 3,500 foreign volunteers, or machalniks, from 37 countries who went to Israel to take part in the War of Independence, Warner laid his life on the line for a fledgling nation that fired his passion and imagination. Trained as wireless air gunner in Canada, Warner was assigned to an anti-tank unit in support of an infantry formation, the Givati Brigade. A company clerk and medic, he saw action in southern and northern Israel before being sidelined by a minor knee wound.

The unit to which he was posted was commanded by a decorated American war veteran, Lester Gorn, and consisted of 82 men, 80 of whom hailed from the United States, Canada, Britain and South Africa and two of whom were English-speaking Sabras. Of the 80, seven were Canadians.

Warner, a graduate of Harbord Collegiate who had never belonged to a Zionist youth group, arrived in Israel in June 1948, about a month after its emergence as a sovereign state. He volunteered for Machal after listening to a radio broadcast announcing the United Nations partition of Palestine, then a British mandate. "If we lost the chance of statehood, it wouldn't be worth a nickel to be a Jew," he said.

The fourth of six children of Sam and Helen Warner, he divulged his plans to his parents following a Passover meal. His mother, though apprehensive, was supportive. His father, a tailor, urged him to reconsider in light of the fact that one of his sons, Murray, had already served in the Canadian armed forces in Europe for four years as the first Jewish officer in the Grenadier Guards.

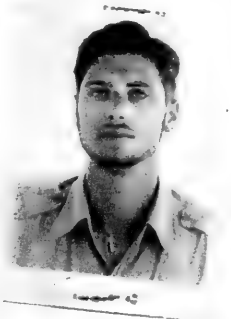
But Warner, who signed up for Machal at a secret recruiting centre, had made up his mind. He left Toronto at the end of April with a group of 17 volunteers aged 17 to 22, not knowing whether he was legally entitled to be a soldier in Israel. The first leg of their trip was financed by two local businessmen, D. Lou Harris and Sam Dunkelman, whose son, Ben, would distinguish himself as a commander in the1948 Arab-Israeli war.

"We were sent to New York City and instructed not to sit together in the train," he said. Later, they boarded a Polish ship bound for Naples, Italy. "We got off at Cannes, in France, and were taken to a displaced persons camp in Marseilles, where we posed as Holocaust survivors." Then they were dispatched to a deserted farm nearby. There they waited impatiently.

"One night, a truck suddenly appeared. We were transported to a village and then placed on a fishing boat that had been purchased in Newfoundland."

Since the creaky vessel was not totally seaworthy, it hugged the coast as it sailed toward Israel. "We had a lot of fun. Sometimes, we stopped for a swim in the sea."

They landed in Israel shortly before the first of two truces in the War of Independence went into effect on June 11. The boat dropped them off at an inhospitable stretch of sand dunes in what is now the wealthy seaside Tel Aviv suburb of Herzliya Pituach. "We arrived during the day," he recalled, saying that his first impression of Israel was that of a hot, dry land. "The welcoming committee gave us each an orange and a stale bun." They were driven to a base near Hadera, and en route, Warner saw a camel caravan. He applied for a position in the air force, but since Israel had no bombers his skills as a wireless air gunner were irrelevant.



Joe Warner as a young machalnik

Warner, who had been an air cadet in a Toronto squadron sponsored by the B'nai Brith, had trained to be a gunner in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta after having fallen short of his goal to be a pilot. When he finally finished his course in 1945, the war was winding down and his services were no longer required. Subsequently schooled in jungle warfare in case the war with Japan escalated, he spent the remaining months in the armed forces as a police officer.

Having been unable to join Israel's air force, which had the largest Machal presence, he joined its ragtag army. The first skirmishes in which he participated were near the coastal town of Atlit. "We cleaned up (Arab) villages sniping at convoys coming from Haifa." Moved southward, his unit, based near Rehovot, helped clear a road so that men and materiel could be funnelled to the Negev.

During the months of September and October, his unit stormed hostile Arab villages. "When the Arabs realized they were losing, they ran like hell." Warner's squad also took a former British fortress held by the Egyptian army and seized an air base at Hatzor held by the Egyptians.

The Egyptian troops he faced were poorly trained and their officers displayed little or no resolve. But the Sudanese soldiers in their ranks were tough and fearless. Initially armed with captured Egyptian anti-tank guns, Warner's unit later used German-made equipment bought from Czechoslovakia.

During a battle in late October, following the collapse of the second ceasefire, Warner was hit by shrapnel. His knee wound was tended to by doctors at a base in Sarafand. After three weeks, he was sent for further treatment at a Kupat Holim clinic in Tel Aviv. With the war almost over, he picked oranges and toured the country. When hostilities ceased in the winter of 1949, Warner hung around, figuring that fighting would resume. By then, he had fallen in love with Sarah Cohen, his wife-to-be. "She was the fourth Sarah Cohen I had met in Israel."

After returning to Toronto for surgery and to continue his studies, Warner went back to Israel to marry Cohen, whose father, a member of the Third Aliyah, was the proprietor of the Esther Cinema in Tel Aviv and of the biggest metal bed factory in the Middle East. He and Sarah, who had two sons, were married in 1951 and lived with her parents in what was then the northern edge of Tel Aviv.

Warner earned a living as a functionary in the Jewish Agency and as a book and baby carriage salesman. The couple settled in Toronto in 1956 when Pfizer, a pharmaceutical company, hired him. He went back to Israel five years later when Pfizer opened a branch there. He and Sarah – who died in 1998 – remained in Israel until the summer of 1973.

Warner, who has since remarried and now heads an organization called American & Canadian Veterans of Israel, looks back at his Machal years with great pride. "We did a big job," he said, sadly noting that 11 Canadian Machal volunteers were killed in battle. "I'm not a hero. I did a job that had to be done."

Hawkish in his views of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Warner is less than optimistic that it can be resolved peacefully.

"It's like the Hatfields and McCoys," he said. But he is certain that Israel will prevail and survive. "We won't let ourselves be pushed around anymore."

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

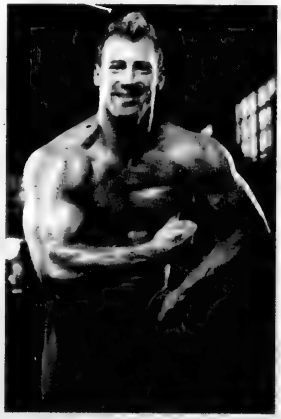
Victim of bullying becomes a body builder

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

At five-feet-nine and 210 pounds, it's easy to judge Rick Rotchild by his tanned, rock-solid exterior.

Preconceptions of vanity and self-obsession come to mind at first glance of his body-builder frame, but Rotchild is a benevolent man who focuses his efforts on improving the lives of troubled youth and giving back to the community.

According to Rotchild, body building is more about achieving personal goals rather than bulking up and it's a sport that has helped him make positive changes in his life.



Rick Rotchild balances his love for body building with his commitment to social work.

In his adolescent years, Rotchild was bullied at school and eventually turned into a bully himself. He channelled some of his aggression by working out in his high school weight room. As his physique developed so did his rebellious behaviour, but his arms were drawn when he found solace with his guidance counsellor.

"Anyone can hit, a baby can hit, but [he taught me] you should use your mouth and brain and use cognitive thinking," Rotchild says. "It's what makes us different than animals, and this really got into my head and it's when I fell in love with psychology."

'I'm doing this for me and no one else'

The 35-year-old social worker is now somewhat of a guidance counsellor himself, leading disgruntled children away from bullying.

Rotchild's experiences being a social outcast and a punching bag have helped him relate to the kids and to come up with efficient anger management tools.

At four years old, Rotchild's Israeli parents packed up their home in Canada and moved back to Israel, hoping for a prosperous life with family and loved ones on their native soil. But economic hardship put a strain on his family, and they returned to Toronto six years later. Rotchild barely spoke a word of English on his return.

"People asked me on the first day of school, if I was born in Canada why couldn't I speak English. They were ignorant kids and I was bullied and teased because I couldn't speak the language, and I experienced racism in school for being Jewish," he recalls.

'Once someone's getting bullied, the victim becomes the bully'

"I became an angry teen and once someone's getting bullied, the victim becomes the bully."

Rotchild encourages the children he counsels to gain self-discipline, which he has lots of. He's been dedicated to improving his physique for more than 20 years through a strict diet and workout regime. Initially, he started body building so that he could intimidate others; now, it is a mantra of healthy living for him and a way of connecting mind, body and spirit.

Rotchild, a former body builder champion in the FAME World Championship and PRO Showdown competitions, which are high-profile drug-free fitness events, says his career in body building is about achieving personal goals and creating higher ones to reach in the future.

"A lot of people, including my co-workers, who are psychologists and psychiatrists, look at me like I'm really into myself, but I really try to come across that there's more to me than body building," he says.

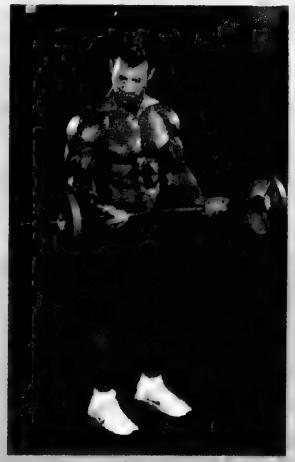
"Everyone's different and there are some people who are self-absorbed. Before, for me, it was about narcissism, but now it's not. It's about goals."

To keep in top condition, Rotchild hits the gym six days a week, twice a day, and focuses on weight lifting and cardio. He keeps to a strict, balanced diet of carbohydrates and proteins, and eats multiple meals a day.

"I always have a big lunch bag, and I get teased a lot by my co-workers. They say, 'He never leaves home without a picnic!' Whenever I open up my food containers, I have to warn people [about the smells] and I get ridiculed a bit, but I'm doing this for me and no one else."

A lot of pressure comes with body building and participating in fitness competitions. Rotchild says it puts a strain on the body and the mind. The pressure to beat personal goals echoes through his head like a constant drumbeat.

This year's FAME championship and showdown takes place at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre from June 13 to 15, but Rotchild won't be attending.



Jeff Kippel, co-president of FAME, says that because Rotchild's tests came back positive for steroid use, he won't be able to compete in this year's event.

"The guidelines [for FAME] are to be natural and healthy, which means not using substances," Kippel says.

But Rotchild say FAME's allegations are untrue and argues the organization is jumping to conclusions before listening to what he has to say.

"Sometime when there are all kinds of supplementations and vitamins that people take over the counter, [others] jump to conclusions. I was not taking steroids or illegal substances," he says.

Despite this challenge, Rotchild says he will persevere and overcome it in the same way he's prevailed over the obstacles he tackled in his youth. He's determined to clear his name and move on by entering other body-building competitions.

"Everything in life we have to work for. We have to work hard for what we want, and if things came easy we wouldn't appreciate it. I work very hard to get to where I am and I'm proud," Rotchild says.

Books & Authors

The Canadian student who was Sharon's and Olmert's speechwriter

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

"This is the story of a typical 20-something New Yorker who accidentally stumbled into the nerve centre of the Israeli government, and an account of all that I saw along the way before realizing that I really had no business being there."

This bracingly candid paragraph succinctly sums up Gregory Levey's comical memoir, *Shut Up, I'm Talking And Other Diplomacy Lessons I learned in the Israeli Government* (Free Press).

Gregory Levey

Levey, in fact a Torontonian, wrote speeches for Israel's United Nations mission in New York City and served as a speechwriter for two successive prime ministers, Ariel Sharon and Ehud Olmert. Currently on the faculty of Ryerson University in Toronto, he was an employee of the Israeli government for 2½ years, until Olmert succeeded his incapacitated predecessor in January 2006. Levey describes his brief career as "sometimes rocky" and "always very strange."

The book, by turns sardonic and funny, exposes ineptitude, and skewers foibles and inappropriate behaviour. In an author's note, he observes: "Israelis frequently deal with their difficult situation by laughing about the absurdity that surrounds them. There is no reason outsiders should not do the same. Sometimes it is in the comic details that best reflect the gravity of the larger picture"

A graduate of Bialik Hebrew Day School, he took his position during his second year of law school, when he badly needed a break from boredom and tedium. He originally considered joining the Israeli army, signing up online for a program designed for foreign volunteers. In the meantime, though, he applied for an internship at Israel's UN mission to help pass the time until his departure date.

An atheist who grew up in a somewhat observant family from South Africa, he soon learned that internships were not actually available. Much to his surprise, however, the deputy ambassador, Arye Mekel, now the foreign ministry's spokesman, hired him.

The tone of *Shut Up, I'm Talking* is established in the foreword. As a result of a bizarre series of events, Levey, then 25 and not even an Israeli citizen, found himself representing Israel at the UN assembly minutes before a vote was to be taken on a resolution. He neither knew what it was about nor how he should cast his ballot. If nothing else, the incident left an indelible impression: "It continually astounded me that things were done in such a haphazard fashion in the Israeli government."

Returning to this theme, he says, "Nothing was ever really planned out ahead of time, even when it was clear that other countries were working on their speeches weeks in advance."

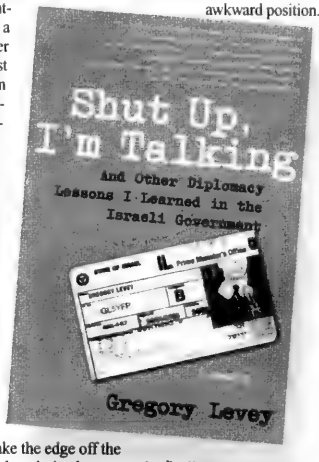
Levey's pen portraits of the rather eccentric staff at the Israeli mission may seem damning. At his first official meeting with Mekel, he expected a serious discussion of the situation in the Middle East and at the United Nations and an explanation of his responsibilities. What he got instead was "an incredibly dirty joke" from Mekel, who had a habit of contorting his legs into incredibly improbable positions.

Levey eventually discovered that a few of his colleagues resorted to comic relief to take the edge off the pressure at the United Nations. After awhile, he admits, he emulated them.

Thanks to Mekel, he acquired a knowledge of doublespeak. "When a diplomat says yes," he told Levey, "it means maybe. When a diplomat says maybe, it means no." And if a diplomat says no, he should not be a diplomat, period.

Usually, Levey was called upon to compose straightforward speeches on current events. But in one odd instance, he had to write a speech refuting an accusation that Israel's occupation of the territories was causing acne among Palestinian teenagers.

On at least one occasion, Levey was almost thrust into an unpalatable situation. When PLO leader Yasser Arafat died, the United Nations decided to honour him, placing Israel in an awkward position. Israel viewed Arafat as a terrorist and was inclined to boycott the event. On the other hand, Israel did not want to snub the UN. Levey was delegated to represent Israel, a task he resented. He was greatly relieved by Israel's decision not to send anyone.



In another case, Mekel informed a group of diplomats from Canada that Levey was a Canadian. "They both looked at me, confused and scrunching their brows." When Levey said he was not an Israeli and informed the Canadians that they represented him at the UN, they were utterly perplexed.

Levey pokes fun at Silvan Shalom, who was then Israeli foreign minister. Levey was told that he could not handle sentences more than six words long. Later, he learned that Shalom was challenged by the simplest monosyllabic word. When he finally met Shalom, he was wearing only his underwear. Shalom continued to wear this as he conferred with Israel's ambassador to the UN, Danny Gillerman, and the director general of Israel's foreign ministry, Ron Prosser.

Levey usually agreed with Israeli policy, but in his book he lays out dissenting views. He disagrees with Israel's murder of high-ranking Hamas leaders, saying that targeted assassinations "fan the flames of animosity." He also believes that the route of the security barrier should follow the old Green Line rather than jut into the West Bank.

Levey became a speechwriter for Sharon after one of his aides asked for a speech. He was shocked when Sharon delivered it nearly as it had been written. When Levey was subsequently offered a job in Sharon's office in Jerusalem, he considered rejecting it because his girlfriend and wife-to-be, a student, was not enthusiastic about the idea.

Having decided to accept what could be the chance of a lifetime, Levey told Gillerman he was leaving New York. Gillerman's response was couched in black humour: "You know, I can get you the name of a good psychiatrist."

Levey got little face time with Sharon, whom he refers to "an invincible force of nature." Levey's boss, Ra'anan Gissin, a loud, frantic individual partial to Abba, the Swedish pop band, once swore at a pedestrian while conducting an interview with CNN in his car. And Gissin conspicuously clipped his nails while hosting an American delegation.

Yet Gissin was hardly the strangest character Levey encountered. He assigns that dubious honour to a particularly disgusting fellow who was in charge of dispensing cellphones. He mocked the way Levey spoke and spat the shells of sunflower seeds directly into his face.

By that juncture, Levey knew that his days in Israel were numbered. In the aftermath of Sharon's massive stroke, Levey wrote short speeches for Olmert, but Olmert, a good English speaker, rarely used them. However, after giving Gissin notice that he was leaving, he was asked to write Olmert's speech for his first trip abroad. "Only a smattering of my first draft remained recognizable in the final version, but I was flattered to hear that some of my lines had stayed in because [Olmert] had liked them."

Shortly afterward, Levey and his girlfriend left Israel. When he arrived in the United States, he virtually let out a sigh. "When our plane touched down at JFK Airport, it felt like I had finally come home."

Despite the close connections he had forged with Israel, he had no intention of becoming an Israeli.

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Steel Toes – a strong film about racism

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

David Gow's strong feature film, *Steel Toes*, which opens in Toronto on May 16, will definitely not leave viewers indifferent.

The tough-minded story of a Montreal neo-Nazi skinhead who goes on trial for killing an East Indian immigrant, *Steel Toes* stars David Strathairn as Danny Dunkelman, the court-appointed Jewish lawyer who defends him, and Andrew Walker as Mike Downey, the despicable but intelligent racist.

Written and directed by Gow, it opens with a bang as Downey attacks a hapless Indian restaurant worker who has accidentally spilled a liquid substance on him.

The scene shifts to a detached house, where Dunkelman is readying himself for a new day, and then to a cell where Downey is being held.

"Do you know what kind of a name Dunkelman is?" the lawyer asks provocatively. "It's not Irish," Downey sarcastically retorts. Gow thus sets the mood of a contentious relationship.

Steel Toes – which refers to the black boots Downey used to pummel his victim to death – is a spare film with basically only two characters, Dunkelman and Downey. As a character study, it is corrosively good.

Polar opposites, they continually joust. "I don't like skinheads or neo-Nazis," Dunkelman declares. "I don't expect you to like me," replies Downey, Subsequently, Downey observes that Dunkelman does not "look" Jewish and refers disparagingly to ethnic Indians as "sand niggers."

Surprisingly, perhaps, Dunkelman agrees to represent him. He considers his case a challenge. Though pleased by his decision, Downey admits that, in "an ideal world," he would have Dunkelman "eliminated."

Andrew Walker and David Strathairn in *Steel Toes*

Warning Downey that he faces a long sentence if convicted, Dunkelman convinces him to construct his own defence. Downey, however, can hardly concentrate on the task at hand. Hemmed in by prison walls, he rants, raves and moans as he paces the floor furiously.

Meanwhile, back at the Dunkelman residence, a friend berates him for defending a neo-Nazi.

As the film builds to a climax and Dunkelman instructs his client on how best to conduct himself in court, he and Downey engage in further verbal fisticuffs. Dunkelman describes him as "white trash," while Downey brands Jews as the "spawn of Satan" and talks menacingly about the "Zionist occupation government."

Downey softens after listening to the pained oral deposition of his victim, who died after the beating. He now realizes the error of his ways, recants and disavows his unsavoury past. This begs the question whether Downey's remorse and volte face are genuine or merely a conversion of convenience?

Wisely, *Steel Toes*, distinguished by fine acting and razor sharp dialogue, leaves that conundrum to our imagination.

Inside Out movie/video festival features two Israeli films

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Inside Out, the Toronto Lesbian and Gay Film and Video Festival that runs from May 15 to 25, has two Israeli films on its program this year.

The Secrets, by Avi Nesher, largely takes place in a secluded women's seminary in Israel and touches on a sometimes erotic relationship between two students. It will be screened on May 18 at 9:45 p.m. at the Royal Ontario Museum.

Japan Japan, a film by Lior Shamriz scheduled for May 16 at 10 p.m. at Cinecycle, is about an isolated young man searching for life's meaning.

Nesher's two-hour film, beautifully composed and performed, is mainly set in a midrashah in Safed, high in the forested mountains of the Galilee.

Naomi Hess' dearly beloved mother has just died, yet even amid the grief, she comes under pressure from her father – a respected rabbi who heads a yeshiva in the Orthodox enclave of Bnei Brak – to settle down and marry Michael, his glum protege.Naomi (Ania Bokstein), a pretty young thing well schooled in Talmud and Kabbalah, marches to a different drummer. Turned off by Michael, a straight-laced, humourless man who views women through the prism of domestic servitude, she wants to postpone the wedding, study at a seminary, and hopefully, pursue her secret ambition of becoming a rabbi.

Having won her father's approval to continue her religious studies, she finds herself at the Knowledge and Truth Seminary, where she meets Michelle (Michal Shtamler), a feisty, spoiled, strong-willed person from France who was born in Israel.

Michelle leaves a poor impression on her peers, but she and Naomi form a close and abiding bond after they are assigned to visit and feed a dying middle-aged French visitor, Anouk Kessner (the French actress Fanny Ardant), who lives across from the midrashah.

As these events converge, Nesher draws a plausible portrait of the austere seminary, where personal animosities and a commitment to excellence in scholarship coexist uneasily.

In a film brimming with sub-plots, one of the most affecting ones concerns Michelle's growing romantic attraction to Yanki, an Orthodox klezmer clarinetist who works as a pharmacist by day. Yanki's boyish charm, modesty and down-to-earth qualities make him a far better catch than Michael, the stiff, sober scholar promised to Naomi.

Rather than marrying him, Naomi is drawn to Michelle. In a tender scene, they find themselves at a sleepover. Affectionate touching turns to passionate necking, and exchanges of kisses on the lips signify that they have passed into the uncharted waters of lesbianism.

Tapping into her formidable erudition, Naomi informs Michelle that there is no biblical injunction against sex between women. Naomi proclaims her desire to live in domestic bliss with Michelle, but much to her disappointment, Michelle is as straight as an arrow. "I want a normal family," she says, referring to her growing attachment to Yanki. Naomi retorts, "Am I not normal?"

The answer is obvious, at least in her rigorously Orthodox milieu.

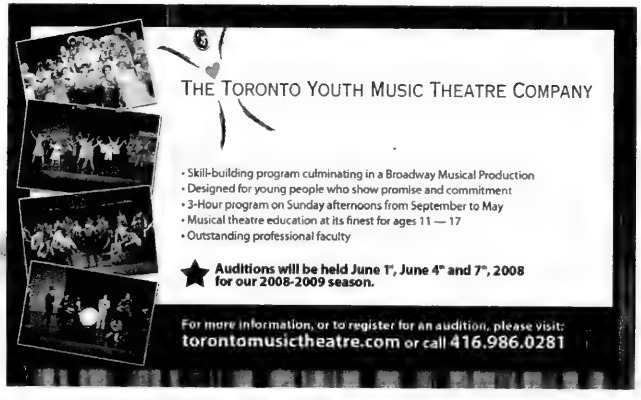
Nesher, a skillful director, handles these situations with sensitivity and finesse, and *The Secrets* morphs into a love story with a definite twist.

It stands head and shoulders above *Japan Japan*, a low-budget, sexually explicit movie about an aimless 19-year-old Israeli who fetishizes Japan.

Imri, who is gay, uses his passion for Japan as a kind of search engine for self-examination. But at the end of the day, he is confused. "I don't know what to do with my life," he laments in a searing moment of truth.

Unfortunately, a spirit of drift informs *Japan Japan*, which is improvisational, fragmentary, experimental, self-indulgent and, finally, weird.

More information on the Inside Out festival is available online at www. insideout.ca.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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

WINNIPEG AUTHOR ALLAN LEVINE LAUNCHES NEW MYSTERY SERIES SET IN NEW YORK CITY IN 1870s

Winnipeg historian-author **Allan Levine** has taken a year off his teaching job to work on various impressive literary projects. After writing a trilogy of books about his Winnipeg-based Jewish immigrant detective Sam Klein, he has penned the first in what he hopes will be a series of mystery books set in New York in 1871 and featuring a journalist as the protagonist. The title is *Evil of the Age: The Charles St. Clair Chronicles*.

"In the sizzling summer of 1871, New Yorkers talk about only two things: a murdered woman cruelly stuffed into a trunk and Tammany Hall's insidious corruption," reads a promotional blurb. "Journalist Charles St. Clair travels from the mansions of Fifth Avenue to the brothels of SoHo on the trail of both stories. But what he uncovers proves to be more shocking than even he ever imagined."

One hopes that, with New York as a backdrop instead of Winnipeg, the book will appeal to a much larger readership south of the border. It is being launched in Winnipeg on May 14; Levine also appears in Toronto at Bloody Words, the mystery book convention, June 5 to 8.

Meanwhile, he's preparing an introduction for a new edition of his award-winning non-fiction work *Fugitives of the Forest: The Heroic Story of Jewish Resistance and Survival During the Second World War*, which was first published a decade ago. Its reappearance is likely to coincide with the release of *Defiance*, a major motion picture from Paramount/Vintage about the Jewish partisans, including some in Toronto and Winnipeg.

Other projects on his desk include *Coming of Age: A History of the Jews of Manitoba*, a book commissioned by the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada and slated for publication next year. Additionally, he did extensive research, including interviews in Canada, Europe and Israel, for Peter C. Newman, who is writing a biography of **Izzy Asper**, expected out in the fall.

For a new Holocaust book project, he would like to interview survivors whose skills as tailors, electricians, metal workers, etc., helped them survive in ghetto factories or labour camps. Please contact him by e-mail, Alevine@sjr.mb.ca or by telephone, 204-831-9695. His website is www.allanlevinebooks.com.

* * *

Toronto Jewish Folk Choir: The 82nd annual spring concert of the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir features the lively work *Oifn Fidl (On the Fiddle)* by composer **Vladimir Heifetz**, based on a **Sholem Aleichem** short story about a boy's passion for the violin. The performance features **David Weiss** as baritone soloist, clarinettist **Alexander Fedorovsky**, and four teenage musicians – violinists **Lyrit Milgram** and **Eitan Postavsky**, cellist **Hannah Belvedere** and flautist **Chris James**.

Presented in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary, the concert offers a mélange of evocative Hebrew tunes as well as *Adio Querida*, a Sephardi song in Judeo-Spanish. The orchestration is by **Alexander Veprinsky**, who has arranged a Yiddish tango and some Yiddish favourites for the 30-voice choir. An operatic chorus and French folksong complete the program, which also features an instrumental ensemble, pianist **Lina Zemelman**, soprano **Miriam Eskin,** tenor **Artour Razgoev** and bass **Herman Rombouts**. $23, $19; children 12 and under, free. Leah Posluns Theatre, 4588 Bathurst St., Sunday, June 1, 2 p.m. e-mail tjfolkchoir@sympatico.ca, or phone 416-737-6101 or 416-636-0936

* * *

Benmergui at Winchevsky: Ralph Benmergui, the award-winning broadcast journalist, speaks about his recent deeply personal exploration of the Jewish state that resulted in the five-part documentary that aired last week on Vision TV. "This trip was something I've always dreamed of doing," he said. "I want people to see the real Israel, in all its complexity and beauty."

Free admission; light refreshments; co-sponsored by the United Jewish People's Order and Hashomer Hatzair. Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. (north of Lawrence, east off Bathurst). Thursday, May 15, 8 p.m. 416-789-5502, www.winchevskycentre.org

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **KlezFactor** performs songs from their new CD and other material, joined by Jennifer Burford on violin and singer Limore Twena. Rex Hotel, 194 Queen St. W. $5 cover. Monday, May 19, 9:30 p.m.

• **Harold Troper** speaks on "The Power of the Book – The Story Behind *None Is Too Many*." Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Tuesday, May 20, 7:30 p.m. Contact Randi Sokolsky, 416-924-6211, ext. 154; randis@mnjcc.org.

• Show One Entertainment presents the Moscow Virtuosi and conductor **Vladimir Spivakov** with striking young Russian dynamo **Olga Kern** making her Toronto debut as soloist in piano concertos by **Haydn** and **Shostakovich**. $45 to $90. Thanks to Alex and Simona Shnaider's generous contribution, a portion of the proceeds go to the Princess Margaret Hospital. Roy Thomson Hall, Thursday, May 22, 8 p.m. 416-872-4255, www.RoyThomson.com

• The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's upcoming production of **Wendy Wasserstein**'s *The Sisters Rosensweig* is certain to be wonderful, but it is not the Toronto première as billed. Teatron Jewish Theatre Company mounted a production of the Tony-nominated play at the Leah Posluns Theatre in 2005. HGJTC's production is at the St. Lawrence Centre June 12 to 21. For tickets, phone 416-366-7723.

* * *

Out of Town: The Ottawa Klezmer Band's 25th anniversary concert features Yiddish theatre songs, Holocaust material, sing-along medleys, instrumental pieces and classic Hebrew songs in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary. National Arts Centre, Fourth Stage, Ottawa. Saturday, May 24, 8 p.m.

Successful Toronto-born actor takes on producing

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

She has graced the screen in the cult classic movie *Napoleon Dynamite*. Received a Gemini award for her role in the immensely popular supernatural TV drama *The Collector*. Is venturing into a new, real-life role as a producer. And is a spokesperson for the venerable Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Yet in spite of a host of successes that would give most of us swelled egos, Ellen Dubin appreciates it all and definitely remembers who helped her along the way.

"I never forget who gave me my first jobs," the attractive, Toronto-born actor-producer says.

"I always love coming back and doing repeat business for those producers."

To that end, Dubin just wrapped up a movie role for *A Teacher's Crime*, a film that will air on the Lifetime Network. It was produced by the same producer who gave her the very first role she played in a movie.

She keeps busy, dividing her time between Toronto, Los Angeles and Vancouver.

Ellen Dubin

In addition to *A Teacher's Crime*, Dubin recently completed her first gig as a producer for a movie called *Lost and Found*, now in post-production. And she also lent her voice as a narrator for a series of sci-fi/fantasy books.

"The character I played spoke so low and gravelly, I had to drink warm water and honey in between recordings," she says.

Dubin is funny and vivacious, and quite comfortably reveals these gifts on the big and little screen. Although she often appears in dramas, she has a knack for injecting humour into her roles.

"Like life, nothing is black and white in acting – no character is entirely serious or funny," says Dubin, who has also appeared in such shows and films as *Lexx*, *Highlander: The Raven*, *Dead Zone* and *A Wrinkle in Time*.

In a drama, she finds the lighter moments, "so when the heavy dramatic section occurs, you can surprise the audience and take them in a different direction," she says.

It was, in fact, a ballet teacher who helped take Dubin in the direction of acting.

She was a shy kid, and her father, Carl, and her mother, Rose, who incidentally was a director of the Leah Posluns Theatre school, enrolled their daughter in a ballet class to help her come out of her shell.

The ballet teacher was tough as nails, but also had a keen eye for talent and after seeing Dubin showcase comedic antics on stage, suggested that acting was in the cards.

"She told me that I had the ability to move an audience to tears and also make them laugh," Dubin says.

So she began acting in school, did small-town theatre, summer stock and paid her dues.

"I always tried to keep studying and learning new things – singing, improv, comedy – [and then] taking the leap and moving to the United States to really learn the business of acting," she says.

"I never think of myself as well-known. I just want to work, and I think if you have that frame of mind, it is a better way to focus on a career in acting."

So what's next for the nearly six-foot-tall thespian?

The film she produced will be entered into festivals and is slated to air on Bravo.

Other films, including *Abducted*, *The Perfect Neighbour* and *The Wives He Forgot*, can be seen on the Movie Network. And when she isn't acting or producing, quality time with her husband, Jay Switzer, the former president of CHUM Television and a well-known media consultant, is cherished.

Wherever she is and whatever she is doing, you can be sure Dubin and the team working with her will be laughing together.

ORDER IN DISORDER: ***Montreal Gazette*** **journalist/author Josh Freed, seen here in his shockingly disorganized office, is a self-confessed mess. He claims, however, that his best work is born from the chaos. In the humorous, new, one-hour CTV documentary *My Messy Life* (May 17, 7 p.m), Freed defends his clutter and gets to the bottom of the battle between the chaotic and the neat in an attempt to prove that a messy desk does not equal a messy mind. In the film, Freed meets Canada's former justice minister Irwin Cotler, who explains that his busy desk reflects his busy mind – and why his passion for paper reflects his passion for justice. Then, Freed visits renowned Internet guru Esther Dyson, the notoriously messy cyber-superstar and author who argues that tidying up is an inefficient waste of time and that her mess is in fact the secret to her success. Freed, an award-winning author, playwright and journalist, has won two National Newspaper Awards as best Canadian columnist for his weekly column in the *Gazette* and has received the Stephen Leacock Memorial Medal for Humour.**

Travel Talk

BY BILL GLADSTONE

ISRAEL LOOKS AT BARRING CARS FROM JERUSALEM'S OLD CITY

Two Israeli government ministries are studying the pros and cons of turning the Old City of Jerusalem into a pedestrian zone, largely free of the vehicular traffic that often clogs its streets.

The directors of the tourism and transportation ministries established a joint committee in April to examine the roads system and limited parking facilities within the Old City. The move was prompted by the increasing number of tourists and visitors in the area, and tourist-related vehicles that are parked illegally, blocking traffic.

"The movement of private and public vehicles inside the Old City constitutes a serious nuisance… and significantly damages the touring experience," said Tourism Minister Shaul Tzemach.

The ministries are working with the municipality to find permanent solutions to the traffic chaos, which may require lower fees in surrounding parking lots, safe passenger drop-off lanes for tourists, the broadening of existing traffic routes and the addition of alternative routes into the Old City.

In a separate development, the tourism ministry recently approved a 90-million NIS (about $26 million) investment in nearly a dozen tourism projects in and around Jerusalem. The funds have been earmarked for building new hotel rooms, adding new hotel rooms to existing hotels and upgrading rooms. Funds have also been allocated for hotel expansion around the country.

According to Tzemach, Israel is preparing to welcome some five million tourists and business travellers to the country by 2010. "We must be prepared to offer an attractive tourism answer to these visitors [because]… there will be significant competition from Turkey, Egypt, Cyprus and other countries in the region," he said.

* * *

What's Doing at Yad Vashem: A new exhibition on how Holocaust survivors helped shape Israel's identity opened recently in Yad Vashem's Exhibitions Pavilion in commemoration of Israel's 60th anniversary. My Homeland: Holocaust Survivors in Israel is a multi-dimensional exhibition that illustrates how survivors rebuilt their lives in Israel, leaving their mark in every field – in building new towns, the army, industry, the economy, law and culture. Almost from the start, their influence went beyond the personal realm and affected the daily life of all Israelis.

* * *

At the Israel Museum: To mark the country's 60th anniversary, the Israel Museum in Jerusalem offers an exhibition of contemporary Israeli art of the past 10 years. Real Time: Art in Israel, 1998-2008 explores the trajectory of this dynamic decade through the work of 40 young Israeli artists, many of whom have garnered international acclaim. They include Guy Ben Ner, Sigalit Landau, Adi Nes and Yehudit Sasportas. The works encompass both traditional media and new technologies, paralleling Israel's own evolution. On view until Aug. 30.

* * *

Nemirovsky Exhibit Planned: As Irène Némirovsky's remarkable books have surfaced in recent years, her story has become well known – that of a remarkable writer who was driven to create, even as her world was being destroyed around her. Her life, work and legacy are the subject of a new exhibition, coming to the Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust, in Lower Manhattan. Woman of Letters: Irène Némirovsky and Suite Française is slated to open Sept. 24.

* * *

San Francisco Jewish Museum: A new Jewish museum designed by architect Daniel Libeskind opens June 8 in San Francisco. A "non-collecting museum," the new Contemporary Jewish Museum opens with three inaugural exhibitions: two travelling shows – the "John Zorn Aleph-Bet Project" and "From The New Yorker to Shrek: The Art of William Steig" – and "In the Beginning: Artists Respond to Genesis," which was curated in-house.

* * *

Travel Briefs

• Kolel's Israel Summer Soul is a new educational tour led by Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, and set to travel Aug. 17 to 26. The tour hits all the summer highlights of sites, restaurants, outdoor beauty and experiences in Israel. Geared for couples, singles or families ages 16 and up. For details, please telephone 416-636-1880, ext. 472, or e-mail michelle@ peerlesstravel.com.

• Two worthy art exhibitions are on view at the Jewish Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave. in Manhattan. Warhol's Jews: Ten Portraits Reconsidered is on view until Aug. 3, and Action/Abstraction: Pollock, de Kooning and American Art, 1940-1976 runs until Sept. 21. 212-423-3271.

• Opera Romana, the Vatican's official travel agency, has begun flying six weekly charter flights from Italy to Israel. The flights, which depart from Naples, Sicily, Bergamo and Brescia, have added tens of thousands of seats to existing capacity, helping to meet the greatly increased levels of Catholic tourism from Italy.

• The incredible history and power of the ancient Greek empire comes to the Canadian Museum of Civilization in the Ottawa area on May 30 with the opening of The Greeks, an exhibition that originated with the Benaki Museum in Athens. More than 180 artifacts – sculptures, ceramics, jewelry, textiles, paintings, metalwork, religious icons, toys, figurines, lamps, wooden chests – illuminate the diversity of Greek art, culture and society. On view until Sept. 28.

• Dr Nick Maes, a classics scholar who currently teaches history at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and at the University of Waterloo, and whose novel *Dead Man's Float* was published in 2007, is escorting a Jewish heritage tour to Italy this summer. The Victours Italy Jewish Heritage Tour features a Shabbos in Florence and accommodation in four-star hotels. Travel dates are Aug. 17 to 28. Details at the website www.victours.ca

• Classical Pursuits, a Toronto-based literary travel organization, offers Toronto Pursuits, a week (July 13 to 18) celebrating Creativity in Later Life, focusing on Beethoven, Shakespeare, Rembrandt, Dostoyevsky and other artists, as well as walks, group dinners and an optional trip to Stratford. Its Jewish Montreal program features a trip to Montreal with discussions of works by Mordecai Richler, Leonard Cohen, A.M. Klein and Irving Layton, as well as visits to various old haunts, including the Jewish Public Library. Its website address is www.classicalpursuits.com .

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203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
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225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
246 VOLUNTEERS
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481 SEWING
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REAL ESTATE Section

5 HOUSES FOR SALE

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PRESTIGIOUS ST. ANDREWS AREA
$1,595,000. Yonge/York Mills. Spacious & beautiful Shane Baghai built 5 bdrm home with main flr office & family room, lower level spa. Lovely landscaped lot. L. Richman* Ext 241 C. Kalles* Ext 555

TRULY STUNNING CUSTOM HOME
Finest materials used thru-out, Jerusalem stone on mn, Hrdwd on 2nd. 5 Bdrms, custom kit w/ top of line appl. Too many upgrds to list. $1,277,000. Vicky Tal */Meir Gluzberg* ext 753

AVE RD & WILSON – JUST LISTED!
Fabulous custom 3300 sq ft stone & brick home. 4+ bdrms, 6 baths, family room & library. Sep in-law apt with walkout to fenced Yard. 40x115. $1,249,000. Michele Rosen* Ext 294

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18 RELMAR RD. - Spectacular Townhouse Condo overlooking the park, 2200 sq. feet of perfection. Marble, granite, hardwood, top-of the line 3-bedroom with a private elevator. Huge roof/treetop deck overlooking the park. Great access to shopping, subway, close to downtown in a secluded setting. **$1,299,000**

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BATHURST / HILLMOUNT — NEW LISTING
Detached 5 bedroom, 2 storey home on 50 x 140 ft. lot. Renovated kitchen & bath, double garage, close to synagogues, schools, subway ++. Ideal for live in now / build later. Double garage. **$799,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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Let's face it : "Unique" is an overworked word. This is one case where it is actually inadequate. This spectacular 5,877 sq. ft. 2 1/2 storey + fin. bsmt. mansion on a 50 x 215 ft. lot is truly a one-of-a kind private retreat in the city. 6 + 1 bedrooms, 5 + 1 baths,10 ft. ceilings on main floor, 9 ft. ceilings on 2nd floor. Gourmet "Cameo" Kosher kitchen, elevator, marble floors, marble & onyx fireplaces, state-of-the art electronics & designer upgrades throughout. For further details and a private viewing, call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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BATHURST / SULTANA — Don't miss this beauty!
Totally renovated & decorated charming 3 + 2 bdrm. bung. Brazilian cherrywood & slate flrs., 2 maple kit., sep. entry to exquisite apt., quality materials & finishes throughout, gorgeous landscaping, interlock driveway. **ONLY $599,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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Spacious, unsplashed 4,000 sq. ft. custom executive home, 5 + 1 bedrooms, 5 baths, hardwood floors on both levels, multi-tiered deck, huge rec. room. **ACT NOW!** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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BATHURST / SHELBORNE — NEW PRICE
Exquisite 4 + 1 bdrm, 4 baths, surrounded by luxury homes, custom total renovation & addition, designer finishes throughout, modern kit. w/granite counters. **$999,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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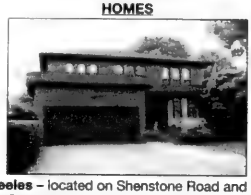

Bathurst/Steeles – located on Shenstone Road and backing onto park, elegant, 2 storey custom home, centre hall plan, 5 bedrooms, paneled study and family room, sunken living room, sauna, finished basement with complete apt, loads of extras, asking $750,000

Bathurst/Lawrence – Just Listed! Well maintained bungalow, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, finished basement, rear deck, large backyard, great value at $478,000

Bathurst/Lawrence – Great Starter Bungalow, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, updated kitchen and bathroom, updated windows, finished basement with potential income, rear deck, large lot, updated, shows well, asking $544,900

Bathurst/Shelborne – East Side, lovely building lot in great location, 50x117, Build your dream home! Available immediately, asking $769,900

CONDOS

Bathurst/Lawrence – Rare Offering, Penthouse unit at 3000 Bathurst, approx. 2400 s.f., 2 bedrooms plus family room, 4 bathrooms, 3 underground parking spots, locker, Shabbat Elevator, Refurbished lobby and hallways, close to shopping, asking $649,900

Bathurst/Clark – Great Value at the Promenade! 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, eat-in kitchen, facilities include outdoor pool and tennis courts, security, asking only $239,900

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BATHURST / LAWRENCE
LARGE AND SPACIOUS BUNGALOW with attached Garage and Family Room Addition on 69 x 165 ft lot!! 3 Bedrooms, 3 Bathrms, Updated Kitchen, Hardwood Floors. Separate entrance to a Finished Basement which includes a 2nd Kitchen. INGROUND POOL - Backyard feels like your own private oasis. $610,000.

ESSIE SHER

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3 bdrms, 3 baths, updated kitchen, all good size rms, finished basement, double drive gar, large lot.

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CUSTOM BUILT HOME - FAYWOOD/SHEPPARD $1,149,000
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1ST AD! BEAUTIFUL FAM HOME, NEAR WYCHWOOD PARK $659,000
3 Bdrm, 2 Bath Fab, Reno'd LR w/FP, Formal DR, Eat-in Kit, Open Concept, Rec Rm, Hrdwd Flrs, Grge. Marilyn Merrick* 416-488-2875

$459,000! FAYWOOD CLANTON PARK!
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POOL IS NOW OPEN! MISTY AREA! DENLOW SCHOOL!
Fab Exec Home! Approx. 7000 sf of Living Space 84 x 140' Lot, 2 Stry, Ent Family Rm + Library. Cheryl Sniderman* 416-488-2875

BUILDERS OWN LORNE ROSE DESIGN, AVE RD + LAWRENCE
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A MUST SEE IN HIGH DEMAND AREA
Custom kitchen, 9 ft. ceilings, hardwood floors, 4 bdrm + Nanny suite, great home for entertaining. Lahav Reznik* 905-881-7653

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CLARK/WESTMINSTER – NEW PRICE $589,900
Bright & Immaculate 5 Bdrm, 3400' Fin Low Lev w/Scarlett O'Hara Strcse, Hrdwd Flrs, Gr Mstr Retreat, Mn Flr Lndry. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

DETATCHED IN THORNHILL
4 bdrm/4bath, 2 kitchens, fin bsmnt w/separate ent, 9 ft. ceilings, hrdwd firs on main floor, neutral décor. N. Sarova* 905-881-7653

LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION!!!!
Detatched 3 bdrm/4 bath, large family room, new windows, Central Air, great street, deck. J. Engel* 905-881-7653

IMMACULATE ACORN TOWNHOUSE
Hrdwd flrs, glass backsplash, Miele dishwasher, mn flr. lndry, top of line appls, Just Move In & enjoy. Veronika Goldberg-Vajda* 905-881-7653

THORNILL WOODS END UNIT TOWNHOUSE
Aspen Ridge, Built-in Fin'd Lower Level, Hardwood, 9' Ceilings on Main Floor, feels like a Semi. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

BEAUTIFUL 7 YEARS OLD HOME ON 41 FT WIDE LOT
Large rooms, upgraded kitchen, family rm, oak stairs & parquet on both flrs, 9ft ceiling, entrance to grge. B. Abramov* 905-881-7653

WEST PROPERTIES

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CONDOMINIUM PROPERTIES

INCREDIBLE CONDO - FEELS LIKE 2 STRY HOME $2,250,000
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Fab 1700 sq. ft. 2 Bdrm, 2 Bath, 2 Parking Unit! Lots of Space for Entertaining! Move in! Cheryl Sniderman* 416-488-2875

253 MERTON STREET #319! YONGE S/DAVISVILLE!
$469,000! Amazing 2br, 2 bth S/E corner ste w/balcony+panoramic views! Parking+locker! Gorg'us! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

PRICE REDUCED TO SELL FOR QUICK SALE
Spectacular 2 bdrm, 2 bath penthouse condo w/9ft. clngs, hrdwd flrs & upgraded kitchen, steps to TTC. Lahav Reznik* 905-881-7653

1ST AD! BATHURST/SHEPPARD – 2BDRM+DEN $424,900
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AVENUE RD/LAWRENCE [SOLD] GANT GEM $289,000
1 Bdrm + Den, Gourmet Kit, Sunlite Lrge LR, Open Style, 9' Clngs, Near Shops, Rests + Transport. Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

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$274,900! Bay S/Bloor! Spectacular west facing 1+1br, 1bth w/panoramic city and lake views! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

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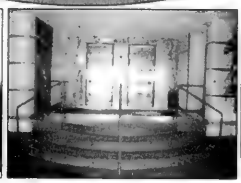

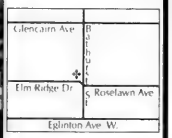

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July & or Aug ONLY Lrge. 5 bdr. lake-front vintage summer cottage close to Beaverton 1 hr. drive from Toronto. Bright open concept, pictures avail. E-mail: rentatmaplebeach@gmail.com

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LAKE SIMCOE - URGENT!
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LEISUREVILLE
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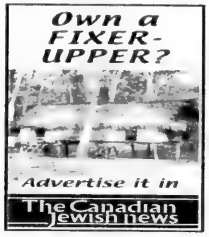

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North York youngster tops in Canadian Under-13 squash

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

He's the highest ranked squash player in Canada for kids under 13, but Jake Beck has a sort of ho-hum attitude to the sport he dominates.

To maintain his interest, he plays up, competing in tournaments against youngsters in the Under-15 grouping. But even with the added challenge, he sometimes feels he'd rather be doing something else.

"I was pretty unenthusiastic this year, but the years before I was enthusiastic," Beck, 12, said on the phone from his home in North York.

Other sports, particularly soccer, interest him more than squash these days, though during the squash season, which has pretty much wound up until September, he was able to maintain his concentration.

At the Canadian Junior Championship last month, he fell behind in the best-of-five final two games to nothing and trailed in the third, 7-3, before turning the match around. He won the third game 10-9 and then went on to dominate games four and five to win the title, 3-2.

"I usually beat him badly," Beck said of his championship match opponent.

So what happened in the final?

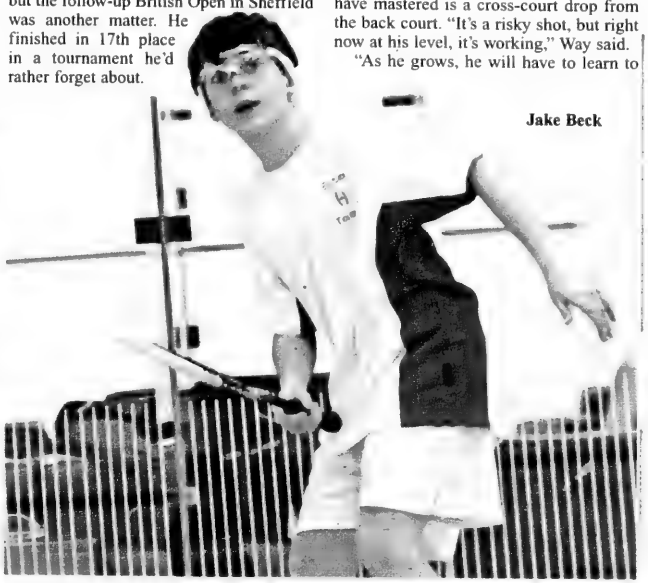
"I just woke up when I was down two. I underestimated him."

Playing close matches is a talent Beck seems to be cultivating. It's what his father, Harvey, calls "a parent heart-stopper."

In December, Jake advanced to the finals of the Canadian Junior Open and fell behind 2-0 in games to an opponent from Mexico. Game 5 went right down to the wire, but it was a match Jake couldn't pull out. He lost 9-7 in Game 5 and 3-2 overall.

A year before at the 2007 Canadian Junior Championship – Jake's first year in the age group – he lost in the final 3-2. Game 5 was decided in extra points, 10-9. For the drama value alone, Beck's games should be on TSN.

He had an easier time of it last December when he travelled to Edinburgh for the Scottish Junior Open for boys under 13. He won that tournament rather easily, but the follow-up British Open in Sheffield was another matter. He finished in 17th place in a tournament he'd rather forget about.



Jake Beck

"I could have done better," he said.

Beck has been playing recreational squash since he was six and competitively for the last three years. Harvey is a recreational player and older brother, Aaron, 14, is ranked third in Ontario in the under-15 category.

Jake calls himself a natural athlete who loves to compete. On the squash court, "I rely on speed and stamina, and on my hands for drop shots and fake shots."

One of his coaches, Mike Way, calls Jake "an independent spirit who marches to his own drumbeat.

"He's first of all a great little athlete, so he's fit and he's fast. Coupled with that, he's very determined. He's the most creative squash player, so he does things Jake's way. He doesn't always do things the coach's way."

One unorthodox shot Jake seems to have mastered is a cross-court drop from the back court. "It's a risky shot, but right now at his level, it's working," Way said.

"As he grows, he will have to learn to be a more disciplined player, but that creativity will serve him well. But he's going to have to make those choices wiser and make creativity work for him."

As the summer looms ahead, Jake is turning his attention to the other sports he enjoys. He's a midfielder and back up goalie for North York Cosmos rep team, and he's on his school's track and field and cross-country teams. Oh, and he's also played for the school's badminton and tennis teams.

Jake attends St. Andrews Junior High School as part of its program for high-performing athletes.

"I'm a really good natural athlete," he said. "I'm able to learn. I'm not a crazy-hard worker. It's mostly my natural athleticism."

Given that he trains six days a week during the squash season (September to April) and nine times a week before big tournaments, it looks like he's got a different definition of hard work than most.

With all that training and natural talent, his goal to compete in the Canada Games when he's 16 appears well within reach.

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Doing it all for love

Recently, I had lunch with a former colleague who had moved on from journalism into public relations.

She was tanned and relaxed, even though it was a Wednesday night. She was telling me about her upcoming vacation – her third this year.

"I'm telling you Sand," she said. "As soon as I quit journalism, I realized I was in for a lifestyle change."

It wasn't the first time I had contemplated abandoning my career choice. But each time, I decided to stick to what I love instead of opting for this "lifestyle" that everyone keeps talking about. But now I can't help but wonder if it's time to stop the romanticism and finally try some of that rationalism that always seems to escape me when it comes to matters of the heart.

Yes, heart. Because I truly believe we should be in love with our jobs, considering that our work is how and where we spend practically half of our lives.

But even when you're in love, sometimes you just can't help but look around and wonder what might have been, had you chosen a different path.

Take my friend Samantha, for example. She's the quintessential corporate type who relishes power suits, thrives on PowerPoint presentations and owns the corporate ladder. She's going to be a CEO one day, she says, and I have no doubt about it.

However, even she has started to express some second thoughts about her career path. She's got other loves, other passions, that she wants to – needs to – explore before settling down with just one.

For example, she's an accomplished and talented dancer. Should she pursue that dream while she's still young enough to do it?

When I was 25, I wrote about the frustrations of starting a career. I figured that by 27, I would have figured it all out. Mostly I have, but there are days when I wonder exactly what it is that I know for certain, and the answer is, "Not a damn thing."

I also thought this career backtracking was unique to those of us suffering from quarter-life crises, but lately I've come to realize that it's a struggle we all go through ever few years, no matter what business we're in.

I read somewhere that the average person changes careers about three times in their lifetime. I wonder how many of those changes take place while the person is in their twenties?

I once had a teacher who I greatly admired for having a wonderful job in the industry while raising two little ones at home.

"How do you do it?" I asked her one day.

She, too, used the analogy of love and said that once she had her children, it was easy to give up part of her first love for her real loves – her kids.

"But you never forget your first love," she said. "You just have to find a way to make it all work for you."

When it comes to a career, I guess it doesn't matter if you're contemplating giving it up for kids, or giving it up for an easier lifestyle.

All that matters is that you don't give it up for something that you'll always love less.

GREEN BEAN AND HAZELNUT SALAD

- 2 tbl hazelnuts
- 1-1/2 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/4 c finely chopped red onion
- 3/4 lb green beans, trimmed and halved diagonally
- 2-1/4 tsp grainy mustard
- 1/8 tsp sea salt
- 1 tblsp flaxseed oil
- 1 tsp hazelnut oil

Preheat oven to 325°F. Toast nuts in small baking pan 15-20 minutes (cut one open to test for doneness). Cool, then rub off any loose skins in a paper towel. Coarsely chop nuts.

Cook beans in pot of boiling salted water until just tender (4-6 min.). Rinse with cold water to stop cooking. Drain well.

In a bowl, whisk together mustard, vinegar, sea salt; whisk in olive, flaxseed, and hazelnut oils. Add beans, nuts, and onion and toss well. Season with salt and pepper.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

I am a mother of two boys and have seen what bullying can do, but I always thought it was something that kids eventually outgrow.

But recently I attended a simchah where I was seated at a table with a man who used threats, intimidation and manipulation to control everyone, from his wife and kids to the wait staff and other guests. He even bullied me out of my seat so he could have a better view of the dance floor. At first I thought he was just a jerk, but by the end of the evening, I realized that this guy is an adult bully.

My friend who made the simchah later informed me that she is friends with his wife and has often witnessed his inappropriate bullying of his own family. I was quiet for most of the night, but now I wish I would have spoken out. How do you handle an adult bully?

Obnoxious Bully

Dear Obnoxious Bully

There is no question that adult bullies exist, and they make people whose lives they touch miserable. A bully is someone who tries to gain control by making others feel angry or afraid. It is often a subconscious method used by people with emotional problems, such as low self esteem, anger and poor social skills. It makes them feel powerful and is really a tactic to mask their own insecurities.

How does one handle an adult bully? The same way you would handle a child bully. You stand up to them. You could start by ignoring their behaviour, but that's not always possible. In your case, you get to just walk away, but his wife, kids, business associates, friends, etc., aren't so lucky.

You need an equally strong personality to deal with a bully. You must stand your ground without provoking him. You need to address his remarks confidently and firmly without emotion. Do not let him upset you, or he has won his measure of control. If he can't bully you, he will change the subject or move on. If you remember that this is his problem, not yours, you will have more success at not letting his hurtful words penetrate you.

Chances are you won't change a bully's behaviour, but you can change how he treats you. If he can't bully you, he will back down or abandon the relationship. You can handle the situation with a controlled reaction.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN. *email: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

An ode to accountants

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Accountants get a lot of bad press, and they're often the butt of jokes, such as this anonymous zinger: "An accountant is a man who watches the battle from the safety of the hills and then comes down to bayonet the wounded."

Accounting season has just wrapped up, and instead of ridiculing them, I think we should pay homage to the hard-working men and women whom we visit at least once a year to complete our tax returns, as well as share some of our most intimate and personal information.

Let me tell you a little bit about my experiences with my accountants.

David Rosenzweig, my brother-in-law (may he rest in peace) and original accountant, was a fine man and an excellent professional.

Once a year, I would head over to David's office, generally on the Sunday morning before the April 30 filing deadline, feeling groggy and irritated about the task at hand. His office was abuzz with activity, and he would meet me in the reception area with a smile and tired, but joyful, eyes.

David would shift his coffee mug from one hand to the other and shake my hand, and then we would then make the short jaunt to his office, past the coffee room and some very tired-looking accountants.

There I was greeted by stacks of files, returns being prepared to mail off to Ottawa.

I remember wondering about the financial situation of his other clients. How much were they worth? Who was experiencing great business success and who was suffering (because somebody always was)? Did I have as many charitable receipts as the other files he was working on? Did I choose the correct profession? The other files seemed so much thicker than mine.

Throughout our 60 minutes together, as David unfolded and collated my T4s and gas receipts, I always felt as though I was David's only client, and I sensed that he, too, looked forward to our time together. From stories I heard later, most of his clients felt the same way.

It was understood that while we were meeting, everyone else was to stay out of the office. After all, our conversation was very private. It had to do with money, and I'm Canadian. Nobody needs to know.

And while we talked dollars and cents, David would always ask, in a most sincere way, how things were going in my life.

He would tell me how he enjoyed the *Marty & Avrum* (my radio show) shiva food review he had heard that morning on the way to work. He would laugh heartily at the silliness of it. He would then respectfully probe a little deeper, asking poignant questions about familial issues and the ways to solve them.

This was our – David's and mine – annual one-hour meeting, when we would fulfil the obligations set out by the Canada Revenue Agency.

I looked forward to it. It was enjoyable and unique, and, in those days, I generally got money back.

I miss my original accountant and our annual hour together. I am fortunate, however, because today my accountant is Stephen Altbaum, a very decent and talented man, with a warm soul and deep sense of concern for the Jewish people. He also knows his way around numbers.

David Letterman once said, "There's no business like show business, but there are several businesses like accounting." That may be, but there aren't a lot of people around like the women and men we spend some of our most private moments with, discussing our financial lives and the secret stuff about our existence that few are privy to.

God bless our accountants. What would a good battle be without them?

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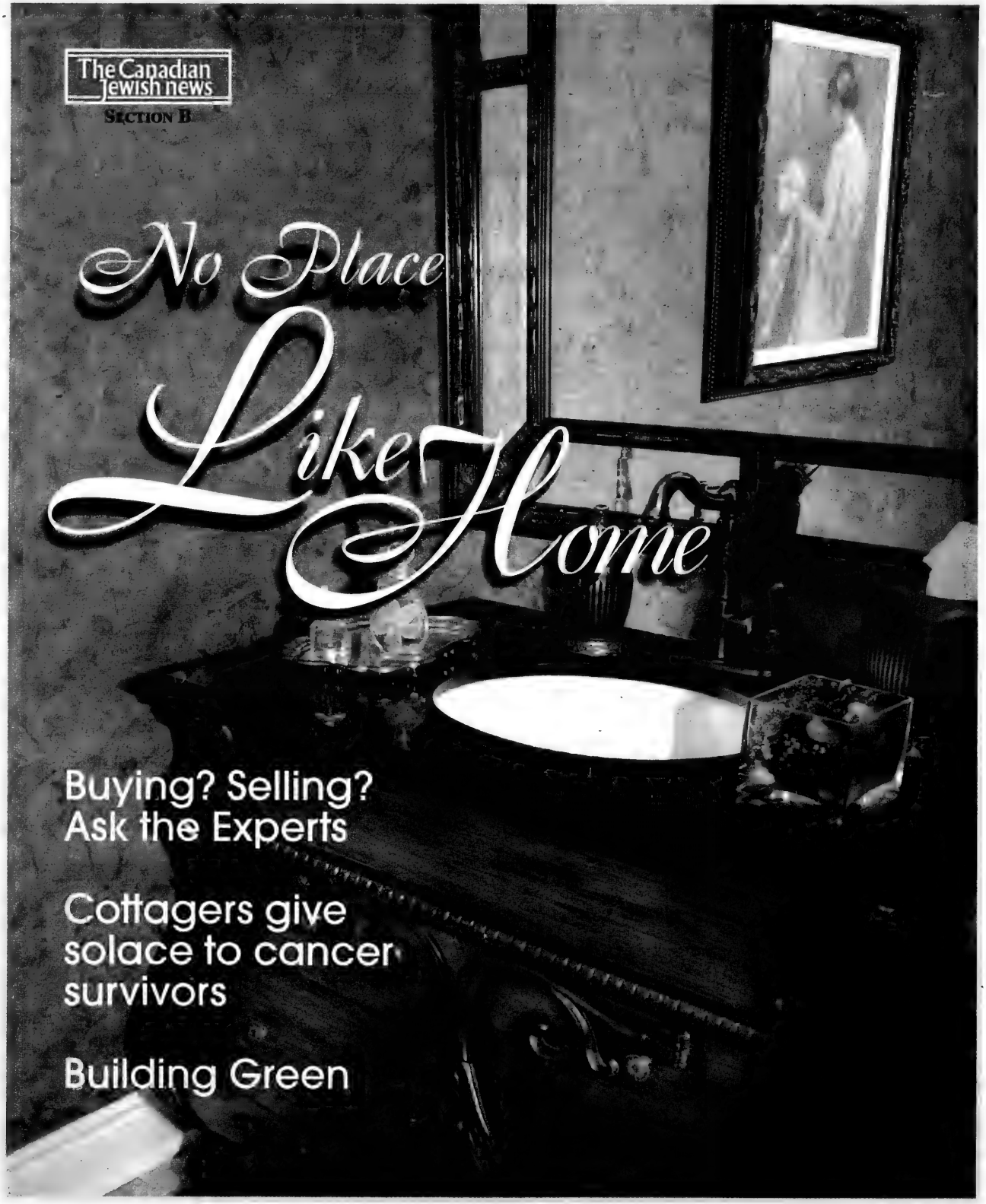

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What you've always wanted to ask home buying professionals

By MICHAEL ADAM SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Buying a home is perhaps the biggest and most important purchase you will ever make. It requires a lot of planning, research and smart investment decisions. Here are some pointers from home buying industry professionals.

CJN: *How does Toronto's market for carriage trade homes compare with other high-end markets in large cities?*

Elise Kalles of Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd.: When you compare Toronto to New York, London and Hong Kong, for example, Toronto's high-end market... is very favourable. Toronto has high-end exclusive homes that are single-family detached homes, very close to the downtown core. This is unique... None of the other cities boast homes that are detached, where you have room for tennis courts, pools etc., and you can be downtown in less than 10 minutes.

CJN: *Discuss the people who are buying these homes.*

Elise Kalles of Harvey Kalles Real Estate Ltd: The people who are buying these luxury homes are Canadians who range in age from 40 to70. Also, foreign investors are buying many condominium units as investments. [In fact], Toronto sold more condominium units in 2007 than Manhattan

CJN: *What are the up and coming areas in cottage country?*

Bernice Whelan of Bernice Whelan Realty: The areas that are gaining popularity are in and around Barrie and Keswick. Both sides of the lake have prime locations for cottages.

CJN: *Is the trend for people to buy cottages or rent?*

Bernice Whelan of Bernice Whelan Realty: Definitely buying. People are buying cottages both as an investment and for full use of them. It is a summer home for them to take their families to, and in the winter, they also spend lots of time there, as do their children and grandchildren.

CJN: *What would you say to prospective buyers about why cottages are good investments?*

Sandra Roth of Rybak Realty Inc: An investment is measured by its return. An investment in a cottage is not just a financial investment – it is also an investment in family and... in your own personal well-being.

Your summers on the lake [and] winters on the frozen lake become shared memories of quality time spent together with family and friends, creating bonds that would otherwise be unknown. Swimming, boating, biking, walking, reading, chatting, playing in the unpolluted air – what could be better for your physical and mental health?

Unlike subdivisions, more lakefront property is not being created, so few cottagers sell their property for the price they paid for it. That is a sure sign of a good investment.

CJN: *Who are the most common buyers of high-end condominiums in the mid-downtown area of Toronto?*

Elli Davis of Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd. Brokerage: While all kinds of people are buying these condos, many are in the 50-plus group – empty nesters who want to scale down and are trading their homes for condos. There are also younger people, such as single men and women, as well as couples, who tend to purchase these condos in the mid-price range.

CJN: *Do condos need to be inspected?*

Elli Davis of Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd. Brokerage: In general, people do not have condos inspected. However, I think it's a good idea to go through the new ones in particular and make sure everything is finished to your satisfaction.

CJN: *Discuss the kinds of amenities offered in high-end condos and what is their average size?*

Elli Davis of Royal LePage Real Estate Services Ltd. Brokerage: Most of these condos have such features as swimming pools, a doorman and exercise rooms. They also have underground parking, a sauna, party facilities and a hobby room. The average size of them is 1,500 to 2,000 square feet, but at the very high end, some can go up to 4,000 square feet.

CJN: *Who is generally buying condos in the north end of the city?*

Ted Waxman of Alan Newton Real Estate Ltd.: A lot of the people purchasing condos in the north end are older people who no longer want to look after a house. There are also many young people who are trying to get into the market.

CJN: *To what extent are condos starter homes for many people?*

Ted Waxman of Alan Newton Real Estate Ltd: Many people who are first-time buyers are trying to get into the market, because they realize real estate is a good investment, so they buy a condo. Depending on the market, they will likely stay in the condo for anywhere from one to three years.

Continued on page B4

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PRESENTATION CENTRE HOURS

What you've always wanted to ask home buying professionals

Continued from page B2

CJN: *What is the average size of these condos in the north end and what amenities do they typically include?*

Ted Waxman of Alan Newton Real Estate Ltd: It depends on the area of the city. For example, the new condos near Yonge and Sheppard are 600 to 700 square feet for a one-bedroom. Farther north, along Steeles near Bathurst, as well as the Promenade condos, you will find more two-bedroom suites in the 1,100- to 1,200-square-feet range.

The main amenities people are looking for in these areas are a swimming pool, workout room and sauna.

CJN: *How common is it for people to buy a condo and rent it out?*

Ted Waxman of Alan Newton Real Estate Ltd.: Right now, this is not common. Maintenance fees go up every year and so have the prices of condos, which makes it less attractive to rent out. What people are doing is buying condos off of the blueprints, waiting for them to get registered and then a few years later, flipping them.

CJN: *What are young Orthodox couples looking for in their homes?*

David Eichorn of David Eichorn Realty Limited: The most important feature for a young Orthodox family in their search for a home is proximity to synagogues, day schools, shopping, and other Orthodox Jewish families. They are looking to be ideally situated in the heart of an established Orthodox community whose members share the same beliefs, lifestyle and values.

With regard to the actual design of the home, their needs are rather specific. The kitchen, being the focal point, requires generous space to allow for the separation of dairy and meat. Ideally, it should be large enough to permit family dining. Space and budget permitting, it would also include two separate ovens, stoves, sinks, dishwashers and counters. The cabinetry must be sufficient to allow for four sets of dishes.

Family sizes are generally larger, requiring more bedrooms and bathrooms. The dining room should preferably be combined with the living room to allow for comfortable, formal family meals. Being the people of the book, the family's wish list would include a main-floor library for the husband.

CJN: *Why would people in search of a mortgage want to enlist the services of a mortgage broker?*

Guy Scheiner of Venture Financial Ltd: Mortgages are not simple, and it is difficult for people to be educated about all the details. That is what a broker or mortgage consultant can help with. From day one, we sit with the client, explain everything to them and let them know about the different products and institutions available to them. Plus, the services of the mortgage broker is paid for by the bank, so it is free for the home buyer.

CJN: *What is your opinion of getting pre-approved for a mortgage?*

Guy Scheiner of Venture Financial Ltd: On one hand, pre-approval is very important because you know the exact loan amount you are approved for, which will make you more knowledgeable and comfortable when putting in an offer for a home.

But what you can qualify for in terms of a loan, is not necessarily what you can afford. The bank can approve you for a mortgage, but in reality, it may exceed all of your obligations. A broker can help in this regard, too, because they represent the borrower's interests.

CJN: *What is your view of reverse mortgages – people using the equity in their home as part of retirement planning?*

Sonny Goldstein of Goldstein Financial Consultants: I have been in this business for 41 years, and I believe from all of that experience that reverse mortgages are a ripoff. The interest charged on them is extremely high, and I have seen people lose their homes as a result.

For people who are planning for their retirement, I recommend getting competent, professional, independent advice from a certified financial planner, a chartered financial consultant or someone who will show them the best way to augment their lifestyle.

Sources:

Bernice Whelan: 705-739-8000, www.icoverthewaterfront.com
Sandra Roth: 416-782-0598
Elise Kalles: 416-441-2888 www.elisekalles.com
Elli Davis: 416-921-1112 www.ellidavis.com
Ted Waxman: 905-764-7200
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Guy Scheiner: 416-616-2466 www.venturefinancial.com
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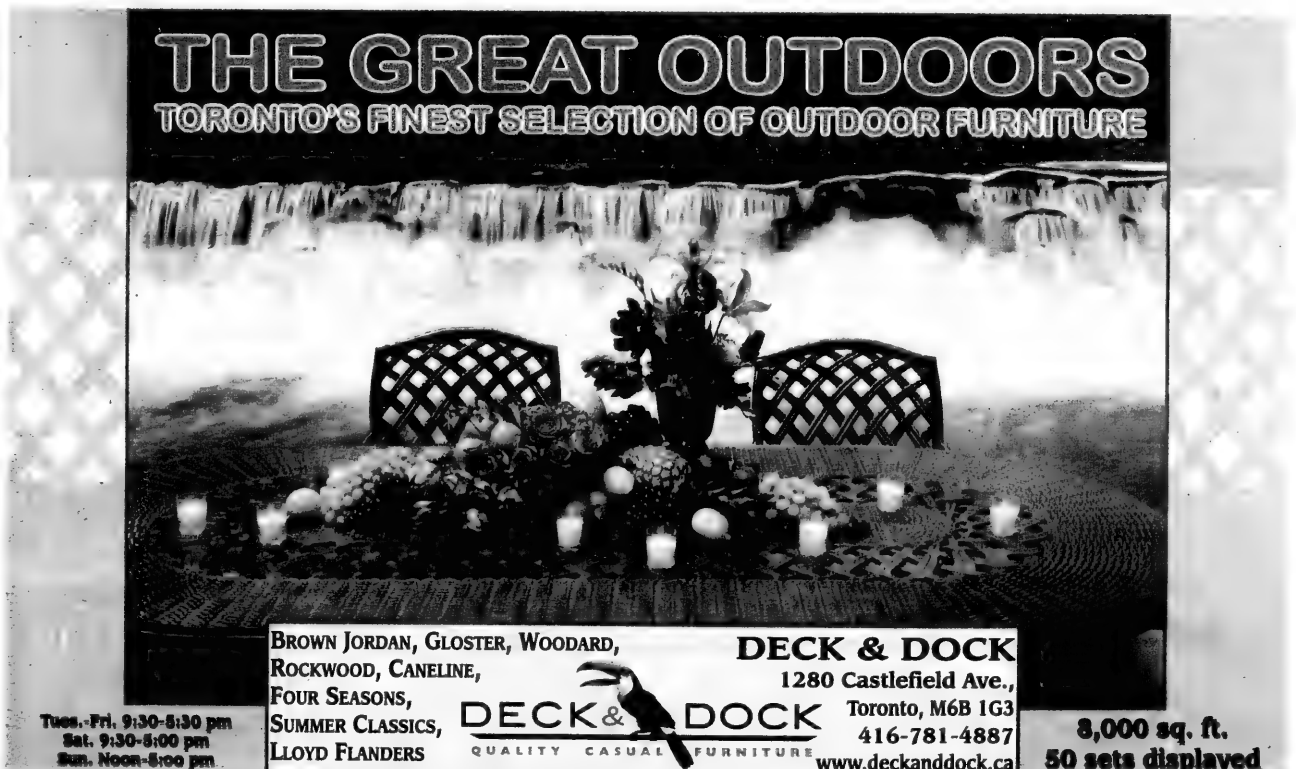

Condo to reflect 'Portrait' of the neighbourhood

Picture it! Inspired living coming soon to Bathurst and Sheppard at Portrait Condominiums.

In late March, Elm Developments will introduce Portrait Condominiums – an eight-storey mid-rise in the popular Bathurst and Sheppard neighbourhood of North York. The building will feature garden terraces reminiscent of sunny Italy, a rare feature in Toronto condominiums. The complex will also include a European-style garden rooftop deck, manicured gardens and courtyards. Plus, the halls and key common areas of Portrait Condominiums will be graced with an inspiring art collection.

Portrait Condominiums will be nestled into quiet residential surroundings, close to every amenity imaginable including, Burnett Park and Hearthstone Valley Greenbelt. Active suite owners will also appreciate being close to Earl Bales Park – home to an alpine ski centre with snowmaking facilities and the 1,500-seat Barry Zukerman Amphitheatre – and Downsview Park, which includes more than 572 acres of land being developed as a unique, recreational urban green space. In addition to a shopping plaza and 24-hour Dominion across the street, there are many local stores, services, large shopping centres, cinemas and a live theatre in the vicinity. The subway and major transportation routes such as Highway 401, are just minutes away.

The well-respected, award-winning design team for Portrait Condominiums includes Northgrave Architect Inc., which has created many distinguished projects in Toronto, Chicago, Boston and New York. For this venture, the firm has teamed up with Trevor Kruse of Hudson Kruse Design, which specializes in high-end projects. Known for balancing functionality and ingenuity in interior design, the award-winning Hudson Kruse Design also has an impressive portfolio of notable residential clients across North America, and Kruse is a past president of ARIDO (The Association of Registered Interior Designers of Ontario).

Portrait Condominiums is characterized by scenic terraces overlooking lush garden walkways and peaceful courtyards. "The Portrait Club" will feature a luxurious party room, complete with a fireplace opening onto a landscaped patio with outdoor seating, a dining room for private functions with a catering kitchen and bar area, a billiards room with large-screen TV, and for the exercise enthusiast, a fully equipped fitness area, yoga/stretch room and private change rooms with his and her steam rooms.

In addition, Portrait Condominiums will have a guest suite for family and friends to enjoy, a pet spa, and a potting room to get an early start on spring flowers. The south-facing fifth floor rooftop deck and outdoor kitchen, will allow for summer barbeques overlooking the skyline of downtown Toronto.

Finishes in the 192 suites will include engineered wood flooring; ceramic or marble foyer tile; plush broadloom; granite kitchen countertop; ceramic backsplash; full-height uppers; valance lighting; and granite or marble bath countertops. With energy savings and the environment in mind, Elm Developments has also incorporated numerous building and suite features such as individual hydro monitoring; ENERGY STAR® appliances; locally sourced flooring created from 100 per cent recycled content core material; bicycle storage; and landscaping and storm water management, among other features.

For more than 25 years, Elm Developments has transformed innovative design ideas into reality by creating smarter living areas in high-rise landmarks across the city. Suites at Portrait Condominiums will range in size from 585 to 1,700 sq. ft. and will be priced from $190,000 to over $600,000.

For more information, visit www.portraitcondos.com or contact Elliot Steiner at Elm Developments, 905-709-8232 ext 28 or to help arrange an interview, call Rhoda Eisenstadt of The Communications Group at 416-696-9900 ext 33.

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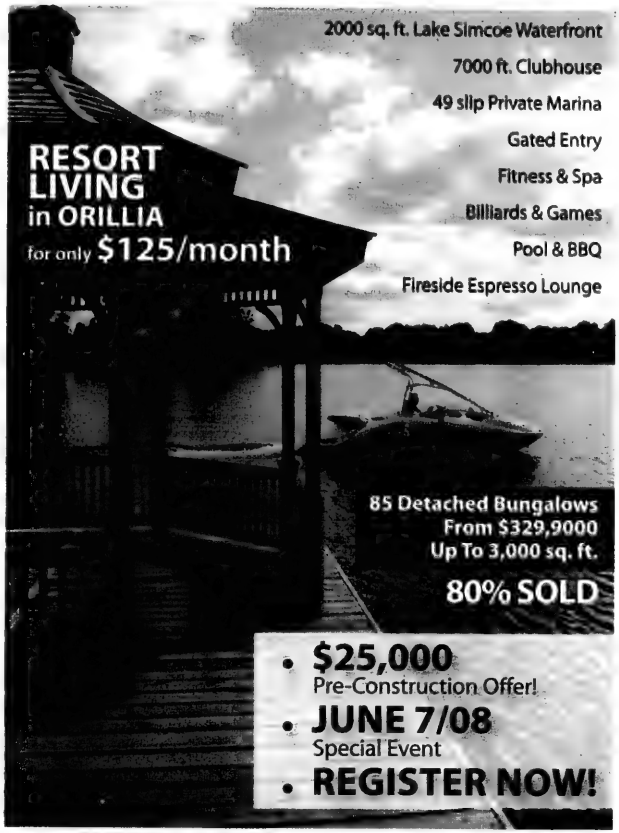

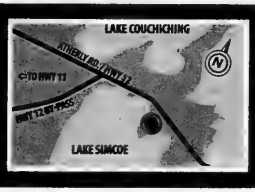

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Homes in Ottawa development are energy efficient

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

Environmental awareness and conservation are hot topics in every arena these days and purchasing a home or condo that reflects those values is sparking interest with buyers.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a rating system conducted by a third party that grades existing and new buildings and development practices through the implementation of green tools and performance standards. In order for a construction site to be stamped with LEED Certification, it has to meet all five of LEED's credits and prerequisites, which are sustainable site, water efficiency, energy and atmosphere, materials and resources, and indoor environment quality.

Minto homes are advanced in energy efficiency

One of the most prominent developers in the housing market is Minto, and it's a part of LEED's green initiative. Minto ensures that the designing and building of all of its high-rise communities are LEED-rated buildings, and its new, detached single-family homes are Energy Star certified.

In Canada, residential, commercial and institutional buildings are responsible for more than one-third of the total of greenhouse gas emissions, according to the Canada Building Green Council, and Minto has signed onto LEED's initiative to reduce these harmful emissions. Minto has been one of Canada's top residential builders and developers for more than 50 years, and it's a company committed to building a sustainable future.

Unlike a number of its counterparts, Minto lives up to its corporate responsibility to protecting the environment. It's been a dedicated pioneer in energy efficiency and green-building practices since the 1970s when it created its Energy-Wise standard of new-home construction by choosing renewable and less harmful fuels to power its living spaces.

This year, construction began on the EQuilibrium Housing Initiative in the southern end of Ottawa. The Minto Manotick House is Minto's EcoHome, situated in a Minto housing community in Manotick, Ottawa. Every one of the 1,800 single-family homes in this new neighbourhood has been built to create healthy, energy-efficient housing that produces as much energy as it consumes annually.

Minto's principle is about crafting attractive, affordable well-built homes and condominiums that satisfy the needs and demands of its clients and the environment.

Whether you're buying one of its new residential homes or high-rise condos in Toronto or renting an apartment, furnished suite, house, executive office or commercial space in Ottawa, Minto's eco motto stays the same.

For more information on Minto's developments in Toronto, call 416-977-0777, and in Ottawa call, 613-230-7051, or visit the company's website at www.minto.com.

Quality and service sets Queensgate Homes apart

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

If it's custom-home design you're looking for on the hunt for your new home, Queensgate Homes is an ideal builder to select in helping you find your dream home.

For more than 30 years, Queensgate builders have produced a wide array of attractive residential and commercial developments. With an ample collection of housing styles to choose from – from custom-crafted masterpieces in elite neighbourhoods in Forest Hill and Lawrence Park to intimate townhome communities and spacious country estates – you'll find Queensgate homes and communities throughout Southern Ontario.

Homes in Aurora, Woodbridge, Mississauga, Brooklin, Georgetown and Whitby attest to Queensgate's philosophy of building superior living spaces.

Queensgate's mandate is to build quality homes that satisfy each customer's requirements and wishes, whether it's custom-design detailing or reliable craftsmanship.

"Whats sets us apart [from other builders] is our quality, service and the product we produce with our developments and custom homes," said Queensgate president Silvana Palombo.

Purchasing a home is a life investment, and it's important to select the one that reflects your style or familial needs.

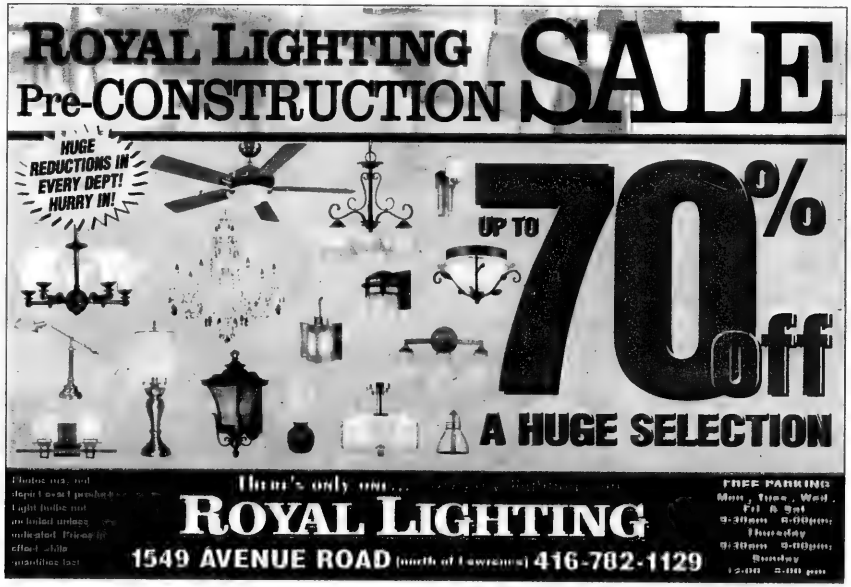
What makes Queensgate unique compared to other home and community builders is that its staff works with clients to help turn vague ideas into concrete reality, with everything from shaping a circular driveway to putting arched entrances in every room.

Queensgate also builds neighbourhoods with an eye to making life easy for homeowners.

"When we put a site together, we try and take everything into consideration," said Palombo, referring to the Queensgate community at Bathurst Street and Rutherford Road in Vaughan, which is close to public transit services and is walking distance to the area's new Jewish community centre.

As a member in good standing of the Greater Toronto Home Builders' Association, Queensgate is part of the Ontario New Home Warranty Program. In addition, Queensgate was honoured with the President's Achievement Award and nominated for the prestigious Ernest Assaly Builder Award.

For more information on Queensgate Homes, visit www.QueensGateHomes.com, or call 905-264-0600.



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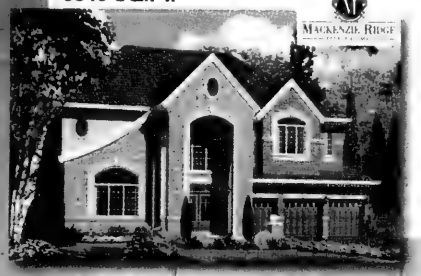

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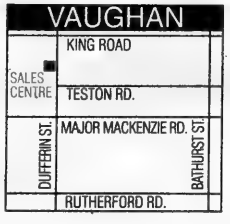

Condo project aims to build community

By all accounts Sophia, the vibrant new condominium about to rise from Bathurst Street and Patricia Avenue just north of Finch, is a jewel. Unlike many other projects in Toronto, it manages to combine the intimacy of a true, self-contained community with an unbeatable location.

"The great lure of a project like Sophia starts with its setting," says Mark Cohen, senior vice-president of The Condo Store Marketing Systems, a consultant on the project. "It is in the heart of one of the city's best loved neighborhoods.

"Go further north or further south and you run into busy street traffic, a real distraction to quiet enjoyment. But Sophia sits in the heart of a quiet, well-established residential neighborhood, where you can walk within minutes to parks, places of worship, schools and street-level shopping."

If you need to go further afield, Highway 401 is minutes away by car. Bathurst Street leads straight south to the heart of the city and TTC buses stop almost at the doorstep.

Then there is the building itself. Architectural firm Page + Steele has created a classically modern, glass and steel, 10-storey tower that makes best use of both inside and outside spaces. Every unit has a generous balcony, patio or terrace.

Buyers will be amazed at the range of housing choices offered in a single building,

Sophia condominium is in the heart of a residential neighbourhood

says Cohen. The first and second floors, for example, hold a mix of large, two-storey maisonettes featuring up to three bedrooms, and a series of single level suites, all with private patios.

The balance of the tower is devoted to a range of sizes and designs from one-bedroom units coming in at just under 700 square feet, right up to three-bedroom suites measuring up to 1,500 square feet. The range of choices is impressive, says Cohen.

"In fact Cityzen Development Group and the Myriad Group, which are partners in Sophia, have just released a new collection of suites," he adds. "There are truly stunning two-level maisonettes – New York comes to North York – and a selection of roomy, one-bedroom pieds-a-terre.

"The range of housing options is one of those things that set Sophia apart," Cohen continues. "The entire project was designed to replicate a balanced community with homes for everyone from young singles just starting out, to couples contemplating retirement."

That approach to creating a balanced community is reflected in both the range and layout of the amenities within the structure.

The fitness centre and workout areas are set apart from those spaces devoted to entertaining, just as they would be in any well-thought-out city neighborhood. Finally, there is the terrific value that Sophia represents, Cohen says.

"This is a first-rate project in a first-rate neighbourhood priced at well under $400 a square foot, something increasingly rare among new condos today," he says.

A terrific price considering the quality of finishes and fixtures including, elegant 9' and 12' ceiling heights, floor-to-ceiling windows, individually controlled heating and air conditioning, architecturally designed suite entries, a choice of spectacular pre-finished engineered wood floors in living areas, dining areas and den. Plus, there's a choice of quality 40 oz. carpet with 1/2" underpad in bedrooms and closets.

Kitchens feature finely crafted cabinetry, complete with taller upper cabinets in a variety of materials and colours, a choice of attractive granite countertops, a choice of ceramic backsplashes, double bowl stainless steel sink with single-lever faucet and pull-out vegetable sprayer, ceiling mounted halogen track lighting, a choice of distinctive ceramic or porcelain floor tiles and six brand name appliances.

To see Sophia for yourself, visit the presentation centre on the southeast corner of Bathurst Street and Patricia Avenue or visit the web site at www.sophiacondos.ca or telephone 416-777-9998.

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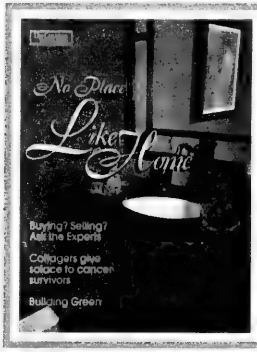


Cover design by Edward Dunbar

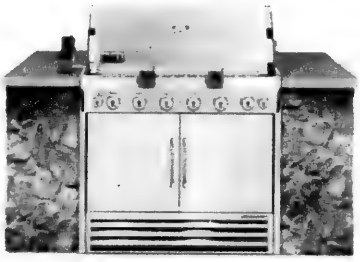
Cover photo courtesy of Anahit Nahapetyan Photography

Sobie's has all the answers for barbecues

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

With the arrival of refreshing warm weather, it's time to roll out the barbecues for a great outdoor meal.

Whether you're planning to enjoy a meal with the family or entertain a large crowd, there are many factors to consider when choosing from the wide variety of barbecues on the market.



First, consider what type of fuel you'd like to use, be it propane or natural gas, explained Mark Herberman, sales manager at Sobie's Barbecues in Toronto. There is also the option of using charcoal, as well as smokers for the unmatched aroma and flavour of grilled food.

Then, figure out the types of features you would like, such as side, rear or infrared burners. Also, decide on the size of the barbecue, taking into account where you want to put it and how many people you plan to cook for.

Models will also vary based on the type of food you want to cook. You may want to prepare hamburgers and hot dogs, sear stakes, or even make stir-fry meals.

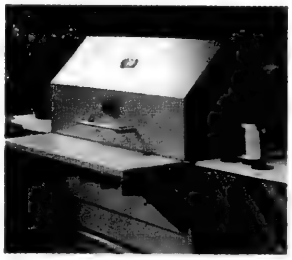
The warranty also makes a difference.

"The longer the warranty, the more the manufacturer knows that barbecue is going to last," said Herberman.

Sobie's specializes in high-end barbecues, with prices ranging from $350 to more than $12,000.

Top-of-the-line barbecues include the infrared gas TEC barbecues, which are also available as built-ins and portable versions. While most grills cook with convection, working like an oven, TEC grills heat the food directly, which allows the food to cook in one-third of the regular time.

Napoleon and Weber grills are also effective. The grill bases are made from high-grade stainless steel or aluminum castings, so you won't have to worry about the grill rusting. Webers also have "flavourizer bars" that create great flavour without flare-ups.



Those looking to purchase a barbecue on a tighter budget may want to get a Broil King model. Their three-position, cast-iron cooking grids retain the heat and sear meats, and they feature deep, thick castings.

"Try to stick with a North American product," said Herberman, "because later on down the road when you need parts, and eventually you will, if you get it in North America, chances are you will be able to get parts for it years down the road."

To ensure the barbecue remains in good condition, it's important to keep it clean. Barbecues should remain covered when they are not in use to prevent dust, dirt, birds, insects, or branches from getting in. Grill wipes and brushes can be used to remove any of that, and this should be done a few times per year.

"If you have a natural gas line, you should use a combination of soap and water on all of the joints," said Herberman.

"Make sure that there are no bubbles so there are no gas leaks.

"Make sure propane tanks are firmly screwed on. If anyone neglects the cleaning too much, a lot of debris can get filled up underneath and cause flaring that is not pleasant."

Sobie's offers servicing and cleaning to most barbecue models.

For more information, visit www.sobies.com.

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His carpets are a work of art

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

If you're choosing a hand-woven carpet for your home, you may want to consult with an expert.

Nicolas Hornbostel, owner of Rug as Art (416-925-3399), at 326 Davenport Rd., in Designers Walk, has been importing rugs to Canada for 17 years and is known for his customized hand-woven rugs.

He's part of a family business that's based in Belgium, he says. "I'm more interested in the creative component. I design the tapestries and carpets. I like the more artsy part of the business."

Hornbostel specializes in carpets from Pakistan, India, Nepal and Tibet. "All the rugs are hand-woven from wool, wool and silk or silk. All of them have a different look. The rug styles are named for the places where they are made."

Each area has its own weaving technique that can be anywhere from a few knots to 1,000 knots per square inch, he says. "The thinner the carpet, the more knots there are and finer the quality."

Hornbostel actually purchases wool in New Zealand and brings it to his carpet weavers in Asia. "New Zealand wool is absolutely the highest quality in the world."

These days, the most popular rugs are those made with vegetable dyes, he says. "They give a carpet an antique look, like they're aged. They often come in beiges, golds and olive greens. They're earth tones. That's what designers like to use."

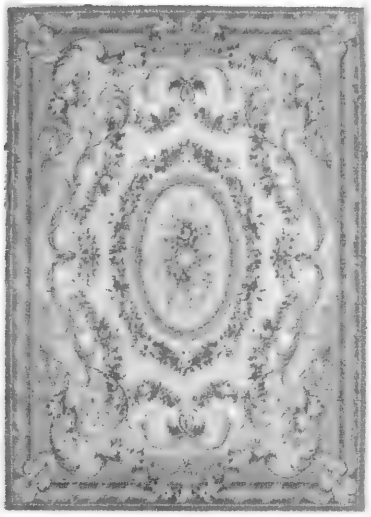
Peshawar is the area near the Pakistan and Afghanistan border where the vegetable-dyed carpets are made, he explains.

Hornbostel stresses that the wool is all hand-spun and hand-dyed. "We use organic dyes. It's the same techniques that have been used for hundreds of years."

As for patterns, he points out that city weavers do more sophisticated designs. "There are more details and the knotting is finer."

French Aubusson carpets are also popular, says Hornbostel. He describes the Aubusson as a "flat-weave needlepoint carpet" typical of those found in French chateaus.

Hornbostel says he is able to replicate the more intricate designs of antique tapestries. "We're reproducing them and they can be customized. We can produce the old tapestries in any size."

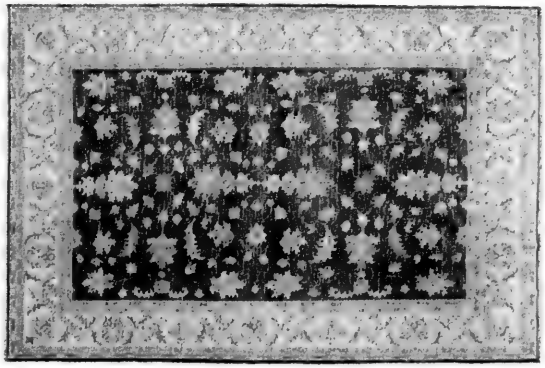


He takes the antique designs and brings them to the weavers. "I tell them what I want."

He says the colour palette of these carpets can also be customized – they're woven in colours chosen by designers. "We work very closely with designers."

Up to 35 different colours can be used in a rug, and there can be as many as 120 in a tapestry, according to Hornbostel. "We specialize in colouring. We're known for colour."

Business hours for Rug as Art are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Saturday. or by appointment. Customers can also visit the website at www.rugasart.ca.



No Place Like Home

An eclectic group of dealers at Antiques on King

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Thirty years ago, Cynthia Findlay (416-260-9057) started selling estate jewelry outdoors at a picnic table at the original Harbourfront Antique Market. "It was just a lark. I fell in love with the whole antique business," she says.

Today, she has her own store and she manages the market.

Findlay became a dealer at the Harbourfront Antique Market when it became a permanent indoor facility. It was subsequently housed in two separate locations in Queen's Quay. When the second venue was no longer viable, the dealers had to scramble to find a new home.

Ed and David Mirvish came to their rescue some six years ago, offering them space in a former Mirvish restaurant at 276 King St. W. The dealers now occupy an 18,000-square-foot space known as Toronto Antiques on King.

Not only did Findlay move there with all the original dealers, but she and her husband, George Paterson, ended up becoming the managers of the antique market. She lauded the Mirvishes for providing them with their new space. "They were happy to rent us this market. They were unbelievable to work with. The company is very supportive," she says.

She and the other dealers are now happily ensconced in the heart of the Theatre District, so they are very accessible to the public. "We think of ourselves as the waiting room for the theatre," Findlay says. "Lots of people love to come into the building and browse. There's so much to see."

Findlay, who specializes in estate jewelry, fine porcelain and objets d'art, shares the space with an eclectic group of dealers. "The diversity of the dealers and their backgrounds makes this market," she says, noting that they sell such fine collectibles as Oriental and bronze art; vintage lighting; china and ceramics; pressed glass; antique furniture; militaria; nostalgia; Tibetan artifacts; Persian carpets; and vintage jewelry and furs.

> Antique shop is "waiting room" for theatre district

Findlay says there are items at the market dating back to 1750, commonly known as Georgian, through to Victorian, Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Retro and Art Moderne. "Toronto is lucky to have such a world-class antique market in the centre of the city. We're known internationally."

Indeed, Toronto Antiques on King has long provided props for period movies, including *Chicago* and *Cinderella Man*, which were filmed in Toronto, says Findlay, adding that they're now renting out objects for the set of *Amelia*, an American movie being shot in Toronto.

The antique market is a magnet for well-known local designers such as Brian Gluckstein, Kimberley Seldon, Lynn Spence, Sarah Richardson and Lori Morris, says Findlay. "The decorators are looking for fine objects for fine homes. Our prices and selection are wonderful."

She says the Chan Gallery of Fine Clocks and Chinese Art and the Shand Gallery, which specialize in Oriental and bronze fine art, attracts many visitors. "Mr. Shand is an international dealer from the original market. It's also his 30th year."

Cynthia Findlay Antiques, her store, is known for its large selection of estate jewelry, silver and porcelain, she says. "We carry George Jensen and Pedersen [sterling], Lalique [glass] and Moorcroft and Majolica [art pottery]."

She also has vintage silver Shabbat candlesticks, which make "great wedding gifts," she says.

You can also find fine Judaica items at the Heritage Antique Gallery run by Tatiana Kuchinsky. "Tatiana also carries art and sculpture," Findlay notes.

Toronto Antiques on King is open every day, except Monday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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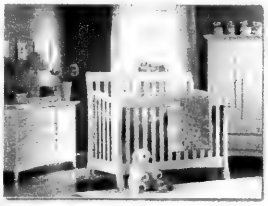

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Cottage owners give solace to cancer survivors

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to the CJN

When Seana O'Neill's mother, a two-time breast cancer survivor, had cancer, she and the family found some solace at their cottage. It was an ideal place for healing.

As an adult cottage owner, O'Neill realized that her cottage, which was vacant on weekdays, could be utilized during that time period. Recalling the restorative power of the cottage during her mother's illness, O'Neill wanted to provide that experience to other cancer survivors and their families.

She knew there were many other cottages that were empty during the week, and she thought that weekdays would be an ideal time to offer cancer survivors a cottage vacation.

All she needed was cottagers willing to donate their homes.

In 2003, she launched the Cottages Dreams Cancer Recovery Initiative, an organization that matches cottage owners with recent cancer survivors.

Today, O'Neill is founding president of a registered Canadian charity that's grown exponentially, according to Hilary Elia, development director for Cottage Dreams.

That first summer, six families were placed. Since then, hundreds of people have benefitted from the program, said Elia, noting that the cancer survivors and their families essentially use the cottages from Sunday until Friday.

There are more than 500 cottages in the database – including some kosher ones – offering vacations from June until October, Elia added. "We contact Wellspring, hospitals, any place where cancer patients network. Unfortunately, it's not too difficult to find people."

There are also many referrals from the Hospital for Sick Children, she said.

To be eligible, a patient must complete treatment within a year of being placed at the cottage, she explained.

"We celebrate cancer survival and the family... Regardless of who has it, all members of the family are affected," Elia said. "That's why Cottage Dreams has been so successful. It celebrates survival and the family unit."

Elia stresses that the vacation gives family members an opportunity to reconnect with one another. "They can create some fun family memories."

She added: "Being in a new environment is restorative. A change is as good as a rest when you're dealing with cancer. You can take a breather and re-energize.

"The cottage is a catalyst for making everyone feel better. It's a gift of time from someone you don't know. It's like them saying, 'Congratulations. You've survived cancer. We want to give you a week.'"

Elia said people may need a break but may not have the energy to plan a getaway. "People are physical and emotionally exhausted and may not have the resources to put together a family vacation."

Use of the cottages is not restricted to families. Sometimes, they're used by a cancer survivor and his or her support network, Elia said.

The program stipulates that a maximum of six people can use the cottage, but there's flexibility as to who accompanies the cancer survivors, she explains.

The contact between cottage owner and survivors varies.

"Some families like to welcome the families. Some families want to meet the family and congratulate the survivor and say, 'Here's the key,'" Elia said.

"Some of the survivors want to meet the cottagers to show their gratitude."

Cottage Dreams enlists cottagers at the spring and fall Cottage Life Shows, Elia said. "It's a great opportunity to raise awareness about the program."

The organization is always looking for more cottages, as well as funds to offset the cost of families' week-long stays, she says.

Cottage Dreams is a registered charity, so cottage donors get a charitable donation receipt for the time used by survivors.

Elia said the organization's major fundraising event is an annual golf tournament, which takes place this year on July 7 at Clublink Wyndance in Uxbridge. "There are limited foursomes and sponsorships left."

For more information about the tournament, donations or participation in the program, visit the www.cottagedreams.org, or contact Elia at at 705-457-9100 or by e-mail at helia@cottagedreams.org.

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Want to get away from the cold? Move to Arizona

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Canadians are flocking to Arizona and it's not just snowbirds flying down.

Recently, Barry Zekelman, 41, a steel manufacturer from Windsor, made headlines in Canada and the United States when he purchased a home in Phoenix for the record-setting price of $14 million.

"It was the highest priced sale we've ever had," says Neil Schneider (602-571-4586), a Phoenix-based realtor at Prudential Arizona Properties. He says there is a range of properties and age-restricted communities and condominiums to choose from, starting at about $100,000.

The big draw is the hot, dry weather, he says, noting that Phoenix offers year-round golfing. "The Phoenix metropolitan area has more golf courses per capita any other city in the U.S."

He notes that the city has grown dramatically. In 1950, Phoenix was the 57th-largest city in the United States. Today, it's the fifth largest. "There is in excess of three million residents. We just beat out Philadelphia for fifth spot.

"The urban city offers many of the cultural attractions people are used to in urban areas in the north."

He says there is a large community of retired Canadians in Phoenix and they're making connections with the Jewish community there. He describes it as a "wonderful community" of approximately 100,000 people.

"We have every stripe of synagogue and two Jewish community centres."

He says while the Jewish community is more spread out than in his native Detroit, one can find large Jewish enclaves in Scotsdale, a suburb eight miles from downtown Phoenix, and in the Chandler Gilbert area in the Southeast valley.

Joani Frankel (602-953-4000, ext. 2439) of John Hall and Associates (www.infoarizona.com) is another real estate agent working out of Phoenix. A former Toronto resident, Frankel says she left Canada 30 years ago because she couldn't tolerate the winter weather. "I said I was never going to be a victim of the cold again."

Phoenix offers great weather and attractions.

The New York state native did some checking and discovered that Arizona had the best climate. She and her then-husband packed up their two children in 1978, and Phoenix became their new home.

Frankel deals in new homes and resale from multimillion-dollar mansions to downtown lofts and studios. "I provide people with all the information they'll need to make a wise decision."

For new homes, she says real estate agents provide an excellent service to buyers. "We can save people a pile of money. We know the ins and outs that builders don't tell buyers."

She says the Phoenix market is not just for snowbirds. In fact, some people buy properties to establish residency so that their children can get landed status.

Frankel says the time is favourable for Canadians to buy property in Phoenix because of the high value of the Canadian dollar. She stresses that it's also a buyer's market because there's a large supply of homes currently on the market.

"It's a great time to buy. There are fabulous retirement and adult communities. You don't have to spend millions to get a beautiful home."

She says Phoenix offers all the amenities and cultural attractions of urban living. "You can walk to everything. It's not a sleepy cowboy town anymore. There are fine restaurants, and fine shopping.

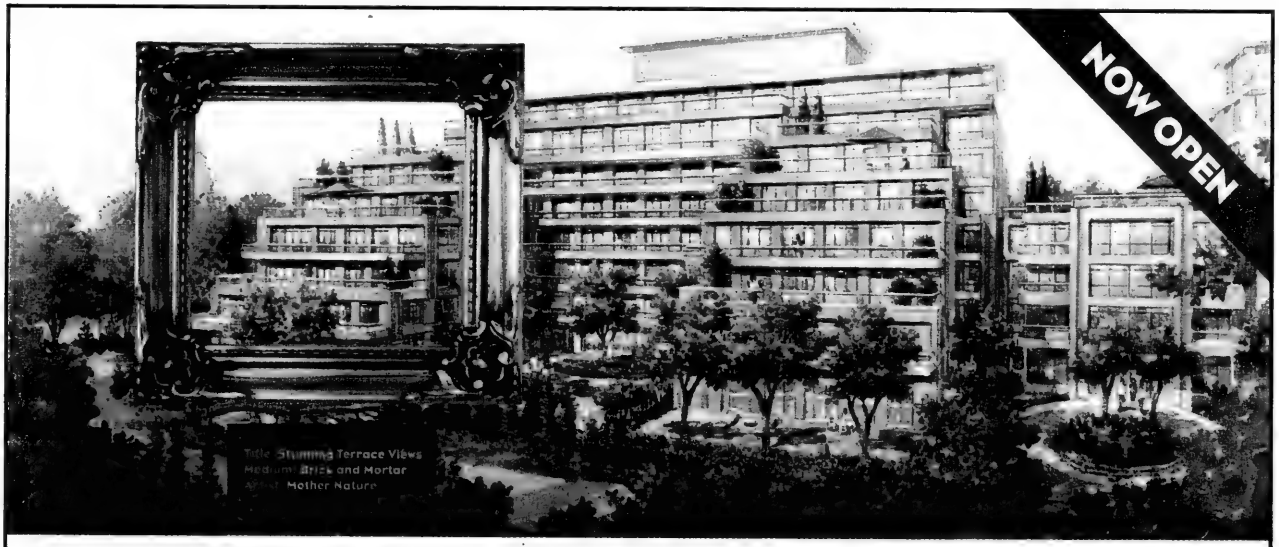
"Anything you see on Rodeo Drive, you'll see here, but it's low key. Money isn't flaunted here like in other places."

Frankel also works with a team of people, from mortgage brokers to painters and movers, who can facilitate the purchase and the move. "I have great people to back me up."

As for property taxes, she says vacation homes for personal use are taxed at the same rate as any other property, but taxes for income properties used only for rental are between 20 and 30 per cent higher.

To give people an idea of prices, she says a 2,400-square-foot ranch bungalow cost about half a million dollars.

"The weather is wonderful and you're safe from hurricanes in Arizona. It's an incredible place to live. Right now, I'm sitting by my pool under the palm trees and citrus trees drinking fresh Valencia orange juice for breakfast. There's nothing like picking your fruit fresh from the tree."



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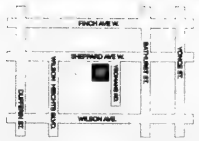

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A unique lifestyle community on the lake

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

As baby boomers hit retirement age, a new crop of services and products has appeared to make the golden years more comfortable. A new community 90 minutes from northern Toronto is in the works that caters to empty nesters and baby boomers, and offers all the amenities of a condo with all the perks of a cottage.

The development is Sophie's Landing, a gated waterfront lifestyle community in Orillia on the north shore of Lake Simcoe, just west of the Narrows, where Lake Simcoe meets Lake Couchiching (www.sophies-landing.ca; 705-329-7710).

Developer Eric Kerzner, whose company Signature Carleton is spearheading the project, named the development after his daughter. He intends to take his brand of planned communities across Canada and the United States.

With a background in hotels and resorts, he developed the first lifestyles community in British Columbia eight years ago, with a focus on the luxuries usually found only in upscale resorts.

Kerzner is now focused on developing a product to serve the boomer market in Toronto. He recognized the lack of any gated communities north of Toronto. Sophie's Landing is designed with empty nesters and snowbirds in mind, who are heading for retirement and want a home that's maintenance-free.

The complex, made up of 85 units, is already 80 per cent sold. It includes a games room, two swimming pools and billiard tables. Because the community is on a lake, there is a private marina with 36 boat slips and a floating gazebo. Public areas include a fireside espresso lounge, waterside terraces and a party room with a full kitchen and a barbecue area. The property also offers winding nature trails, a putting green and a fitness and spa facility.

The peaceful location puts residents within easy access to cross country skiing, skating, golf courses, fishing, mountain biking and snowmobile trails. Nearby Orillia holds regular festivals, and Casino Rama is a few minutes away by car.

Kerzner notes that "everything is within walking distance. We chose this location for the amenities nearby."

Sophie's Landing will be finished at the end of 2009. Still available are detached bungalows with optional lofts, full basements and attached garages. Prices start at $329,900 but go up to $750,000, with home size starting at 1,000 square feet and going to 3,500 square feet. The average is 1,500 square feet.

Kerzner wants to make Sophie's Landing better than planned subdivisions in the city.

"We encourage purchasers to make changes, start with the base model and change things to fit their lifestyles and needs. We don't want two homes alike. We don't want it to seem like a subdivision."

The community, designed to evoke a French country village with easy pedestrian access, has already been rated the number 1 lifestyle community in Ontario by *Active Adult* magazine.

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Bathroom modifications can help you enjoy your home longer

By RANDI BERGMAN
Special to The CJN

As you age, you often have to make a number of changes in your lifestyle and activities. But what about changing your home?

This may not be the first thought that comes to mind if you have to make adaptations to enable you to remain in your home, but sometimes the washroom is one of the first areas that needs a makeover. Since even contemplating these changes can be difficult, we've found two of the city's finest companies to help you.

One expert option for age-proofing your home is Lampert Plumbing (www.lampertplumbing.com; 416-787 5285). The Lamperts have been the masters of bathroom and kitchen renovations and repairs since 1926. Today, Lampert Plumbing is run by Lawrence and Arthur Lampert, grandsons of the company's founder, Hy Lampert.

Among the company's specializations is age-proofing the home with the least possible inconvenience to the client. Lampert Plumbing focuses on providing simple and inexpensive ways to equip your home. Lampert also guarantees excellent customer service, highly skilled workmanship and an unparallelled understanding of plumbing and renovations.

One of the services offered by Lampert is the Re-Bath liner system which can transform your bathroom in only two days by simply installing new liners over your old tub and wall.

Transform your bathroom in two days

"Most renovations take upward of a week and require dust removal, which is very difficult for some elderly clients," says Lawrence Lampert. "Working with the liner system allows us to provide an excellent quality product while being virtually in and out."

Lampert ensures the utmost practicality in the features they install.

"Some clients request that we install a permanent seat in the tub, but this is not always the wisest choice," Lampert says. "We always recommend a removable seat, so that it can be placed closer to the faucet if necessary. As well, it can be moved if a caretaker needs to be in the tub as well."

Another feature offered by Lampert is a walk-in-tub, which includes a door and grab bars, because "avoiding accidents is what's most important," Lampert says.

With more than 30 years of plumbing experience, Plumbers Canada (www.plumberscanada.com; 416-444-4499) is another company that can help with your plumbing needs. Owners Jeffrey and Aviva Shiff are no strangers to plumbing and offer a fresh take on renovations, retrofits and repairs. In addition, expert staff is available 24 hours a day via the Plumbers Canada hotline at the above number.

"With such a large aging population, we recognize that there is a major need for help with renovating the home," Jeffrey Shiff says. "Since more people prefer to stay home as they age, we provide the modifications so that they can do so and feel safe."

From complex renovations to simple add-ons, Plumbers Canada will work with your existing space and your budget to provide a solution for anything you may need to make aging at home more comfortable for yourself or your loved ones.

Shiff recommends that you start by attending to the bathroom fixtures that are used most frequently.

"For example, toilets are the most used feature of the bathroom, so your first step should be attaching grab bars to simplify sitting down and standing up," he says.

Replacing bathtubs with walk-in showers is another step he suggests for age-proofing your home. "If you don't need help getting in and out of the bathtub, it will be much easier to keep your independence for longer."

Plumbers Canada will not only help you find an affordable solution, the staff will co-ordinate with other contractors who may be working in your home.

"For most people, staying at home is preferable," he says. "We provide a way to maintain safety and dignity so that people can do so with ease, but most importantly, we care about our work and stand by our quality," Shiff says.

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Aspiring musician opts for something more solid

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

David Solursh, founder of Concrete Tides, has a solution for people who are tired of the traditional look of granite countertops.

For the past four years, Solursh, a 32-year-old North York native has been developing his business in Collingwood, Ont., that specializes in custom concrete fabrications for vanities, hearths, bar tops, countertops and more.

"All of my clients are searching for something handmade. People seek me out when they want something that no one else has, or they want something that isn't made by a machine, like a slab of granite at the local box store," Solursh said.

He said the trend has been popular in the southern United States for more than 10 years, and it's just beginning to gain popularity here in Canada.

"As people are researching and looking for something new and different, they're catching on to it and getting their heads wrapped around the idea that concrete doesn't have to be this grey, nasty-looking thing," he said.

"It can be anything. It can take any shape, depending on what your mould is. For a countertop purpose, I like to polish them so they are totally smooth and shiny," he said, adding that it can come in any colour imaginable, because he is able to mix dyes into the concrete mixture.

"I can really predict how the colour is going to come out. And if there ever was a chip or something happened to it, it would still retain the same colour," he said.

Although Solursh is passionate about his art and his budding business, until six years ago, the father of two was on a completely different path.

Solursh, a Concordia University graduate with a degree in fine arts, was an aspiring musician.

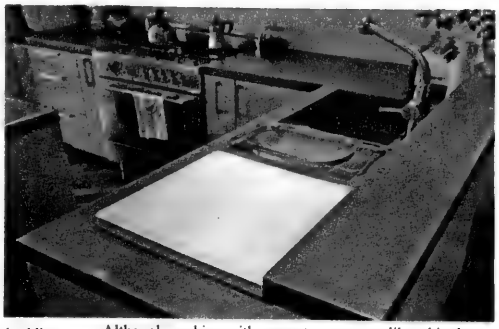
When he decided to give up on a career in the music industry because of the difficulty of finding consistent, paying work, he began working for a friend who is a builder, and the two of them did extensive research on the best way to work with concrete.

"I started experimenting. I did lots of reading," he said.

Two years later, in 2004, he established Concrete Tides and his client list has been growing steadily since.

Solursh specializes in countertops, hearths and vanities, but he said he has also started to create monuments that commemorate the loss of loved ones.

"I recently made a bench, in which a bronze plaque was inset, to celebrate the life of a family friend," he said.



Although working with concrete may seem like a big departure from making music, Solursh said the two arts are very similar is some ways.

"When you step on stage to play a piece of music in front of an audience, you sure as heck better know your stuff, because once you start playing you can't stop and edit. You must push on through, and flow with the timeline until you finish the piece. Concrete is the same. You make a structure, your mould, which takes time, patience and great detail," he said.

Solursh added that he takes his work very seriously and has ambitions to go to a school in North Carolina to enhance his self-taught knowledge of the art.

"Being a kid from a very accomplished Jewish family from the north end of Toronto, there are pressures, or expectations set upon you, that I never seemed to accomplish," he said, adding that his grandfather was Dr. Coleman Solursh, one of the founders of Mount Sinai Hospital.

"It is this need to push for something greater, that I bring into anything I do… For the past six years now, I have been refining my skills and searching for my niche."

He said that people shouldn't view his pieces as cheap alternatives to granite. In fact, the price is comparable to good granite, which sells for about $100 to $120 a square foot.

"If you want a high end, really beautiful artistic piece of product, you should probably have someone who knows what they are doing."

He said homeowners need to be wary of inexperienced people who are just trying to make a quick buck.

"They go and buy a bag of concrete from the store and mix it up and say, 'Here you go.' I've seen people offering that, and then you're asking for big trouble because it's just going to crack and stain," he said.

"People have to know that the concrete you use for your countertop isn't the normal stuff that comes from a ready-mix plant or from your local hardware store. It's a product that is meant specifically for countertops. I make my own mix, and I've tried different recipes."

Environmental responsibility is another aspect of his business that's important to him.

"I go through a whole polishing phase where I will wet grind the product, so I try to recycle the water and not waste it," he said.

Solursh said he recently began working with a California company that uses a chemical to seal the concrete counter tops called lithium silicate, which is more environmentally friendly than epoxy and urethane, which he has used in the past.

He added that he also uses vinegar to clean the product, rather than harsh chemicals.

"It's made so that when you're cleaning, you're using products that are healthy for the environment."

Solursh said the most fulfilling part of his business is working with his clients to create a custom piece of art they will take pride in.

"What brings me more joy than creating the pieces themselves are my meetings with clients to discuss their visions, and to see their faces when I deliver something that makes them feel as if they were there when I created it."

For more information, visit www.concretetides.com, or call 705-443-2003.

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Designers Walk holds its annual sample sale

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special To The CJN

If you're decorating or remodelling your home, you may want to ask your interior designer or decorator to take a stroll through Designers Walk.

Designers Walk is a group of design showrooms housed in five buildings in the Davenport and Avenue roads area. The addresses are 170 Bedford Rd., 150 Pears Ave., and 354, 320 and 326 Davenport Rd.

"Most of the buildings' showrooms are leased out to top-of-the-line design companies, says Orly Borovitch (416-961-1211), Designers Walk's director of public relations.

"All the products are very high quality with a strong emphasis on design, hence the name Designers Walk. Designer's Walk has been around for 30 years."

There are almost 100 members covering all aspects of design and home and commercial renovation, she notes, citing a few of the many companies with showrooms: Benjamin Moore (paints), G.E. Monogram Appliances, Cercan Tile (stone and ceramic flooring), Avenue Rug, Primavera Interior Furnishings (fabrics and furnishings) and Art Boulle (cast aluminum and wood indoor/outdoor designs and furniture).

The showrooms, which are exclusively geared to design professionals, provide a source for interior designers, decorators, architects and others in the industry, Borovitch says.

To order products, designers need to show proof of their professional status, but some showrooms let the designers bring clients.

The advantage of visiting Designers Walk is that it offers the full gamut of designer goods within a one-block radius, Borovitch says. "It's one-stop shopping for such things as wallpaper, tiling, lighting, furniture, appliances and countertops."

One of the spaces anyone can visit is the Resource Centre, which is at 168 Bedford Rd. The 10,000-square-foot space has display booths, panel discussions and regularly showcases new distributors, she says. "The monthly seminars on design are open to the public and trades."

At the end of May, Designers Walk will be opening a sustainable design area within the resource centre. "Eco-friendly products are really big right now, Borovitch says.There'll be a sustainable design area with new displays featuring eco-friendly products.

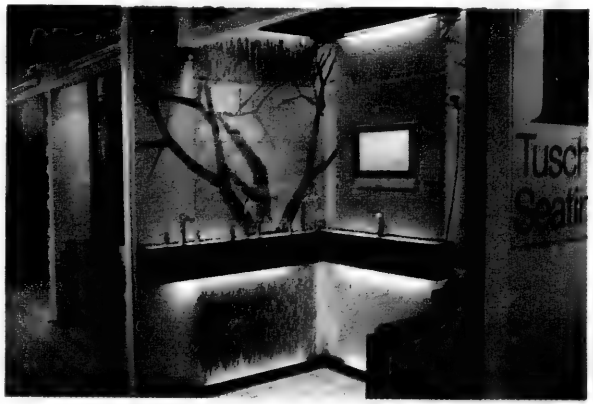
"Either they're water efficient or LED [light emitting diode] lighting, which is energy efficient. There'll be rugs and carpets of natural and renewable fibre and paints with a low or no VOCs [volatile organic compounds].

On June 7, Designers Walk holds its annual summer sample sale, which is open to the public, Borovitch says. "It's like a flea market of high-end designs at a fraction of the cost. Furniture, rugs, leather goods, beautiful designer chairs all become affordable."

"Members of Designer's Walk will set up tents and booths outside on Pears Avenue, and in the building's garage."

There will also be a silent auction with part of the proceeds of the sale going to to Habitat for Humanity. Some initiatives in the planning will be a consultation service called Shop with a Designer.

For more information, visit www.designerswalk.com.



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1717 Avenue offers luxury in the heart of North York

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

If you're seeking the luxurious lifestyle and want to stay in the heart of North York, look no further than the Terrace Garden Condominium.

Located at 1717 Avenue Rd., this new condominium with terraces and glass will feature top service and style that will keep you and your guests immersed in comfort and elegance.

Slated for occupancy in November 2010, the 80 suites in the six-storey condominium will feature finishes such as hardwood floors and Sub-Zero appliances. Most Sub-Zero refrigeration appliances are certified as Shabbat and holiday compliant by Star-K kosher certification.

Each suite also comes with one parking space and one locker, which are included in the purchase price. Some of the larger suites come with two parking spaces.

The suites range in size from 790 square feet to just under 3,400 square feet and are available from $700,000 up to more than $3 million.

"We made sure we wouldn't pass on any finishes that people would find in a million-dollar home within a three-kilometre radius of the site," said Scott McLellan, senior vice-president of sales and marketing for Tribute Communities, the residence's builder.

Tribute Communities has more than 20 years experience building more than 25,000 single family and condominium homes across the Greater Toronto Area. The company has won several industry awards for service from organizations such as the Tarion Warranty Corporation and J.D. Power and Associates.

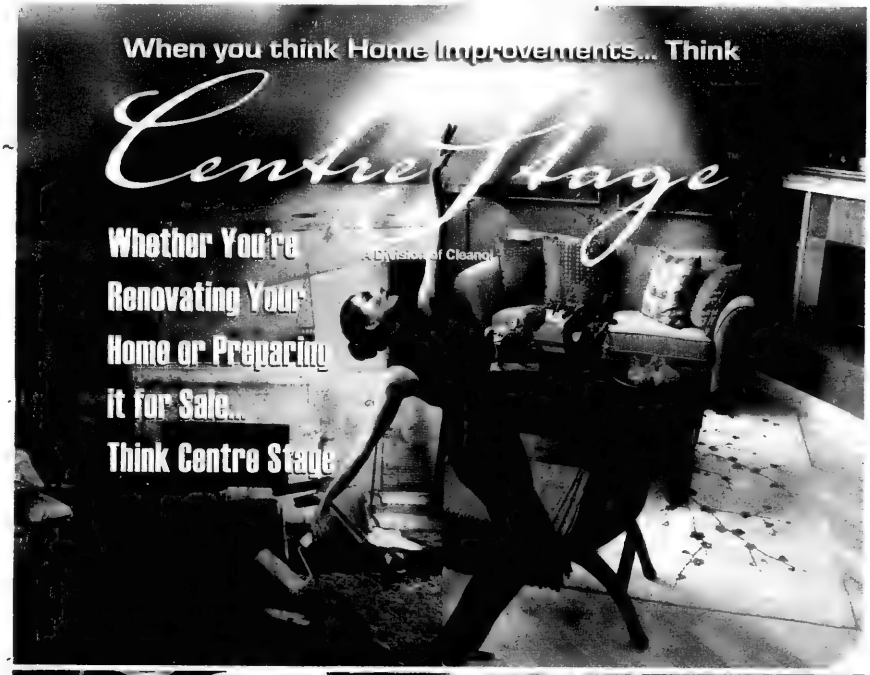
Residents at 1717 Avenue Road will also enjoy a variety of amenities, including a fitness centre, men's and women's saunas, a private dining room, a party room with a terrace that can be booked for private functions, and a media room. There will also be a grand porte-cochere entrance with valet service and a 24-hour executive concierge.

The property is surrounded by established neighbourhoods and is within walking distance of an array of restaurants, shops, boutiques, delis and more.

This condominium will suit those selling their single family homes and looking to downsize, or professionals looking to stay near their parents or other relatives, or in the area they grew up in, McLellan said.

Some may also choose to spend part of the year at a cottage while maintaining a home in the city.

A presentation centre for the building is located at 1717 Avenue Rd. For more information call 416-430-1717, or visit www.tributecommunities.com.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Furnish the outdoors in contemporary style

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Your backyard is "an additional living room – it has to reflect the value of your home," says Dave Reburn of Deck & Dock (416-781-4887, www.deckanddock.ca).

But if you think you're stuck with off-the-shelf dining suites and chaises, think again.

"There are as many options for the outdoors as there are in the indoors," Reburn says.

Outdoor furniture is more exciting than ever, he adds. New long-lasting surfaces, look-alike synthetics that look just like natural materials, and a wider range of high-end choices make this a great time to shop and buy, whether it's for one piece or a complete set.

That includes upholstery choices, a pleasant surprise if you're used to the limited selection in hardware or mass-market stores. "In some cases here, we might have over a thousand different fabrics to choose from."

Although the retail customer is the biggest part of his business, many designers approach Deck & Dock for middle- to high-end quality products for their clients, which have included some of the top hotels and golf courses across Canada.

"We deliver anywhere – we've shipped to Florida and the Caribbean," says Reburn. He's even shipped to Africa, after the wife of former Kenyan prime minister Jomo Kenyatta shopped in person at the store's location in the heart of the Design District, at 1280 Castlefield Ave., near Caledonia Road and Eglinton Avenue, ordering some 65 pieces to be shipped to her Mombasa coastal home.

Throughout the season, Deck & Dock delivers twice weekly to cottage country. They also take care of setup, meaning you'll get your furniture right away, not a bunch of boxes to open and loose pieces to assemble.

This is not the lawn furniture of 20 years ago.

"The evolution of outdoor product has been quite dramatic." That's thanks to a shift in attitude of the general public. "It was a change of lifestyle… the outdoors became more important."

Take your living room outdoors

Today's outdoor furniture is as likely to be made of durable resin as anything that ever came from a tree, but you might not even be able to tell the difference at first.

"People look at the arm of a chair and ask, 'What kind of wood is it?'" Yet it's just as likely to be resin, finished in a mahogany pattern and shade.

Many customers come in asking, "Can it stay outside?" Increasingly, the answer is yes, in almost any weather. Until recently, the only durable all-weather materials were cast metal and tempered glass. These days, updated materials and finishes are sturdy enough to withstand the elements, but beautiful enough to want to show off.

Keeping real wicker outdoors is a risky proposition, with peeling, fading and warping a hazard if the furniture is unattended in bright sun or heavy rains. The newest wicker-look vinyl keeps its shape and colour. Built over a sturdy aluminum frame, "the material is not going to deteriorate in any way," says Reburn.

One of the biggest differences in purchasing high-quality outdoor furniture is warranty – high-end manufacturers stand behind their products. Many of Deck & Dock's pieces carry a five- or 10-year warranty, but Reburn says the pieces will probably outlast even that.

"You'll be tired of it before you have to throw it away."

He also specializes in exclusive pieces you won't find elsewhere – like the newest cantilevered and remote-control umbrellas to provide shade and convenience. With a cantilever, you get all the shade of a traditional umbrella, often in a much larger size, but the "pole" of the umbrella is off to the side so it doesn't interfere with conversation or mobility.

Adjustable-length dining tables are another important item, and there have been other big changes recently in outdoor tables, Reburn says.

Standard tables are just not long enough for outdoor entertaining. "People have gone from 48" and 72" perhaps now to 100 [inches]."

While a 72-inch table seats six, many people are realizing their family alone needs that much space. For adding guests and greater comfort, they're looking for ways to seat eight, 10 or even 12 at a single table.

The table itself is increasingly becoming a focal point, Reburn says, as more options become available, such as different tabletop finishes.

"It used to be the table was glass and the chair was the big concern. You'd sit in it – that's comfortable, that's a lovely looking chair… and you'd arbitrarily take the table."

Today's outdoor table can be a dramatic statement in itself, not just an accessory to a beautiful chair, with finishes ranging from traditional tempered glass to teak, cast aluminum or even an all-weather mosaic.

Showcasing high-quality manufacturers such as Brown Jordan, Gloster, Lloyd Flanders, Summer Classics and others in its airy, 8,000-square-foot store, Deck & Dock is an eye-opening experience.

"It's a unique shopping environment," says Reburn, noting the presence of trees, bridges and even skylights that let in natural light for fabric and colour selection.

Deck & Dock's five full-time staff bring an accumulation of many years' knowledge and experience to help customers select furniture that truly reflects their lifestyle. You can choose pieces – entire suites or a few items at a time – that will proudly accentuate one of the most important "rooms" of your home.

Program helps real estate agents understand seniors' needs

By MARCIE SOMERS
Special to The CJN

When David's parents decided to move from Montreal to Toronto to be closer to their children and grandchildren, selling their home proved to be extremely difficult. Not only were his parents leaving their home where they had lived for the past 40 years and raised a family, but they were also downsizing from a 3,500-square-foot home to a 2,000-square-foot condo.

Their daughter who lived in Calgary and David, in Toronto, both had their own families and were unable to help their parents make the transition as much as they would have liked to. Selling their furniture, packing, delivering goods to charities, arranging shipping of their household contents and helping negotiate on the closing of their home were all things David's parents had to do, with very little help from their children.

To make matters worse, their real estate agent literally disappeared once the offer was signed, only to reappear at closing. Calls to their agent in between that time were either ignored or returned days later.

In the end, moving became an exercise in frustration for David's parents.

"My parents are in their mid-70's and not in the best of health, so needless to say, there were times when they second-guessed their decision. At times, they felt it would have been easier for them to stay in Montreal," he says.

If only David had been introduced to Barry Lebow, a Toronto real estate appraiser, arbitrator, mediator and entrepreneur, his parents might have had a very different experience.

Barry Lebow

Lebow, who has more than 20 years' experience in real estate, has developed the accredited senior agent (ASA) professional designation program, a course that teaches real estate agents about the mature/seniors market.

According to Lebow, many people are either moving up (people are more demanding and affluent and want to maintain a certain lifestyle), moving down (their children move out and they don't need as much space, or people lose their jobs and can't afford to keep their home) or moving out into a retirement residence. The latter group is a very small percentage.

In addition, people are living longer. "In Canada alone, there are over 4,000 people over 100 years old. There's a myth that most seniors live in [retirement] homes. In fact, 93 per cent of Canadians over 65 live in their own residences," Lebow says. "As such, I saw a real need to educate real estate agents on how to deal with this very large and growing niche."

Over the course of two days, agents are taught how to penetrate the rapidly growing mature/seniors market. They learn, among many things, how to get their share of the coming explosion in the mature/seniors market; how to capture their share of the move-up, move-down or move-out markets; how to market to these clients; and how to understand the needs of mature/seniors clients. At the end of two days, agents take an exam in order to receive the ASA accreditation.

They're also taught how to service these clients after the deal is signed. "Agents are around up until the deal is signed and then reappear at closing. What about the in between?" Lebow says. "There are so many things that need to be done, such as packing, donating items to charity, arranging transportation of their goods, etc. I teach agents how to be more holistic and take a counsellor approach with this market."

Linda Hummel and Sophie Frattura of Remax Excellence took the ASA course this past February and are glad they did. "Barry clearly and accurately defined the seniors market for me as an agent," Hummel says. "He taught me how to market to seniors, including the lifestyle options available to them. The course also covered tax- and estate-planning issues as well, which was extremely helpful."

Frattura, her sister, agrees. "Linda and I were already dealing with seniors, and this course reinforced a counsellor selling approach. It helped us refocus our business to specifically market to seniors, and we've successfully been able to apply our learnings in our day-to-day business."

Since Lebow began offering the course in February, more than 200 agents have participated in the ASA course. Although the course is currently offered in Toronto only, Lebow has big plans. Over the next few months, he will be opening branches in Kamloops, B.C.; Halifax and Edmonton. The course is currently being translated into French for the Quebec market, which he hopes to enter in the fall.

He's also creating a virtual class on DVD for agents who live outside of major city centres and are unable to attend the class in person.

David's parents now live in Toronto and have settled into their new home, although moving to the city is an experience they would rather forget. When told about Lebow and what he's doing with the seniors market, David sighs. "If only it was the other way around (moving from Toronto to Montreal), my parents would have had a much more positive experience," he says.

For more information, visit www.thesenioragent.com.

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'Garages are the last frontiers in home renovation'

By RANDI BERGMAN
Special to The CJN

While spring cleaning always seems like such a daunting task at first, it presents you with the opportunity to renew, recharge and transform your home from its drab winter state into a fresh environment ready for the summer.

More often than not, however, the garage is the last space that ever receives your attention, and while you would like to change that, where do you even begin? Isn't the garage where you throw everything that you don't want to see again? Have no fear, Garage Junkie is here!

For the past few months, Garage Junkie (www.garagejunkie.net, 416-457-8625) has been revolutionizing garages as we know them. "Garages are the last frontiers in home renovation, but it shouldn't be that way," says Warren Goodkin, Garage Junkie's owner.

"If you can't reach it, chances are that you won't use it," Goodkin says. "What we try to do is get it off the ground and onto the wall – that way, everything is fully accessible."

Perhaps most importantly, Goodkin cites security as a reason for clearing up garage clutter. "When we researched the topic, we found that most vehicle robberies were tied to the fact that the owners couldn't fit their car into the garage," he says.

Families with small children and toddlers should be aware that whatever is lying around the garage can be a hazard. As well, broken debris from concrete floors is often played with by toddlers and ingested. Liquids also should be stored in a cabinet away from children.

The experts at Garage Junkie will come to you and fully assess what needs to happen in your garage. "There's really nothing we can't do inside the garage," Goodkin boasts.

Working within your budget, Garage Junkie can do anything from a complete makeover to simply adding a few wall units to remove clutter from the ground. Goodkin comes to your home equipped with a trailer that doubles as a showroom.

"Just like the inside of your home, you should know where everything is," Goodkin advises. "The key is having a place for everything."

Garage Junkie achieves this organization by working with a series of expandable wall systems on which everything from shovels to bikes and hoses can be hung. Since the systems are expandable, additions can be made in the future. "Just snap the hooks in and you're ready to go," Goodkin says.

He suggests that a simple coat of paint is another way to improve the look of your garage. "It's a very simple step, but it completely brightens up the whole room!"

Garage Junkie achieves what you always dreamed of doing, but never seemed to have the time – whether it's simply being able to park your car or building a workshop full of tools. "An organized garage brings immense value to your home," Goodkin says. "It seems like a simple touch, but it makes a world of difference."

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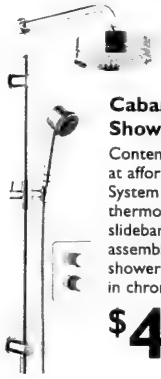

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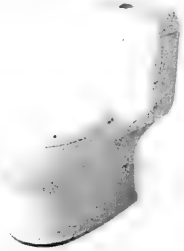

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Bona Vista turns your backyard into a summertime oasis

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

"We do everything we can to help people create a living room outdoors," explains Jennifer Gannon of the family business, Bona Vista Pools.

Now in its 40th year, Bona Vista 416-645-6980, which has completed more than 3,500 commercial and residential projects, is launching Bona Vista LeisureScapes, a retail store committed to providing the custom accessories necessary to transform your backyard into a beautiful oasis for outdoor living.

Gannon, proprietor of LeisureScapes, is passionate about expanding into new and exciting territory while still maintaining a fundamental connection to Bona Vista's traditional pool construction and service business.

Bona Vista LeisureScapes carries products geared to yards with and without swimming pools, such as acrylic hot tubs and outdoor fireplaces, as well as furniture and carpets. Garden accessories, modular systems and a lab for testing pool and spa water are also part of the product mix.

The Gannon family is committed to creating personal outdoor sanctuaries, custom designed to realize the vision of each customer's paradise.

Of particular recent appeal are plunge pools, lap pools and the more modern negative-edge pool. Like a wading pool for adults, a plunge pool is especially common in small urban yards and offers the therapeutic and aesthetic benefits of water without the costly footprint.

Lap pools are generally 75 long by 10 feet wide and are tailored to training for competitive-minded swimmers.

The negative-edge pool uses deliberate elevation and a trough system to create the illusion that the water is flush with the grass, cascading over its borders and bringing true depth to ground-level.

Increasing globalization has brought a myriad of international influences to the consumer's doorstep, and many people want to recreate travel experiences and landscapes in their own backyards. Bona Vista Pools tries to accommodate this trend through the development of custom-designed products that suit the desires and tastes of each client.

Bona Vista has also responded to a growing concern for the environment by searching for green solutions to backyard choices. Solar-powered heating systems, two-speed pumps equipped with timers to prevent unnecessary energy expenditure, and thermal insulation tactics are all being incorporated into the company's attempt to go green. This environmental consciousness extends from natural, enzyme-based products all the way down to recyclable packaging.

Bona Vista Pools works within the often harsh reality of Canada's weather by attempting to maximize the potential of this country's limited sunny months. As Canadians embrace the possibility of spending time outdoors, Bona Vista LeisureScapes realizes the importance of that extra room outside and seeks to incorporate people's dreams into the creation of a personal backyard oasis. www.bonavistapools.com

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Consignment shops have some good deals

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to the CJN

Lynn Albert, owner of the Elegant Garage Sale (416-322-9744) started her consignment business 29 years ago, following a four-year stint as chair of the Hadassah Bazaar.

"I saw a need for people looking to buy quality items at reduced prices," she says.

"I made a decision. I told my sons, 'Boys, we're going to open a store.' My husband [the late Harvey Albert] gave us $1,500 start-up money. We made it back in a day and a half, and we've never looked back."

Her three sons, Michael, Kenny and Richard, were in high school at the time. She says the money they made from the business was to cover her pledges to various charities and to pay for down payments on the boys' first homes.

Three locations and eight grandchildren later, Albert says the Elegant Garage Sale is still going strong, but the boys have long graduated to their own businesses. Her business has been located at 1588 Bayview Ave., south of Eglinton Avenue, for almost 20 years.

"Nobody has the deals that we have," Albert says. "We get the best and the most beautiful. We get pieces that suit kids in their first homes, and we also appeal to dealers and decorators."

She says she offers value and so the merchandise moves quickly. "We're selling a $14,000 sterling set for $4,900. That's a barometer for what our prices are like. You can get a magnificent armoire for under $2,000."

The company, which offers a 60/ 40 split in favour of the customer, picks up the merchandise, Albert says. "I promise a realistic price."

Like Albert, Wendy Teperman, is a long-time veteran of the consignment field with some 20 years experience in the business. Today, she runs Contents for Homes (905-881-6666) a 5,000-square-foot store at 94 Doncaster Ave. in Thornhill, Ont.

"Things change daily," she notes. "As long as the items are good quality and in good condition, we take anywhere from antique country to modern."

She says she has a trained eye and so she can look at pictures to see whether she wants to take an item.

She says certain things retain their popularity. "I'm always looking for mahogany and cherry bedroom and dining room sets. People are also looking for teak furniture.

"There's a demand for these kind of pieces at reasonable prices."

She adds that nice writing desks go quickly and older vanities are getting rarer. Teperman has a "wish book" in which people write down what they're looking for, and there's lots of browsing, she adds. "People like wandering around.

"There's lots to look at – china, knick-knacks, lighting and artwork… We have a little bit of everything, sometimes more of one style than another. It changes from day to day."

She carries pieces from the turn of the century, such as buffets and armoires, to modern. "The pine furniture is great for the cottage."

She says she does take some upholstered furniture, but it must be in very good condition. As for pricing, Teperman says she has a trained eye. "It's just being in the business all these years."

She's also very flexible, she says. "Bedroom and dining-room sets can be split. We're very easy to work with. Everything is negotiable." She can help the client arrange for transportation of the item and the sale is a 50/ 50 split.

Teperman also does content sales and probate appraisals. Visit her website at www.contentsforhomes.com.

Another popular consignment shop stocking high-quality preowned furniture and home items is Of Things Past (416-256-9256) at 185 Bridgeland Ave. The business was started 12 years ago by Sharon Jacobson, Doreen Levitz and Nushy Vuksinic.

Jacobson says Levitz , an interior designer, came across the idea in Florida. She was visiting a consignment shop in Boca Raton, where designers shopped for exclusive pieces. "When she saw the shop, she said, 'We could use this in Toronto.'"

The three women formed a partnership, dividing up responsibilities: Levitz does the merchandising; Vuksinic, a bookkeeper, takes care of administration; and Jacobson, who has background in advertising, is in charge of of publicity and the showroom layout.

They started with a 4,000-square-foot store. Today, the business is housed in a 22,000-square-foot showroom near Dufferin Avenue and Highway 401. "We had a lot of word of mouth," Jacobson recalls.

Two years ago, Of Things Past opened a second showroom in the same premises for exclusive higher-end pieces.

She says the big draw is that the items for sale are at lower than retail prices. "Our mantra is: from one fine home to another… We take everything from antique to contemporary."

She says she has three main criteria for accepting items. "They have to be good quality, good design and fit today's market. You might have an amazing white lacquer bedroom set you paid $30,000 for, but white lacquer is not in demand.

"Your furniture has to fit what's current."

Jacobson says many people are looking to consign their furniture and other items. A lot of business is conducted by e-mail, but items are priced when they are seen. The consigner get 55 per cent, while the store takes 45 per cent of any sale, she adds.

The company also has a sliding pricing system. The prices gets reduced over time as a means of turning over merchandise, Jacobson says. "The initial price lasts for 60 days and then the item is reduced 15 percent the next month.

The prices goes down an additional 10 per cent every month thereafter. Prices may even be further reduced after six to eight months.

"The consigner can take their item back at any time, but most things stay with us until they sell."

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Advice to home buyers: **know thyself**

By DAVID COLLIN
CJN Staff

Know all the rules before playing the game.

Whoever said the purchase of a home is the biggest investment a person can make took the easy way out with such a simple statement. The amount of research, emotional control and financial liquidity involved is conveniently left out.

Three years ago, I thought buying the right first car was challenging, confusing and financially draining, and in retrospect, I can say it was true. Now, after absorbing advice from experts, attending two industry events and having read through and collected numerous articles on how a first-time home buyer is to enter the market, I can tell you this: know thyself and what you want.

Magazines and newspaper advertisements are full of developers enticing prospective buyers and investors to pre-register for their phase previews. At the events, various brokers claim that they can put you on a list of invitation-only developer sales events. Do not believe everything you see and hear. Pre-register for the preview events yourself. Do not be surprised, however, to find that when you arrive for your appointment, you will be the only one to view what the sales centre has to show. Expect to find that when the sales centre on your list of development possibilities opens its doors to the public, the remaining units will be in short supply and the prices for what is left will leave you breathless.

Lobby of Gramercy Park

Private garden courtyard

I was told that my approach as a first-time buyer of a condo, yet to be built, is what others should emulate.

Familiarize yourself with the industry lingo and then evaluate the locations within the city that provide a quality of life and comfort that will satisfy your daily needs. If at all possible, study plans on development websites prior to preview openings so that you know the exact unit and the configuration that will best suit your ideal living-space setup. Remember, you will likely live there for three to five years, so you had better like what you end up with.

Finally, if you will be carrying a mortgage, make sure you sit down with a mortgage specialist well in advance. Plan for a suitable down payment if there will be any at all, find out what all the extra costs are and recalculate the approximate final purchase price. Know whether or not you will be able to carry on some enjoyment of life beyond your impending financial obligation.

The investment world is governed by rules much like anything else. Taking that next big step requires a full understanding of those rules and how you can play by them. The journey is long and arduous, and certainly not as clear cut as some people would have you believe, especially if they have not involved themselves with every aspect of the purchase experience from beginning to end. So know thyself and the rest will come in time.

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Patio, tree establish blissful coexistence after decades of discord

By SHOLOM WARGON
CJN Staff

Some time after my wife and I purchased our home, we discovered that the patio on the northeast corner of the house had been laid directly on the sprawling root system of a massive Norway spruce tree, some 50 feet high and eight feet in girth. The result? Wholesale upheaval and undulation, culminating in a six-inch "peak," where the tree's foot-thick primary anchor root had lifted the 65-pound concrete patio slabs resting on it like so much dandelion fluff.

The solution? Remove the slabs, raise the entire patio by an average of four inches of new sand – graded from a one-inch increment at the south end to a seven-inch increment at the north end abutting the tree – and rebuild with random flagstone. The alternative – cutting into the beautiful root system that had predated our arrival by more than half a century – was not an option in our books.

At the same time, we also had to excavate and build a connecting walkway, plant a strip of violets between it and the garage, and rebuild the crumbling rear garage door sill, patio perimeter base and patio roof support posts, which on close inspection we discovered were quite literally hanging by — actually, *sitting on* — a thread.

After countless summer mornings, evenings and weekends of lifting, schlepping, digging, pickaxing, raking, measuring, mixing, setting, drilling, sawing, hammering, nailing, screwing, stapling, cutting, chopping, chiselling, compacting, cursing, and generally eating dust, I was really starting to get the hang of walkway and patio building.

Along the way, I encountered a myriad of impediments that I hadn't envisioned at the outset. To cite but one, I had to hand-chisel several deep notches in the four by fours anchoring the new perimeter base to allow them to nestle snugly over the roots they encountered. At the same time, the upper surface of these four by fours had to follow the north-south and east-west slopes of the new patio surface. This was necessary both for esthetics and to allow water to drain away from the house.

The trials and tribulations of the undertaking could fill a book. Here are the broad strokes:

BUYING: Countless trips to building supply stores for all the tools, materials and fasteners I thought I'd require and many I never dreamed I'd need.

STAKING AND GRIDDING: A network of some 20 layout lines was required to establish the proper north-south and east-west slopes. Ensuring consistency across the entire network covering one continuous surface – the patio and the connecting walkway — proved particularly tricky. Throughout the process, I repeatedly moved, restaked, adjusted and tweaked the layout lines to ensure this consistency.

DIGGING: Excavating 150 square feet of walkway to a depth of eight inches and digging out the patio's perimeter in order to rebuild its foundation.

SCHLEPPING: Four cubic yards of moisture-laden clay soil and six cubic yards of sand are a lot to shovel and wheelbarrow around a property. Prying up, lifting and carrying the 72 original 65-pound concrete slabs was child's play by comparison. All in all, I moved some 15 tons of material – portions of it multiple times as dictated by space constraints, learning on the job, and simple lack of foresight.

CUTTING AND NOTCHING: Good cedar four by fours for the perimeter base; scrap two by fours and one by fours for spacers to keep the two-by-eight composite walkway borders exactly two feet apart both top and bottom before laying the sand base between them; and good one by fours to finish the patio perimeter base.

LAYING: 450 square feet of landscape fabric, tacked in place with six-inch plastic spikes and stapled to the walkway borders and patio perimeter base.

Continued on page B28

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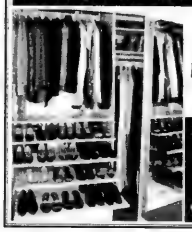
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Building green shouldn't make you blue

By VERA GILLMAN
CJN Staff

We received the news with anticipation and trepidation. Our cottage on Georgian Bay was about to be hooked up to the nearest town's water system. Anticipation, since much of our cottage weekends are typically spent with my husband reprimingthe pump and worrying about the ever-shrinking bay that holds our shore well or me frantically looking for buckets to catch rainwater before it makes its way inside. Trepidation, because for 17 years we have enjoyed our cottage life, despite its inconveniences, and like many cottagers, were uneasy about the inescapable so-called improvements to the area.

Russ and I both agree, however, that change as the area might, this locale has an undeniable hold on us. Our family, admittedly, would be much happier with a reliable source of water and more room. So the promise of water when needed and more frequent visits from our kids was the impetus for our idea to add space to our existing cottage.

Building in our part of cottage country has been rampant, but doing so with an eco-conscience, so far, has not been the norm. So Russ and I hoped to show that the decision to renovate, and to do so with an emphasis on keeping environmental impact low, could coexist. We would hire and buy local, replace inefficiencies with energy-saving options and use the greenest viable building supplies. That was the plan.

A renovation can create tremendous upheaval to its surroundings. Reflecting on what originally drew us to the area: existing trees, wildlife and neighbours; charged us with burdening them as little as possible.

Russ and I would consider our future needs and wants and then adopt a less-is-more approach since projects tend to grow. We hired an architectural technologist who shared our vision. She helped us with our plan to retain as much of the old cottage as was sound to preserve its charm and avoid new where old would do.

To minimize our impact, we kept the original footprint, building up instead of out, committed to not felling trees and chose a design and colour that blended with the natural setting. ReStore, Habitat for Humanity's retail outlet, was called to take all of the reusables, leaving only some wood siding, which we recycled for indoor use.

We were thinking outside the reduce-reuse-recycle box, and words like research, redefine and relax made their way into our eco-building lexicon. A multitude of decisions lay ahead and our research proved to be both friend and foe. The old adage, "the more you know, the more you realize you don't know" applied.

Buying Energy Star appliances, upgrading insulation and windows to current R-rated values, fans for cooling, low-voltage lighting and low-flush toilets was straightforward enough, but the task of exploring and concurring on some of the other alternatives turned out to be much more daunting.

Russ was happy with our decision-making process so far. Me… not so much. Why? As the one who was truly immersed in all the eco-research, I fought pangs of guilt each time our final choice didn't measure up to what I began to call my "alleged" eco-standards. The following account epitomized some of our "greenish" building scenarios.

Our kitchen countertop was a challenge. My search for natural, non-toxic, recycled material remained elusive. Our younger son, Jamie, an integral part of our building crew, told us about a countertop option that sounded like it fit our vision. It was made of soapstone, a beautiful, natural product that needed no toxic sealant. It sounded encouraging. A trip to the supplier, where a husband and wife team, artist and salesperson, excitedly invited us to their soapstone yard to view

Before **After**

and hopefully choose our own new slab, proved productive. Never having had the granite experience, this was new to us, and intoxicating. We found the most beautiful stone with a magnificent aqua quartz vein running through it, which, the artist assured us, would be the pièce de résistance of our renovation. We were sold and enamoured with our choice. So then why, asked Russ, did I need to know exactly how the soapstone got there and who might have been impacted along the way?

The buyer proudly recounted the story. What I heard went something like this.

Soapstone, like other natural stone is quarried. The quarries are small, more like underground bubbles. Geologists, in Brazil in their case, go to farmers and request permission, I guess, to check their fields for evidence of soapstone. If they find it, farmers are paid, presumably a fair wage, for allowing the soapstone to be extracted, and the earth replaced, of course, without any environmental damage. Then labourers haul these gargantuan slabs, with I suppose the aid of modern equipment, onto trucks, where drivers then gingerly negotiate the treacherous mountainous drive to the city, I gather safely. It is then crated and shipped to various suppliers… oooh, the carbon emissions.

Did we use soapstone? Yes. Is it beautiful and natural? Yes. Do you need to use toxic sealants? No. Am I perfectly content with the choice? Not perfectly, but I'm learning that green comes in a variety of shades.

Greenest options are not necessarily most budget-favourable, readily available or suitable. Many more eco-options are being developed, but current information and regulations can be cryptic, and the lingo and looks from the naysayers… intimidating. Our efforts to be green, if not entirely successful, were good intentioned and honest and we did get an education. Our most valuable lesson was learning to relax with our choices because building green shouldn't make you blue.

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Spruce adds natural border to walkway

Continued from page B26

LEVELLING, PLUMBING AND SUPPORTING: By means both conventional (box and line levels) and unorthodox (the iron bars used to keep the walkway borders plumb until I could buttress them on the outside with hard-packed clay soil).

PAINTING: Three coats – high-gloss paint for the white portion of the new perimeter base, sealant for the natural red portion.

GRADING: Once the layout lines were in place, the sand had to be raked and compacted to match their level and slope.

All of the foregoing took me to the end of October, at which point I decided to hire a stonemason to ensure that the job would be completed before winter. That gentleman was most helpful in selecting the stone, which he agreed to lay and set at a good price based on the entire base being graded and ready for laying, so that no additional work would be required on his part.

Throughout the process, our magnificent spruce loomed over the proceedings like a giant mastodon prepared to scuttle, with a flick of its big toe, my efforts at the slightest sign of further encroachment. But it was also benevolent, allowing me to use its farthest-reaching broad root as a natural border for the walkway and lead-in to the patio. For its part, the variety of random flagstone my wife chose has lived up to its name ("Rainbow") by showing its full colour when wet, ensuring sunny spirits come fair weather or foul.

STILL MASTER OF ITS DOMAIN and breathing easier now, our spruce spreads its limbs in welcome.

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MacKenzie Ridge and Upper Thornhill estates

Townwood Homes is now showcasing Upper Thornhill Estates and MacKenzie Ridge, two sought-after new communities featuring classic detached homes on 42-, 60- and 70-foot lots in the city of Vaughan.

Upper Thornhill Estates will be surrounded by nature in all of its splendour but will still be close to city amenities. It is set amid rolling hills, quiet walking paths, lush trees and parks – a setting of natural beauty, with places to walk, hike, bike and explore in all the four-season magnificence that Vaughan offers.

Vaughan, "the city above Toronto," is one of the Greater Toronto Areas's most affluent communities. This upscale city continues to experience exceptional growth and offers wonderful amenities such as parks, shopping centres, schools – both public and private – theatres and more.

Upper Thornhill Estates is the ideal place for families to live – in homes that offer spacious layouts, fabulous kitchens and magnificent family rooms.

Exclusively crafted by Townwood, these detached homes are situated on 42-foot lots. Priced from the upper $500's, these stunning homes will range up to 3,170 square feet.

The homes will be showcases of modern technology and environmentally responsible construction. Townwood's Eco-Eclipse Program will provide complete energy efficient features for the energy-smart consumer and will make the homes of Upper Thornhill Estates one-of-a-kind residences.

Townwood offers purchasers their choice of either the Signet or Estates series.

The Signet series boasts an impressive list of features, including nine-foot main-floor ceilings, an oak main-floor staircase, Silestone kitchen counters, strip hardwood flooring and Manor House garage doors, as well as $7,500 in free upgrades.

The Estate Series comes with additional energy-saving upgrades, as well as nine-foot second-floor ceilings and extended-height basements. It also offers a spectacular upgrade package that features built-in stainless appliances by Wolf, Sub-Zero and Asko, upgraded kitchen cabinets, Berber carpeting, and Regency hardwood flooring and cultured marble counters.

At Townwood's MacKenzie Ridge in Maple, Ont., classic estate homes are set amid lush trees and gently rolling hills. These stately 60- to 70-foot-lot homes are priced from the upper $700's and boast inspired interiors and kitchens with Wolf and Sub-Zero built-in appliances.

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The big move – to a downtown condo from the 'burbs

By GARY LAFORET
CJN Staff

It was early in May, a crisp, sunny day with a cool east wind in the harbour. As we sailed past the *Toronto Star* building, I handed over the tiller, ducked into the cabin for my cellphone and called my wife at our new home.

"Hi, Hon. Look out the kitchen window. Can you see us? We're really flying."

While that day was smooth sailing, selling your home in the suburbs and moving to a new condominium downtown can present some challenges across the financial and emotional spectrums.

Various concerns shifted in and out of focus during the long delay between the offer to purchase and the final closing, but primarily my wife, Raylyn, and I struggled with two recurring questions: even though our three children are grown, will we fragment our close family feeling if we move from our house in Guildwood Village in east Toronto? Secondly, are we doing the right thing financially?

Raylyn's major worry evaporated after the first, big, raucous family dinner at the new place. With more open space, and a newly purchased larger dining room table, it actually seemed better suited. Cupboard and counter space in the kitchen proved adequate when put to the test.

North view

Financial and logistical planning began with the offer to purchase and continued through the closing. It helped somewhat that we had faith in the developer of our condominium. Ours was a Lanterra Development partnered with H&R Developments and Malibu Investments Inc, an Israeli developer. We found them to be very professional throughout the process. We had also familiarized ourselves with the project's declaration so we knew what to expect, to some extent.

The timeline

March 29, 2003: Raylyn and I put a deposit down on a one bedroom and den near the top of 18 Yonge St., a 39-storey tower to be built at Yonge Street and Lakeshore Boulevard. The plan is to use it as a "cottage in the city." We'd keep our rather elderly 26-foot sloop at the Toronto Island Marina.

East view

Feb. 13, 2004: We upgrade to a two-bedroom corner unit on the same floor. After repeatedly scouting our future neighbourhood, exploring Harbourfront and St. Lawrence Market, we had decided that this is where we'd like to live full time someday when we are so-called "empty nesters."

Sept. 15, 2005: Our projected occupancy date. Despite Raylyn's somewhat unreasonable entreaties to me to "get them to build ours first," our floor to be is literally thin air. Our new occupancy date is Dec. 18, 2006. We predict it will be finished February of 2007. That's okay, more time to get ready; more time to sock money into the condo fund. To be fair, building permit delays had been a problem.

Dec. 11, 2006: Our pre-delivery inspection, "PDI day." The builder's rep lets us into our future home, and Raylyn instructs me to start looking for flaws. I nod dutifully and then begin staring transfixed through the kitchen window at a freighter steaming through the east end of the harbour. My harbour. I get into even more trouble a few minutes later when she discovers that I've brought my camera – just one – and am snapping more pictures of the harbour and the lake beyond through the master bedroom window and vistas of the city through the living room windows.

Okay, I didn't find any good flaws, I guess, but I was distracted.

Dec. 18, 2006: Occupancy date arrives. The builder's second prediction was accurate. This began a kind of limbo period in which we lived in the condo but kept the house for 10 more months before we were sure that the kids wouldn't need it. John had taken one look at the new place and abandoned the house to move into the second bedroom. Originally, he had been looking forward to his plan whereby he would forsake living in residence to look after the house while he went to University of Toronto.

Aug. 15, 2007: The building was registered in July, and we were able to close several weeks later. Our most recent graduate, Jessica, announced that she was moving to her own place in September and no longer needed the house. We listed it 10 days later and sold it with a late October closing.

Continued on page 31

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Luxury condo tower in the downtown core

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

The L Tower is an icon to live in.

Reaching 205 metres into Toronto's skyline, the 57-storey L-shaped condominium building holds 496 suites and was designed by renowned architect Daniel Libeskind, known for his design of the Royal Ontario Museum's Michael Lee-Chin Crystal.

The skyscraper has a number of unique elements, including panoramic views of the downtown core and Lake Ontario. The building is framed around the Sony Centre for the Arts (formerly the Hummingbird Centre) at Yonge and Front streets.

People looking for a condo in a busy neighbourhood with restaurants, galleries, shops and theatres should consider the L Tower. It is steps away from the St. Lawrence Market and is linked to the new Heritage Awareness Centre, an extension of the Sony Centre for the Arts. The centre consists of an interactive culture museum; ArtsLab, a studio theatre showcasing fine arts, drama, dance, literature, architectural and screen presentations; TVDinner, a dinner theatre; CyberSpace, an eatery with an open gaming facility; and CityLink, a tourist information centre that promotes city and provincial attractions. In addition to these services, it sells tickets to events and provides a concierge service.

The L Tower has luxurious spa facilities with treatment suites, his and her wet and dry saunas, a yoga studio, a lap pool, a state-of-the-art fitness space and a lounge area.

Each unit has engineered hardwood in the foyer, a living/dining room, kitchen, interior bedroom and hallway. It comes complete with a Miele stainless steel kitchen appliance package and stainless steel exhaust hood; a granite kitchen countertop with choice of porcelain, ceramic or mosaic tumbled marble backsplash; a marble countertop in the master bathrooms with porcelain sinks; and a Miele laundry machine and dryer.

Building amenities include a catering kitchen featuring two glass upper cabinets; a private dining room; library; cinema and resident's lounge.

L Tower is a short walking distance from a TTC subway station and is well serviced by taxis.

Living quarters range from 43 to 157 metres squared and have nine- and 10-foot ceilings. Suites start at $589,900 and occupancy date is slated for 2011.

For more information about the L Tower, call 416-777-2533.

Moving downtown was a great decision

Continued from page B29

While the whole timing sequence in which we owned two homes for more than 10 months was less than efficient, we wouldn't have had it any other way. Raylyn remarked the other day that she thinks we see our kids – two of whom work downtown and use the TTC – more than if we had stayed in the house. It's true. Raylyn has lunch with Jessica three or four days a week, John stops for dinner most nights "on his way home" to his new apartment, and Jennifer comes in from Brooklin, Ont., frequently for theatre or concert nights, or just to drag Dad to the gym in our building.

Raylyn now walks to her office in 10 minutes or less. If it rains, she walks through the PATH, a network of pedestrian tunnels under the downtown office towers. She heroically volunteered to give up her car, which saved purchasing a second parking space at $20,000 back in 2003… it's a lot more now. Not having the overhead on a second car covers maintenance fees on the condo. The suburbanesque Subaru Outback was traded in for a more nimble Mini. It sits idly in the garage most weekends because we find we walk everywhere downtown. Unfortunately, we are often walking to restaurants. (Just kidding, Dr. P.)

It goes without saying that you are sacrificing square footage if you purchase downtown, and that was of some concern to us. At around 900 feet with a very good split two-bedroom layout, our new place is like a bungalow in the sky with nine-foot ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows. We opted generally for modern condo-friendly furniture, including low-backed couches that don't block the windows and the views.

We have two storage lockers, which is recommended for anyone moving from a house. With no basement and no garage, there is a limited clutter forgiveness factor. Of the whole experience, ensuring that sentimental treasures moved with us while clutter didn't was probably the most challenging and time-consuming task. For instance, my three copies of the last issue of the *Toronto Telegram* newspaper didn't make the move; artwork and cards from the kids through the years did.

More importantly, our family as a unit came through what Raylyn and I saw as a necessary "shift in gears" very nicely. Our new place is hardly an "empty nest" and it never will be. The goal was change and more vibrant surroundings, and it's happened.

What do I miss and what have I learned?

I do miss – especially in the winter – being able to point our rotund Pug Kasey in the direction of the backyard. I do know my condo neighbours and enjoy talking to them. I do know I should sedate myself before attending any more condo annual meetings. I do wish they'd stop "testing" various alarms in the building. I am happy that the kids come by as often as they do – even if my son makes me go on four-mile walks through the city.

I do think we made the right decision and, most importantly, I know Raylyn thinks so, too. This is good because, what I know for sure is, I am not moving again.

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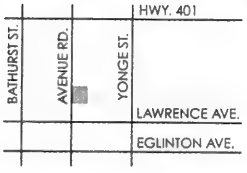

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This Week

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National

Immigrants struggle to make a connection. *Page 3*

Toronto woman receives award from IDF. *Page 32*

Heebonics

Local artist creates music 'out of love.' *Page 37*

Arts & Travel

Film focuses on Jerusalem's homeless teens. *Page 38*

Neil Sedaka to perform in rare synagogue concert. *Page 40*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions.....10
The Kirshner File 11
Family Moments 21
National 21
According to Reports 21
What's New 22
Obituaries and Notices 24
Yiddish Corner 24
On Campus 25
Jewish Life 26
Health & Lifestyle.....28
Summer Fashion 29
Israel & the Jewish World 33
Arts & Travel.....38

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'Masada shall not fall again'

U.S. President George W. Bush, right, and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert reflect on the horizon from their perch on Masada in the Judean Hills. Bush visited Israel last week. ***Please see related story on page 33.***

[*Israel Sun photo*]

Feds to fund program commemorating *St. Louis*

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The government of Canada has agreed to fund a memorial and an education program dedicated to the St. Louis, a passenger ship with more than 900 Jewish refugees from prewar Europe that was denied landing in Halifax.

At least one-third of the ship's passengers were killed during the Holocaust after being turned away in May and June 1939 by Canada, the United States and Cuba, its original destination.

Canadian Jewish Congress has been lobbying for a memorial to the St. Louis for 20 years and will receive $300,000 to design a memorial in Halifax harbour as well as develop a teachers' kit. The instructional material will facilitate the education of young people about the consequences of a racist immigration policy, said Congress CEO Bernie Farber.

Congress has proposed erecting a memorial at Pier 21, where immigrants most often arrived in Canada, he added.

The St. Louis grant is part of a $29-million Community Historical Recognition Program announced last week by Jason Kenney, secretary of state for multiculturalism and Canadian identity. The Indo-Canadian community was granted $2.5 million to commemorate the 1914 Komagata Maru incident, in which a ship

Continued on page 45

EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE: Canadian Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, in Israel last week, inspects some spent Qassam rocket shells from among the 7,000 that have fallen on the residents of Sderot and other Negev communities. Beside Day, left, is his Israeli cabinet counterpart, Avi Dichter.

[*Israel photo*]

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Bin Laden levels new threat against Israel — see page 34

The News in Brief

CANADA

Israel Dep't Planned

TORONTO — To mark Israel's 60th birthday, the Canada Christian College is creating a department dedicated to studying the Jewish state, the college said this month. President Charles McVety said the first chair will be Frank Diamant, executive vice-president of B'nai Brith Canada, whom McVety said has a "wealth of first-hand experience and insight into the Diaspora Jewish community and its relationship to the Jewish state." The department, which will serve both graduate and undergraduate students, "is a powerful symbol of the extraordinary working relationship and devotion of the evangelical movement with the modern State of Israel and the Jewish People throughout the world," McVety added.

Relief Fund Launched

TORONTO — B'nai Brith Canada has established an emergency relief fund to assist the growing number of victims of the cyclone in Burma, as well as last week's earthquake in China's Sichuan province. To donate, visit www.bnaibrith.ca, or call 1-800-274-2310.

WORLD

Still More Threats

TEHRAN — Arabs and Iranians would destroy Israel if they got the chance, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said. "The criminals imagine that by holding celebrations they can save the Zionist regime from death," the Iranian president said May 14 as U.S. President George W. Bush arrived in Israel for its 60th birthday. "They should know that regional nations hate this fake and criminal regime, and if the smallest and briefest chance is given to regional nations, they will destroy it."

Shooter Called Insane

SEATTLE — Naveed Haq was insane when he opened fire in the Seattle Jewish Federation in 2006, a witness said. Dr. James Missett, an addiction and forensic psychiatrist, testified last week that Haq was and is severely mentally ill, and was legally insane at the time of the shooting. Haq, 32, killed one woman and injured five people, then told police he wanted to make a political point about Jewish power. Haq's lawyers will continue to question medical experts about his diagnosed bipolar disorder and chronic psychosis this week. The Muslim-American was taking six drugs for his mental illness at the time, including one not approved for bipolar disorder that has homicidal side effects in some patients, an expert said. He also suffered from schizoaffective disorder, which includes hallucinations and delusions.

Meat Plant Raided

DES MOINES — U.S. authorities say a methamphetamine laboratory was operating at the nation's largest kosher slaughterhouse, that employees carried weapons to work, and that some 80 per cent of its workers were illegal immigrants, including rabbis who had entered the country from Canada without proper documents. The charges were among the most explosive to emerge following the massive May 12 raid at Agriprocessors in Postville, Iowa. In a 60-page search warrant application, U.S. federal agents revealed details of their six-month probe of the factory that involved 12 federal agencies. Some 390 workers were arrested on immigration violations. The plant's rabbinic supervisor, Moses Weissmandel, denied the drug charges.

Rescuer of Warsaw Ghetto Children Dies

WARSAW — Irena Sendler, who smuggled thousands of Jewish children out of the Warsaw Ghetto to safety, died May 11 in Warsaw. She was 98.

Irena Sendler

Between October 1940 and April 1943, Sendler and a team of about 20 volunteers smuggled out about 2,500 children in boxes or suitcases. She then placed them with Polish families. As a social worker, Sendler, who was Catholic, visited the ghetto regularly.

She was later arrested and tortured by the Gestapo.

In 1965, she was among the first people named by Yad Vashem as Righteous Among the Nations. She also was made an honorary Israeli citizen. Sendler was nominated last year for a Nobel Peace Prize.

She lived in relative obscurity until about eight years ago, when a group of students from Kansas learned about her wartime heroism and wrote a play about it. The play has been performed in North America and Poland.

Hundreds of people attended her May 15 funeral, including Poland's chief rabbi, Michael Schudrich, who said a prayer, and Israel's ambassador to Poland, David Peleg.

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Immigrants struggle to forge a community connection

'Imperative that they become involved in the fabric of Jewish life'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Gabriel Epelbaum, who came to Toronto from Argentina four years ago with his wife and two children, got involved in the Jewish community by helping other newcomers.

By becoming part of Jewish Immigrant Aid Services of Toronto's Gordie Wolfe Leadership Development Program for newcomers, he said that he is not only giving back to the community, he is getting back as well.

The Epelbaum family is among the one-third of 180,000 Jews in the Greater Toronto Area who identify themselves as immigrants.

Joanna Sasson Morrison, co-ordinator of community development services at JIAS, said that the leadership program, one of a number of JIAS programs, was established as a response to the situation of immigrants not sitting on community boards despite making up one-third of the community.

"It is imperative that immigrants become involved in the fabric of Jewish life. The community needs a [bank] of talented people from which to draw," she said.

Julia and Arkadiy Teplitskiy [Carolyn Blackman photo]

Janis Roth, JIAS executive director, said that the agency has always been the gateway to immigration, but its role has changed over the years.

"Eighty-five years ago, its role was all about settlement – assisting with food and shelter. The focus now is getting people connected with the community. Without that, we would have a disengaged, unaffiliated group. If we offer more when they arrive, the [community benefits]."

There is no longer a framework within which all immigrants fit, she said. "We now work closely with each family to determine their goals and dreams, and we work from there. It is much more individualized. There is no notion that each family needs 'this and this and this.'"

Morrison said that there are more "spokes on the wheel.

"While before it was linear, with each family needing basically the same things, now

Continued on page 6

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Two new encyclopedias

From the editor's desk

One of the chief characteristics of the Jewish people through the ages has been our deep inclination towards learning.

Indeed, each morning, at the very outset of our prayers, as we prepare to contend with the rigours of the upcoming day, the traditional liturgy directs our minds and our hearts to a number of blessings related to learning.

Study (of Torah) is considered the transformative equal to a range of socially desirable behaviours that our rabbis urged us to pursue. They knew that study and learning would, of its own motion and integrity, lead the student to adopt those very same behaviours of his or her own accord.

Achad Ha'am, one of our people's great thinkers and commentators of the last century, was quite emphatic that the gravitational pull exerted on the Jew by the need to learn has been one of the key factors of Jewish continuity throughout the centuries.

"Learning, learning, learning," he wrote to the American scholar, Rabbi J.L. Magnes. "That is the secret of Jewish survival."

Were he alive today, Achad Ha'am (Asher Ginzburg, as he was born) would undoubtedly be very pleased with the recent appearance of two new, unprecedented encyclopedias – new aids to Jewish survival – that enhance the already vast possibilities of more learning by and about Jews, if not precisely more Jewish learning.

* * *

The Jewish Women's Archive and Shalvi Publishing have produced an electronic encyclopedia called *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia.*

Edited by professors Paula Hyman and Dalia Ofer, of Yale University and Hebrew University, respectively, the encyclopedia is available only in CD-ROM format. Hebrew U professor Alice Shalvi (a contributor to *The CJN*'s Rosh Hashanah supplement last fall) is the encyclopedia's associate editor.

The work is a watershed achievement in making pertinent, instructive scholarship accessible to vast numbers of curious and interested students. It is a superb resource and an inviting portal for further investigation of the many entries in the work.

Those entries span three millennia of the women of Jewish history. The encyclopedia includes some 1,700 biographical entries, 300 thematic entries and more than 1,400 photographs.

The encyclopedia brings to the fore and makes readily available knowledge and information about hundreds of Jewish women who were known, if at all, only to a few in the narrower, esoteric world of academic research and scholarly study.

Now, whoever is curious may acquire the knowledge. The encyclopedia is an inviting modern, highway of easily travelled interconnections: cross-references, glossaries, essays, articles and helpful visual aids.

If *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia* is not available at the nearest Jewish bookstore, contact Shalvi Publishing Ltd, POB 3828, Jerusalem. The e-mail address is mosheshalvi@israsrv.net.il

Yale University Press has just released *The YIVO Encyclopedia of Jews in Eastern Europe*. Edited by Gershon David Hundert, Leonor Segal Professor of Jewish Studies and professor of history at McGill University, the two-volume encyclopedia is a stunning, magnificent, weighty work of some 2,400 pages.

It is the combined, masterfully produced product of an editorial board consisting of 34 scholars and more than 450 contributors, whom Hundert describes as "virtually every major and senior scholar [in] their areas of expertise." The work contains an index of more than 200 pages, maps, colour plates, countless photographs and of course, entries upon entries regarding the Jews of eastern Europe.

In the preface Hundert writes that the work was intended to. "[reflect] all aspects of Jewish life in its variety and multiplicity: religious and secular; male and female; urban and rural; Hasidic and Misnagdic; Yiddishist and Hebraist; Zionist and assimilationist; Russian and Polish; Romanian and Ukrainian; Lithuanian and Galician; even Karaite and Rabbinite."

Hundert explains the encyclopedia's genesis, aims and methods in a seven-page preface. Conceived some 10 years ago, he explains, the encyclopedia owes its existence to the single-minded collaboration of a number of dedicated and highly motivated individuals and generous sponsors.

The encyclopedia "is intended for anyone interested in the history and culture of Jews in Eastern Europe." That encompasses a very wide sweep of Jews and non-Jews alike.

We are all the beneficiaries of this significant collaboration directed so ably by Prof. Hundert.

* * *

In the May 8 Editor's Desk, Richard Marceau was incorrectly identified as a as a Bloc Québécois MP. In fact, he is a former Bloc MP who now works for the Canada-Israel Committee.

—MBD

SeeJN CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

EVERYONE HAD TO MAKE A LIVING

A young Jewish boy whose parents had recently arrived in Israel from Yemen sells newspapers at the central bus station in Jerusalem in July 1950.

[WZPS photo by Seymour Katcoff, courtesy of Don Katcoff]

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JIAS, JRCC play key role in immigrants' lives

Continued from page 3

people come in on different places along the continuum."

In the *2001 Census Analysis Series on the Jewish Community*, prepared by Charles Shahar and Tina Rosenbaum in 2005, it states that JIAS provides resettlement and integration services, as well as an array of programming, including orientation to Toronto and its Jewish community; financial assistance; English lessons; children's and youth programs; and vocational counselling in partnership with community and government-sponsored agencies.

Boris Shorfer

The integration of newcomers can be further enhanced, they said, by providing opportunities "for participation in the breadth and scope of Jewish community life through camping and day and supplementary school attendance; Jewish community centre and synagogue membership; and by taking leadership roles within community agencies and organizations and on communal boards and committees.

"It is important to recognize the enormous contribution made by newcomers to the overall strength, vitality and viability of the community. Moving forward, the community will sustain and further its efforts to welcome, support and integrate newcomers as they adapt to Canadian society and become fully participating members of our community."

Epelbaum, who works as a project engineer, and his wife, Silvina, who runs a day care, admit that immigration is not an easy process.

"It wasn't difficult to find a way to make a living, but being Jewish can be very expensive. That is true in any country, and I understand. We have to help institutions supplement themselves," said Gabriel Epelbaum.

His older son attended the Anne & Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto for one year on a subsidy, he said, but left because it was difficult for him socially. "That was the main reason he switched schools. He was the one of the only Latin Americans at CHAT, and everyone had friends from their previous school. I admit that he is shy, but the school made little effort to help him out."

Nina and Meir Shenhav
[Carolyn Blackman photos]

Nina and Meir Shenhav have been here for about nine months and are still looking for work. She is a journalist, author and actress, and he is an electrical engineer. They are the parents of a 12-year-old and an eight-year-old. They were offered a "generous" subsidy for their children to attend Associated Hebrew Schools, but turned it down, they said, because they want them to integrate with the larger community.

"We came here," said Nina Shenhav, "because we wanted to move beyond our own community, shake up our life a little. We want our kids to make an effort, to learn to swim in the deep water."

Their lives are calmer and more relaxed here, they said, and they realize now how tense they were in Israel.

"Our social lives are different, though. In Israel, our families lived nearby, and the kids popped in and out of everyone's home. They miss that. It is harder for them to make friends here. They keep in close touch by computer, but it is not the same. You can't get a warm hug from a computer," she said.

They would like to get involved in the Jewish community they said, "but now is not the time. We have to network for jobs and help our kids get settled."

They're also learning their way around. "We need to learn how to find a doctor, get to the pharmacy, the library, things we always took for granted in Israel."

Boris Shorfer, 43, a father of two, and a member of Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, arrived here from the Soviet Union via Israel when he was 14. He still remembers how difficult it was to fit in socially. "I had left all my friends behind, and I was angry for at least two years."

He has visited his birth town, he said, and realized how good it is to live here. "It is a country with a lot of anger. My parents did a brave and smart thing to move."

Arkadiy Teplitskiy, 24, who has been here more than three years, and his wife Julia, 24, who arrived several months ago, are both working, and agree that life is definitely easier here.

"We work and we can spend our money. In Russia, we could hardly pay our rent. It's a good step. We miss Russia, though, so we try to enjoy ourselves and forget," said Arkadiy.

Work takes all their time, however, and they have no time to forge a connection to the Jewish community, they say.

Igor Korenzvit, who moved here from Russia in 1973, is chair of the Jewish Russian Community Centre and a member of *The CJN's* editorial advisory board.

He agreed that the resettlement of immigrants is not the big problem any more. "Some take longer, some take shorter. What is the problem, is their integration into the larger Jewish community, and that is what we need to concentrate on."

With about 40,000 Russian Jews in the Greater Toronto Area, they represent about 20 per cent of the Jewish population, he said, but less than one per cent sit on boards of Jewish institutions.

The problem, he said, is that many in the larger Jewish community believe that Russian immigrants will integrate on their own if we give them time.

"It happened in the past when their grandparents came [from eastern Europe], but their grandparents were educated in Judaism, and they knew about traditions and religion.

"Russian Jews know very little when they come. Tzedakah did not exist in Russia, and if we don't teach them, the next generation will be completely lost."

At the JRCC, he said, we try to teach them about Jewish values, and "afterwards [we hope] they'll move on to attending synagogue."

In general, he said, Russians are highly educated and hard-working. "They could strengthen the Jewish community.

"We have more to lose than they do if they don't integrate. We need new blood and new thinkers."

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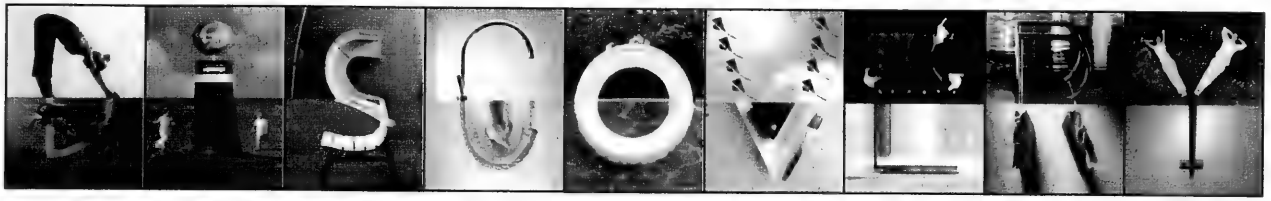

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The sorrow and shame of a hypocrite's deceit

Last week was a momentous one in Israel. Scores of dignitaries – current and former heads of governments, nobel laureates, scholars, thinkers, leaders of industry and science, writers and celebrities from all walks and spheres of life – were in the country to take part in a special 60th anniversary conference, called *Facing Tomorrow*, convened by President Shimon Peres under the auspices of the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute in Jerusalem. The celebratory occasion and the august roster of participants burnished the gathering to a high shine of possibility, hope and aspiration for the future.

To commemorate the 60th anniversary, U.S. President George W. Bush addressed a special session of the Knesset. Fresh from a visit that day to Masada and fully aware of the mountain fortress' symbol-laden significance in Jewish history, the president proclaimed that "Masada will not fall again." The moment was electric with emotion. "I am proud to be Israel's closest ally and best friend," he told the assembly.

On the same day, Mahmoud Abbas, president of the Palestinian Authority (PA), addressed his people in commemoration of *al Nakba* when Palestinians mourn, as a "disaster," the founding of the Jewish state. He urged Israel to honour its 60th anniversary by making peace with the Palestinians. "There are two peoples living on this beloved land. One celebrates independence and the other feels pain at the memory of its Nakba… *Isn't it time for Israel to respond to the call of a just and comprehensive peace and achieve historical reconciliation between the two peoples on this sacred and tortured land?"* (Our emphasis)

Seldom have so few words carried greater hypocrisy and deceit.

At every turn by Israelis and international mediators of the wheel of attempted coexistence, Palestinian leaders, if not all of the Palestinian people, have jammed the spokes. As recently as 15 years ago, and ever since in Oslo, Washington, Wye Plantation and Camp David, Palestinian leaders have spurned peace and reconciliation with Israel.

Seldom have leaders abused their own people more than the Palestinian leaders have abused, harmed and betrayed the Palestinians. How many billions of dollars given to the PA by Europe, the United States, other Western countries and the Gulf states, intended for state-building, have Palestinian leaders squandered or simply stolen?

Typical of Palestinian leaders' behaviour toward Israel was the launching, the day before Abbas spoke, of a GRAD rocket at a shopping centre in Ashkelon, wounding some 90 people.

These Palestinian leaders tried to do in Ashkelon what their confederates have always tried to do since even before Israel was formed: kill Jews, and the possibility of peace with a Jewish state.

Isn't it time for Abbas to speak the truth to his own people about the real cause of their pain? It is both a shame and deep sorrow for them that he does not.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Prof. John Polanyi of the University of Toronto was awarded the prestigious Wolf Foundation Prize for Chemistry in Jerusalem The honour, which he shared with Prof. George Pimentel of the University of California at Berkeley, was for envisioning the chemical laser and for his development of infra-red chemiluminescence technique. In 1986, Polanyi won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
THEIR HOLIDAY CALENDAR
EACH YEAR WE CELEBRATE THE DISASTER OF 1948.
WHEN WE CHOSE WAR INSTEAD OF A STATE ALONGSIDE OF ISRAEL.
IN TIME, OF COURSE WE'LL BE CELEBRATING THE DISASTER OF 2006
WHEN WE CHOSE HAMAS TERROR INSTEAD OF A STATE ALONGSIDE OF ISRAEL.
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Democracies should denounce Durban II

According to *The CJN*, The Canadian Council on Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) has given up trying to get accredited to Durban II, the upcoming conference that's allegedly about human rights ("CIJA blocked from Durban II, May 8). I don't know why they tried in the first place.

It should be clear to anyone that the United Nations has lost all understanding of what human rights are, and that its agency on the subject, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, is little more than a vehicle for denouncing Israel. All western democracies and any Jewish organizations should follow the lead of Canada and have nothing to do with this upcoming travesty.

Perhaps, the well-known defenders of human rights who are organizing this event (Libya, Iran, Cuba, etc.) could invite that nice former U.S. president, Jimmy Carter, as a keynote speaker. Carter could then proclaim again that if only Israel and its supporters would talk to those nice, misunderstood folks of Hamas, there would be peace in our time!

Ken Frankel
Montreal

* * *

Conservative synagogues and USCJ

In ending their affiliation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), a move that is out of step with other conservative congregations in the rest of Canada, several Toronto synagogues are isolating themselves and depriving their membership of benefiting from the vast array of services that the USCJ provides to its affiliated congregations ("Beth Emeth leaves Conservative umbrella body – follows Adath Israel in ending USCJ membership," *CJN* Toronto, April 24).

While the leadership of these synagogues assert their ongoing commitment to Conservative Judaism, it is troubling that they do not feel it incumbent upon their congregations to assume their share of the responsibility of supporting, by way of dues, the very infrastructure that works on their behalf, and whose raison d'etre is to empower and enrich its affiliated congregations by ensuring that there is a strong, unified and dynamic body to represent, sustain and grow a pluralistic Conservative Judaism.

What message is the leadership of these synagogues conveying to their members, and to all of us as individuals, regarding the importance of communal responsibility, the significance of affiliation, and about the notion that one must not only receive, but also give?

Can our relationship with the bodies that maintain and ensure the continued existence of an infrastructure for Jewish life in our communities be based solely on a short-term, monetary cost-benefit formula, or rather, should it be based on a long-range vision that recognizes the value of that infrastructure and the necessity of contributing toward its sustainability, not only for the present, but for the future benefit of our children and children's children?

Alexandra Cyngiser
President, Pacific Northwest Region
Chair, Services to Congregations
United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

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People search

I am organizing a reunion of child survivors who were in the "International DP Children's Center Kloster Indersdorf" in 1945-46. The "boys" from Kloster Indersdorf who will be coming to the reunion this summer keep asking me whether I can't find more of the "girls" who were with them in this displaced persons' camp. Female survivors are hard to find, because most of them have probably changed their names.

Here are nine names of "girls" whom they are hoping to see again at the reunion:

- Halina Bryks, born about 1930
- Margot Krakauer, born about 1930
- Nina Krieger, born about 1932
- Jaceta and Laia Rajnsztajn, born about 1931 and 1927,
- Magda Rozsahegyi, born about 1930,
- Sinaida Grussman, born about 1937
- Nelli Jussen, born about 1930
- Suri Lachmanovivz, born about 1931

Please contact me if you are one of these survivors or know any of them.

Anna Andlauer
Indersdorf, Germany
andlauer@onlinehome.de

* * *

Re-branding Israel

Consul General Amir Gissin understands full well how "to help re-brand Israel on the world stage" ("Our joy is always connected to tears," *CJN*, May 8). As long as Israel occupies the West Bank, illegally expands settlements, illegally builds the security barrier, kills innocent non-combatants, and creates a living hell for Palestinians under its control, no amount of mere spin-doctoring will help.

We who truly love Israel know that "positive images" will be seen once these egregious acts cease. Israel must stop double dealing, stop pretending to seek peace while travelling the same old paths of dishonour, immorality and death.

Bernard Katz
Toronto

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Telling the stories of Canadian Jewry

By FRANKLIN BIALYSTOK and RANDAL SCHNOOR

B.G. Sack. Louis Rosenberg. A.M. Klein. Miriam Waddington. Mordecai Richler. Naim Kattan. Gerald Tulchinsky. Irving Abella. Pierre Anctil. Janice Rosen. Norman Ravvin. Some of these names are familiar to many Canadian Jews, others less so. They are representative of Canadian Jews who have recorded the history of Canadian Jewry and who have penned the literature of our people in Canada, in English, French, Yiddish and Hebrew since the turn of the last century.

Some of these writers, scholars and archivists, together with local and national Jewish leaders, established historical societies that have kept alive our stories and records across the country. At the forefront of this effort is the the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies/Association des études juives canadiennes. Its history and achievements have made a major impact in our understanding of Jewish life in Canada. As the association celebrates its 32nd. anniversary from June 1 to 3, 2008, at the Congress of Humanities and Social Science (Congress) in Vancouver, it is pertinent to recall its important contribution to our community.

The association sprung from the Canadian Jewish Historical Society (CJHS). It was founded in 1937 in Montreal, in part to document, award and organize the "history and life of the Jews in Canada in general, and in Canadian regional centres in particular, as well as with the history of the Jews as an [sic] historical people." Sack, who wrote the first comprehensive history of Canadian Jewry in Yiddish in 1926 was the president, and H. M. Caiserman, who was the driving force for the creation of the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) in 1919, and its rebirth in 1933, was the secretary. At a meeting the following year, Saul Hayes gave a reading of "The Crisis of 1849" and its impact on Jewish merchants in Montreal. Hayes was soon to become the director of Congress, a position he held for the next 40 years. Little is known about the fledgling society after that. Most likely, it folded due to the tremendous strains of the oncoming world conflict and the unsuccessful efforts to persuade the government to open our doors to the Jews under Nazi oppression.

Although local Jewish historical societies thrived from coast to coast, we don't pick up the threads of the CJHS until the 1960s. In the intervening 30 years, literature by and about Canadian Jews had become widespread, especially in Montreal and Winnipeg. Klein, arguably the most profound Canadian Jewish thinker, had written poetry, essays, political commentaries and a seminal novel. Irving Layton, Mordecai Richler and Leonard Cohen were in the first rank of Canadian writers as were Prairie-bred Adele Wiseman, Waddington and Eli Mandel. In 1964, the "governing principles" of the reborn society surpassed those of its predecessor, encouraging university students to explore their Jewish heritage, an indication of the social mobility of Canadian Jewry in postwar years. Yet, without proper funding and a link to the national mainstream, the society became moribund by the end of the decade.

Thankfully, this situation was soon reversed. Hayes, disturbed by what he coined "the Jewish emptiness," where young Canadian Jews had become divorced from their traditional prewar institutions and knew little of their past, spearheaded the re-establishment of the CJHS under the aegis of CJC. The society's president, Victor Sefton from Winnipeg, was joined by other visionaries, such as landsleit Abraham Arnold and Harry Gutkin, in inaugurating the new society at the Congress at Laval University in 1976. Now that the society was linked academically and to CJC, it was able to sponsor programs, publish newsletters and organize an annual conference highlighting the best of new scholarship. Yet, the members and participants were largely "amateur" historians and writers. Canadian Jewish studies, as an academic field, was still in its infancy. Thus, the driving force of the society were the leaders of local historical societies.

H.M. Caiserman, secretary of the Congress of Humanities and Social Science, left, and David Rome, who was to become the director of the Canadian Jewish Archives, return to Canada after completing a fact-finding mission to Poland immediately following the end of World War II. [CJC archives photo]

The Winnipeggers were joined by such significant stalwarts as Ben Kayfetz, the director of community relations for CJC and a historian of Jewish Ontario, and David Rome of Montreal, the director of the Canadian Jewish Archives and a luminous historian of Jewish Quebec.

A major factor in the rising profile of the society was the inculcation of the study of Canadian Jewry in the universities. In the 1980s, academics were undertaking the formal study of our history and culture. One impetus for this interest was the publication of *None Is Too Many*, by professors Harold Troper and Abella. The authors uncovered the anti-Semitism prevalent in the Immigration Branch in the 1930s and through World War II that prevented European Jewry from finding refuge in Canada. The impact of their work was profound in exposing the anti-Semitic and racist nature of Canadian society at that time. Subsequently, other scholars have looked at various aspects of that period and have branched out to examine our history since 1760. Many professionals joined the existing conclave of learned "amateur scholars" in the society, and together they created a unique blend of inquiry into the story of Canadian Jewry.

The creation of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society Journal in 1977, a periodical edited by Rabbi Jonathan Plaut and later by Stephen Speisman, the pre-eminent historian of Jewish Toronto, provided an outlet for new and established researchers. With its demise in 1988, the society realized that there had to be a shift in its outlook.

In the early 1990s, there was much discussion, nay dispute, among the membership of the society. Some felt that the work should be devoted solely to history; others argued that our focus had become too narrow, and that to attract new interest, we had to expand our outlook to sociology, the arts and other disciplines. The latter group's perspective prevailed. With a grant from the Social Science and Humanities Research Council, a new journal, *Canadian Jewish Studies/Etudes juives canadiennes*, emerged. Its editors have been professors Richard Menkis, Ira Robinson and Michael Brown. To date, there have been 12 issues. By 1996, the CJHS had changed its name to the Association for Canadian Jewish Studies/Association des études juives canadiennes.

During this transition, Kattan, whose novels weave a thread from his native Baghdad to his adopted home in Montreal,,succeeded Abe Arnold as president. Kattan was the first, and so far the only francophone, to head the association. His successors have been professors Robinson, Troper, Ravvin and Randal Schnoor. The importance of Canadian Jewish studies has led to the establishment of Chairs in the field at York University, inaugurated by Abella, Concordia, headed by Ravvin, and Ottawa, led by Anctil. Courses in the field are now offered at the University of Toronto (Franklin Bialystok), and UBC (Menkis). Morton Weinfeld (McGill University) and Schnoor (York) teach courses on the sociology of North American Jewish life.

The ACJS/AEJC is a national organization with headquarters in Montreal and is a constituent organization of Canadian Jewish Congress. We gratefully acknowledge the ongoing support of the Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies at Concordia University. The association is also affiliated with the Centre for Jewish Studies at York University, the Jewish studies program at the University of Toronto and the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program at the University of Ottawa. The association maintains a close affiliation with historical societies and archival collections in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, Ottawa and St. John.

The association recognizes its debt to the pioneers of Canadian Jewish studies. In the 1960s, it established an award for lifetime achievement. It was named in honour of Caiserman and, fittingly, its first recipient was our first important historian, Sack. Today, the award is named after our first demographer, Rosenberg, who compiled an analysis of all the communities that had at least one Jewish resident in the 1930s. Recent recipients have been historians Abella, Tulchinsky and Cyril Leonoff. This year's recipient is Seymour Levitan of Vancouver for his work on fostering Yiddish culture in Canada.

Today, the association profits from the contributions made by its members and by the research presented in the journal and at the annual conference. The field of Canadian Jewish studies now encompasses all of the social sciences and humanities. In recent years, ground-breaking work has been achieved in a number of areas and disciplines, such as women's studies, Yiddish translation and literary criticism. Norma Joseph, Rebecca Margolis and Ruth Frager are among the list of scholars writing on the contributions of Canadian Jewish women. Pierre Anctil, a francophone fluent in Yiddish, has translated the writings of early Montreal Yiddish writers into French. English translations have been done by numerous scholars, including Vivian Felson, Mervin Butovsky and Robinson. Ravvin and Michael Greenstein have written cogent analyses of our great writers.

The association relies on the efforts of our members. We are especially indebted to Rosen, the chief archivist of the Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives in Montreal, for creating the core for research by a growing number of scholars, students, and lay people. Bernard Katz is our authority on our governance and finances, and Robinson continues his stellar contributions in a myriad of ways.

The association's primary goals remain the same as that of the founders in 1937: recording our history and culture, educating Canadians, and a commitment to telling the story of Canadian Jews. We invite you to be part of this journey.

For information on the association visit www.ACJS/AEJC.ca, and for information on the conference, visit www.jewishmuseum.ca /info/currrent events/acjs-event.

Franklin Bialystok and Randal Schnoor are respectively the vice-president and president of the ACJS/AEJC.

Opinions

Balancing now and later

Gratitude, known as *hakarat hatov* (acknowledgment of the good) is a key concept in theological and human terms.

When properly understood and engaged, it roots us in the present and gives meaning to our daily lives. Even when things are troublesome, there is much to be grateful for. It's more than a mere "the glass is half full" aphorism. It's about being settled in this life. It's about living in the now, as modern psycho-babble would have it.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

Too often we ignore the present for future gain or vision. We live for the end of the rainbow and don't see its present magnificence. Earning money for a child's future is important, but perhaps not more important than reading a story tonight. So many of us wait for graduation, vacation, when the kids grow up, etc. But when the kids are grown, they are gone. We miss the daily interaction, the full level of love and, yes, irritation that makes life so full and worth living. Now.

Don't wait eagerly for the terrible twos to be over. Try to see the joy, the fun and the silliness that's built into that phase. Life is to be engaged in now. Struggle with it – don't sleep through it! See the good as it appears, and be grateful for that life and that relationship. Seize the day!

Nevertheless, living for the present is not sufficient. A future-looking vision is equally engaging and necessary. We advance forward, hoping for progress, expecting some form of future achievement. Never satisfied with the present, we constantly push ourselves to do more, planning for the next 10 or 20 years, seeking a future that is better for our descendants.

In Jewish terms, we are commanded to guard, protect and improve the world. Looking to the future is part of our mandate. What will my life be like? How can I improve it and help others? These are critical questions that we must keep asking and expanding. Never satisfied with the present, we plan for the future.

There is a dynamic tension between this sense of present awareness and forward planning. It is suitably illustrated in a talmudic story of Shammai and Hillel. Shammai ate in honour of Shabbat. If he found a good chicken, he saved it for Shabbat. Hillel lived each day for itself, blessing God day by day. Both modes of existence are available, and even recommended, in our tradition. Finding the balance between present consciousness and future pursuit is the goal.

My grandson is about to celebrate his bar mitzvah with two great-grandmothers over 90. I am grateful for this great good. Dayeinu. I also feel a powerful desire to be present at his child's bar mitzvah (B'H).

Finding room for all under the Conservative tent

Recent decisions by some Toronto synagogues to leave the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) have been news in this paper for several weeks, and obviously the issues have been brewing for much longer than that.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

This columnist can make no comments about those actions. They clearly have resulted from a long process of declining relationships between the congregations and the USCJ. It saddens me to see major, significant members of our denomination pull away from a central body – but whatever the causes, I'm sure the decisions were not taken lightly.

However, I would like to think out loud about denominational affiliations and what I think a viable relationship among members of a denomination could be.

Let me start with us ordinary folk, the members of a synagogue. What do we expect? Many of us expect that our synagogue and clergy will be there for us for our significant life-cycle events: brit milahs, baby namings, bar/bat mitzvahs, weddings, funerals, shivahs and unveilings. in other words, birth-to-death ceremonies.

We also expect that three times a year – on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur – we will spend hours in shul listening, and maybe even participating in, long and complex services. We expect, at all these events, a sermon that will uplift us and guide us (at least until we leave the sanctuary). I should add that we usually expect beautiful cantorial and choir music.

We also want our children to have a good Jewish education. Perhaps that takes place at a day school rather than a synagogue school, but we want a synagogue school to provide the best in Jewish learning. We expect a youth group to shepherd our teens through the temptations of high school.

(What the *klei kodesh* expect from us in return I can only guess.)

What does our synagogue then expect from its umbrella organization? This is less clear. Certainly, from a body like the USCJ we can expect its guidance when we seek to employ a rabbi and cantor. That's been my shul's immediate need in the past few years, and I'm happy to report that we received excellent candidates and have made what I believe are excellent choices who will grow our congregation and serve us well, whatever demands we make on them, for many years to come.

However, I realize that for many congregations, decisions regarding our denominational stances on matters of women's roles and the ordination of gays and lesbians, among other things – in other words ideological matters – have caused divisions. Some individual congregations don't subscribe to the same interpretations that the central bodies now accept.

As a synagogue board member, I hereby submit my wish list for central movement bodies.

First, provide proof that we get value for our dues. This would include providing major speakers from the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) – free of charge, please – who would come on a regular basis to hear us and be heard on issues confronting our denomination, and indeed all Jews, in the 21st century.

Second, and perhaps more importantly for the long-term health of our movement, provide a way – this is the 21st century, after all – to communicate with lay members of our congregation in meaningful ways. For example, I get the weekly JTS Torah study via e-mail. Are there not other ways to educate us on what we are about, rather than just knowing that the other denominations either scorn our leftish ways or think we are too conservative?

Finally, and most importantly, give us the spiritual nourishment that we need to survive and thrive as a movement. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote most luminously about the ways that we human beings can begin to think about concepts of holiness, about the relationship between the divine and the mundane, about the care that the Creator gives to this creation, and about the need of the Creator for that creation – ourselves.

Think of the schools of Hillel and Shammai. While they came to opposite conclusions about many halachic issues, they still married each other's children and ate at each other's tables. Surely under the umbrella of the Conservative movement, we can eat at each other's ideological tables and share our commonalities and our commitment to Halachah, while at the same time agreeing to disagree under the same tent.

Or would that be too miraculous?

A visit to Auschwitz

Like many readers of *The CJN*, I have always felt a profound and special sensitivity to the horrors of the Holocaust. That dark experience has become etched into the fabric of Jewish history and into our very make-up.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

Although I am not aware that any of my relatives were murdered by the Nazi killing machine, like most Jews, I am still deeply touched by this horrific chapter in our recent history. In terms of its magnitude, the Holocaust is, sadly, the lowest point in a history of hatred, repression and discrimination that has marked Jewish life.

I recently delivered an academic paper in Krakow, not far from Auschwitz-Birkenau. Although I knew it would be difficult, I felt it was necessary to visit first-hand that place of monumental nightmares. Auschwitz, that symbol of unprecedented evil, was also witness to the survival of a people that has suffered so much throughout history.

I had been warned that Auschwitz, now designated a museum by the Polish government, was a common tourist attraction, and I was prepared to see offensive sights and inappropriate behaviour by tourists who might lack the sensitivity appropriate for such a monument. On my visit, such offensive sights were minimal and did not prove to be a disturbance to the sanctity of the memories of those who suffered and perished on the site.

I felt that I knew what to expect when I went there. Images of Auschwitz are not new to me. But those images could not capture what it felt like to walk under the foreboding entrance sign "*Arbeit Macht Frei*," to stand on the very ground where the horrific selection process of new arrivals occurred, to visit the cold, harsh barracks where so many people suffered horrible living conditions. It is impossible to describe the feelings that flooded over us as we heard descriptions of the forced slavery, were reminded about the operations of the gas chambers and crematoria and walked through empty buildings that were once witness to unspeakable inhumanity.

We were accompanied on this visit by a survivor of Auschwitz. As our group moved from one location to the next, she became overcome by her memories, and she spoke of the terrifying and brutal experiences she endured there as an 18-year-old.

We felt anger, not only at the perpetrators but also at those who knew about and could have done something to retard or put a halt to the events that transpired. How could this have happened? Why did the Allies not bomb the railway tracks preventing the death trains from reaching those camps? Why were more people not saved? At the end of a six-hour visit, as the sun was setting and the guide had gone for the day, 20 Canadians stood in the dark in the nether corner of Birkenau and recited *Kaddish*. It was the least we could do.

We repeatedly heard from the guides and others that the Poles suffered terribly under the Nazis. Unfortunately, there was also some denial of anti-Semitism or complicity on the part of the Polish people. Historical facts as well as the evidence of recent anti-Semitic graffiti in Krakow reminded us of reality.

But the message is clear. There are some measures we can take to prevent future holocausts, starting with the work we do at home. We must continue to fight against the propagation of hate and ensure that purveyors of hate and violence are held accountable for their wrongdoing.

We must support Israel as a refuge and a symbol for Jewish freedom and self- determination. We must stand ready to stop genocide and hatred wherever it occurs in the world. With all the violence and turmoil occurring in some parts of the world, it appears that the lessons that should have been learned from the Holocaust have been forgotten.

We all hope that a better world will emerge from the darkness of Auschwitz and Birkenau. We should observe each Yom Hashoah and every day in between, reminding the world of the potential of evil. At the same time, we must march forward and lead humanity to that better world. We owe this to those who suffered so much.

The Kirshner File

Zionist movement was aided by Palestinians

It goes without saying that Palestinian Arabs were opposed to Zionism. But from the moment they mounted a concerted campaign to fight it, the Palestinians split into two warring camps, much to the benefit of the Yishuv, the Jewish community in Palestine.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

The mainstream camp, led by Mohammed Amin al-Husseini, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, could not reconcile itself to the Zionist project, whose ultimate goal was Jewish statehood. The accommodationist camp, which was identified with his bitter rival, the Nashashibi family, was pragmatic and open to co-existence with the Zionists, believing that they were simply too strong to be defeated.

This divergence of views had major ramifications. The accommodationists, largely consisting of regional leaders who had forged ties with the Yishuv and resented Husseini's intransigent leadership, aided the Zionists politically, economically and even militarily. When nation-wide fighting broke out in November 1947 and escalated after five Arab armies invaded Israel in May 1948, two important developments occurred, both of which tilted the balance of power in favour of Jews.

First, relatively few Palestinian Arabs joined the armed struggle to throttle the Yishuv. Second, in violation of national leadership edicts, some Arab villages reached non-aggression pacts with their Jewish neighbours.

Not surprisingly, Palestinian scholars have glossed over this sensitive topic, and strangely enough, many Israeli historians have made light of it. Hillel Cohen, an Israeli research fellow at the Truman Institute for the Advancement of Peace at the Hebrew University, tackles it head on in a path-blazing book, *Army of Shadows: Palestinian Collaboration With Zionism, 1917-1948* (University of California Press).

Cohen is familiar with the broad terrain of the subject, having written two related books, *The Present Absentee: Palestinian Refugees in Israel Since 1948* and *Good Arabs: The Israeli Security Service and the Israeli Arabs*. Cohen's current work, based on declassified Zionist, Arab and British archives, illuminates the issue.

As he points out, Zionist diplomacy only seriously began to consider relations with the Arab inhabitants of Palestine following the British occupation in 1917. Until then, the Zionist movement concentrated on cultivating ties with the Ottoman Empire, which ruled Palestine, and currying favour with European powers such as Britain, Germany and France, which had vital interests in the Middle East and might be of help in furthering the Jewish cause in Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration, issued by the British government on Nov. 2, 1917, galvanized the Palestinians, prompting them to form nationalist organizations, mount anti-Zionist demonstrations and carry out attacks against Jews.

In response, Zionist leaders – spearheaded by Chaim Margaliot Kalvarisky, a land purchaser for the Jewish Colonization Association, and Col. Frederick Kisch, a retired British intelligence officer and head of the Zionist executive's political department – devised a counter-strategy. Chaim Weizmann, the president of the World Zionist Organization, was also involved in this campaign.

Underpinned by the naive assumption that an authentic Arab national movement in Palestine did not exist, it sought to create a co-operative Palestinian leadership, deepen already existing fissures in Palestinian society by fomenting conflict between Christians and Muslims, and develop a cadre of Palestinian newspaper writers to laud the advantages of co-operation with Zionism.

The Palestinians who chose co-operation were driven by various motives. Some assumed that the Zionist movement was an arm of the British Mandate and, therefore, should be cultivated. Still other Palestinians, particularly land dealers and job seekers, were animated by personal gain. Palestinians who considered themselves nationalists but who were opposed to the Husseini leadership were also targeted by Zionist strategists. Palestinians who had Jewish friends and who were repelled by the violence of Palestinians also tended to favour co-operation.

With this in mind, Kalvarisky established the Muslim National Associations, a loose network of Palestinian political parties. But the concept did not work, and after more than a decade, he abandoned the idea altogether.

Playing on old animosities, Zionists courted Bedouin tribes, which at first did not identify with the Palestinians. Indeed, some Bedouins regarded the Palestinian national movement as a threat.

Efforts to recruit the Druze of Mount Carmel were undertaken as well. Officially, the Druze community remained neutral, but in practice, Druze fighters drifted into both the Jewish and Arab camps. As for Christians, they played a marginal role in developments.

Zionists tried to shape Arab public opinion by subsidizing Palestinian newspapers in Jaffa and Jerusalem and by recruiting writers who would sing the praises of Arab-Jewish co-operation and brotherhood. But as Cohen suggests, this strategy was only partially successful.

A Jew and a Palestinian Arab in conversation, circa 1940

Since land purchase was a key objective of the Yishuv, Zionist agents cast their gaze at Palestinian landowners, such as the Abu Ghosh family, and absentee Arab landlords residing in neighbouring countries.

Palestinian nationalists tried to block these transactions by various means. Yet by 1948, the Zionist movement had succeeded in buying seven per cent of the land in Palestine.

Palestinians bitterly opposed to such transactions did not sit quietly. In 1925, the first fatwa forbidding the sale of land to Jews was issued. But as Cohen observes, it was left to the British to impose effective restrictions on land sales.

On another front, the Zionist movement tried to recruit Palestinian public figures and informers. The first Palestinian Arab accused of collaboration, a village elder from the Mt. Hebron area, was murdered in 1929. The mayor of Haifa, Hasan Shukri, a symbol of co-existence, survived an attempt on his life.

The Zionist movement attempted to forge economic links with the Palestinians, since they constituted a natural market for goods produced in the Jewish sector. But with the 1929 riots, the Arab Executive Committee declared an economic boycott, calling on Palestinian consumers to buy solely Arab products.

Shortly after the United Nations passed the 1947 Palestine partition resolution, the Higher Arab Committee, headed by the Husseini clan, issued a declaration urging Palestinians to continue the boycott and "to consider any connection with (Jews) as a severe crime and a great betrayal."

Arabs were strongly urged to take up arms and fight for the homeland. Yet during the 1948 war, the majority of able-bodied Palestinian men did not heed that call. In some cases, village elders refused to allow Arab fighters to deploy in their villages.

As the war raged, Arab informers provided Zionist intelligence operatives with valuable political and military information, Arabs turned over British police stations to Zionist forces and Arab merchants sold food to Jews.

It was also not uncommon for Palestinian Arabs to sell weapons to the Zionist side. These arms merchants sold their wares to the Haganah and the more militant Etzel and Lehi militias, their only motive being profit, Cohen says.

Israel won the War of Independence due to a number of compelling factors, notably superior military organization and higher morale.

But as Cohen notes, covert Palestinian co-operation with the Zionist movement was certainly a contributing factor in Israel's seminal victory.

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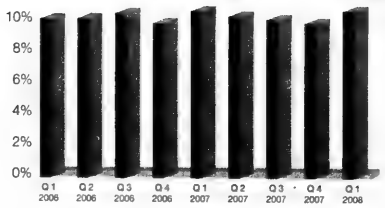

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HEALTHY NEVER TASTED SO GOOD

CMDA hosts gala to buy scooters

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Driving through the crowded and narrow streets of Israel's major cities can be a daunting task for the ambulances of Magen David Adom (MDA), the country's national emergency and blood service.

Between the traffic gridlock and incessant stream of pedestrians, even the sound of a blaring siren doesn't guarantee a free path to whatever emergency has arisen.

To help reach patients safely and on time, MDA is starting to build up a fleet of 100 three-wheeled ambulance scooters.

And the Toronto Chapter of Canadian Magen David Adom (CMDA) for Israel is doing its part by hosting an upcoming gala evening to raise funds for the purchase of several scooters, which cost $25,000 each.

"The scooters can maneuver quite easily through the streets," notes Iris Ehrent of CMDA.

"They are fit with all of the first aid and emergency equipment needed, including a defibrillator and portable oxygen tank, and can get to the scene of an accident before the ambulance arrives."

The gala, which will also celebrate Israel's 60th anniversary, will be held on June 5 at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Featuring MC Harvey Atkin, comedian Deb Filler and the musical talents of violinists' Daniel and Carey Domb, the evening is slated to be a fun-filled affair.

Organizers expect 600 people to attend the occasion, which will include a special sponsor's reception.

"It's a way to say thank you to our supporters by giving them a fun evening, where they can relax, laugh and enjoy the music," says Ehrent.

"At the same time, we are trying to educate people about the importance of what we do, what we want to achieve and where funds will be allocated."

With 650 ambulances, first aid stations across the country, a large corps of skilled volunteers and being the provider of all blood plasma services to hospitals and Israel's Defence Forces, MDA is critical to the nation's well-being.

CMDA has been supporting it since 1976 and there are fundraising branches in the United States, South Africa, Great Britain, Mexico, as well as other places.

Ehrent describes MDA as Israel's "second line of defence" and notes that because the emergency service does not receive funds from major Jewish organizations, donors are "their lifeline.

"Our hope is that proceeds from the gala will enable us to purchase 10 scooters," she says.

"We also need to help with funding the ambulances, which cost $20,000 each per year, to maintain, insure and fully equip with medical supplies."

For tickets to the gala, phone 416-780-0034 or email cmda@interlog.com.

To learn more about CMDA, visit http://cmdai.org/.

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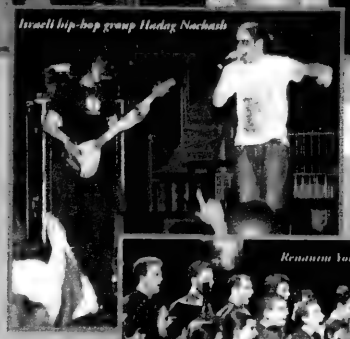

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Business leaders offer advice at federation event

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Richard Wajs truly believes in the old adage, "It's not what you know, it's who you know."

"I am amazed when I meet people, how many don't market themselves properly," the executive search consultant told UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's second annual Taking Care of Business conference last week.

Wajs said people don't use networking to their advantage. "Have you worked to develop a relationship with someone in [your] industry? People aren't proactive enough. Go to meetings and work the room!"

The day-long program took place May 4 at the Sheraton Hotel downtown, with about 300 people in attendance. Panels focused on the real estate business, entrepreneurial insights, and Israeli investing, among other topics.

Wajs moderated a panel titled "Hiring Trends: Positioning Yourself for the Future" that included Rick Chad, president of the recruitment firm Chad Management Group; Steven Pezim, managing director of Bedford Group/Transearch, a search firm, and Daniel Weinzweig, managing partner of Searchlight, a media and entertainment firm.

Pezim noted that "Green issues" are becoming much more important for generations X (tail-end baby boomers born in the 1960s) and Y (the children of baby boomers), in terms of what the companies they work for are doing, or not doing, for the environment.

"But not baby boomers, who are happy to get jobs and happy to keep them," Pezim said.

As much as employees want to be comfortable with their company's actions, Chad said it's also important for employers to recognize the good works of those who work for them.

"I would say it's good to pat people on the back now and then and let them know how much you appreciate them."

A panel titled "Now That's Entertainment" included Jordan Banks of JumpTV; Mark Breslin, owner of Yuk Yuk's comedy clubs; Aubrey Dan, president of theatre company Dancap Productions; and Michael Moskowitz, president and CEO of XM Canada, the satellite radio network.

Banks described how he rose in the corporate ranks after growing up with a single mother in Scarborough who struggled to make ends meet. A few key essentials helped him make it to the top. "There is no substitute for hard work. Today, that has rung true for me," Banks said.

Other elements of success include maintaining an ethical character.

"You only have one reputation, so you better make it good, because it will last a whole lot longer than you. It speaks to your integrity, honesty and the way you treat people," Banks said. "And be careful whose butt you kick on the way up, because it might be the same butt you'll be kissing on the way down."

Richard Wajs
[Dave Gordon photo]

Though hard work might breed achievement, he was quick to say that work isn't everything.

"Success in life is not all about money. It's about family and community success."

Breslin spoke of his own success, coming from humble beginnings. He boasted that Yuk Yuk's is the world's largest chain of comedy clubs, the first of which he opened 32 years ago in Toronto.

"The difference between me and my esteemed colleagues is that Yuk Yuk's did not start out as a business. Accident has played a major role in my life, and a certain desire of the power of negative thinking. I grew up thinking I knew what I did not want to do. I did not want to work. I wanted to play."

After graduating with an English literature degree, he said he entered the "real world" without knowing what career path he would take. His inspiration came when he realized he knew a fair number of comedians who happened to be Jewish.

"I was very aware of wanting to give a Jewish voice and culture to this city. It was a kind of Presbyterian culture in this city, a place that needed an enema, and Yuk Yuk's could be the nozzle."

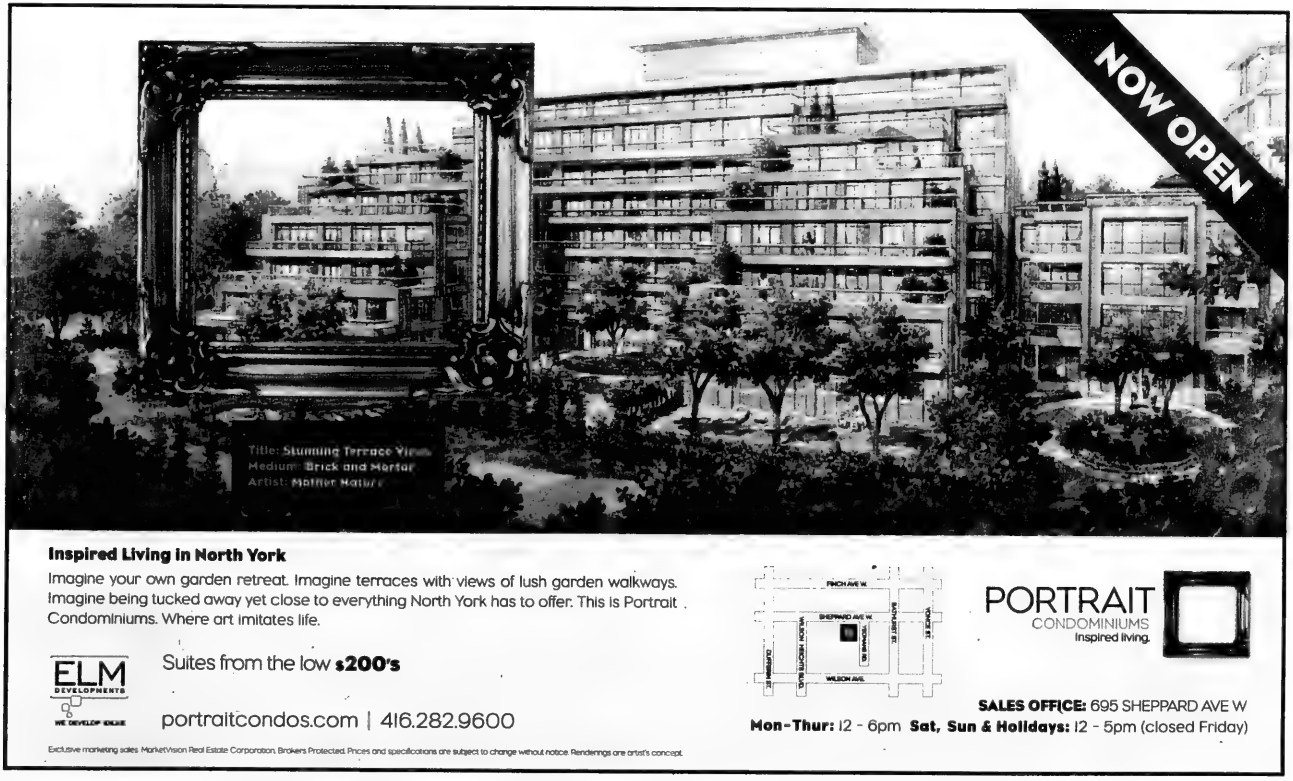
On the heels of what he describes was the "age of counterculture," his club pushed limits.

"It was sex, drugs and rock and roll. We kept the sex in and the anger in."

Despite about one-third of patrons walking out mid-show when the club first opened, Breslin said Yuk Yuk's eventually built up a following.

Dan also touched on the theme of risk-taking, noting that, this summer, his company will be bringing the musical Jersey Boys – based on the career of the singing group the Four Seasons – to Toronto.

The venture to reinvigorate the city with more large-scale, Broadway-type shows is a much-needed gamble, he said, adding that the dearth of theatrical shows has a direct effect not only on tourism, but on a city's overall economic health.



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Greater Toronto Area

Panelists discuss future of Israel advocacy

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

For Israel's image to improve on the world stage, advocates for the Jewish state have to shift their focus from defending negative perceptions to promoting positive accomplishments, Israeli consul general Amir Gissin said at a panel discussion last week.

From left, Liberal MP Joe Volpe, Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee research and outreach co-ordinator Hershel Recht, The House director Rabbi Rafi Lipner and Israel Consul General Amir Gissin.

Heebonics and *The Canadian Jewish News*, along with the Birthright Israel Alumni Community, The House (a centre that offers programming for Jewish students and young professionals of all denominations) and Hillel of Greater Toronto, organized a panel discussion last week titled "Israel after 60 – where do we go from here?"

Gissin, Liberal member of Parliament Joe Volpe, Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee research and outreach co-ordinator Hershel Recht and The House director Rabbi Rafi Lipner discussed the future of Israel, how to combat some of the negative images that plague Israel and how Canadian Jews can become involved in Israel advocacy.

Recht began the discussion, held at The House on May 14, reflecting on the fact that the situation in Israel is constantly changing.

"Last week was a week of celebration, and this week, it has turned into Hezbollah trying to take over Lebanon, a Katyusha rocket slamming into Ashkelon… Hamas saying they are never going to recognize Israel… In a New York minute, everything changes."

He said in spite of this, we need to focus on the positives coming out of Israel.

Many Israeli accomplishments in academia and technology are known by the Jewish community in Toronto, he said, but they are not shared with the rest of the Canadian community.

Recht gave the audience of about 40 students and young professionals the opportunity to express their perceptions of what is going on behind the scenes in Israel.

One audience member noticed that when he visited Israel following the Second Lebanon War, Israelis seemed defeated. Another brought up the fact that the term "apartheid" in reference to Israel is gaining credibility.

The discussion quickly shifted to the atmosphere on many Canadian campuses where students, a woman in the audience said, either don't know how to be effectively involved or fear getting involved because of the backlash they suffer for openly supporting Israel.

"That is a big problem because of the sense of shame that is given to those who advocate for Israel," she said.

Gissin said the concerns voiced by the audience "touched" him because the diversity of their concerns is similar to that of Israelis.

"The mix of huge pride, a sense of being right, a sense of huge achievements [is coupled with] fatigue that comes from tense security situations, from a lack of belief in one government or another," Gissin said.

"There is a feeling of a lot of happiness on one hand, a lot of depression on the other and a lot of confusion in general."

But he added that he is optimistic for the future, as long as Israel, which he said is a "great product with lousy marketing," begins to present itself to the global community in a completely different way.

By changing the focus from the conflict to Israel's achievements, he said, people will start to perceive the country differently.

"The success of our adversaries is partly because they have managed to take away from us the human face. The face of an Israeli is either a tank or a soldier with a helmet."

Gissin suggested that if students are confronted about Israel, rather than talk about territorial concessions, they should present Israel as a more "attractive" way.

"Not right, attractive. We must start thinking in terms of attractiveness… Our only chance to become relevant and not be viewed from the angle of the conflict is if we become relevant to Canadians, if we bring in Israeli insights – successes and failures – in the areas of immigration, of water preservation, of high tech and gadgets, and of pop culture."

In response to Gissin's new marketing strategy to "re-brand" Israel, Volpe said, "You are what others think you to be… It is how people see you, and they see you through what you do and not what you say.

"I see Israel as a flower that developed in the desert. I see it as a success historically. As a politician, we see it and I see it, as a triumph of the rule of law.

"Canada will still be here when we're gone, Israel will be there when we are all gone, so the question is, what will you do, what will we do to make sure… that the value that others see in Israel and others attribute to the Jewish community outside of Israel are maintained with the same kind of … firmness and self-assuredness that we expect of any living, breathing, free, democratic, law-abiding individual?"

Rabbi Lipner offered his perspective on the future of Israel by reflecting on the points addressed by the other three panellists.

"The concept of change is not necessarily something that we have to try to make happen as much as we have to first realize that it can happen," Rabbi Lipner said.

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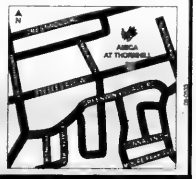

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Bialik honours longtime volunteer

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Toronto lawyer Joseph Steiner first joined the board of Bialik Hebrew Day School in 1984, in part because he wanted to "do something useful" aside from his day job.

On May 27, he will be honoured for his contributions at the school's Israel at 60 gala at Le Parc in Markham.

A former president of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto in the late 1990s and of Bialik's board from 1990 to 1994, Steiner, a senior partner in the litigation department of a downtown firm, also gives his time to the boards of the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School and Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Although he has also been involved with other Jewish organizations, including Canadian Jewish Congress, his volunteer work has focused heavily on Jewish education. A former chair of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Board of Jewish Education (now the Mercaz) from 1994 to 1997, Steiner is also involved with the Melton Centre for Jewish Education.

As well, his wife Elaine – who like her husband has received an Ontario Volunteer Service award from the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration – teaches at United Synagogue Day School. The two of them have studied in the Florence Melton Mini-School program and in summer programs at Jerusalem's Shalom Hartman Institute.

Joseph Steiner

"I'm really very interested in Jewish learning and Jewish text," he said in an interview in his 66th-floor office overlooking Lake Ontario. Although Steiner, 61, describes himself as "not particularly observant," he belongs to a Conservative synagogue and finds "a lot of heritage, knowledge and wisdom" in Jewish study.

Musing on the motivation for his community involvement, Steiner said it has to do with "identification" and also the example set by his father Harry and his mother Ruth, who were involved with the Labour Zionist movement and Pioneer Women (now Na'amat Canada) respectively.

"It seemed to follow very naturally, because I've really been brought up with it," said Steiner, whose parents both chaired organizations. "I found it really interesting, and quite rewarding."

It was Steiner's father who invited him to join Bialik's board when Steiner's son, Jonathan, now 32, was a student at the school. That was his first experience in the Jewish volunteer world.

A native of Toronto who attended Associated Hebrew Schools, Steiner majored in political science and economics at the University of Toronto before pursuing graduate studies at Yale University, where he received his M.Phil. in economics.

He returned to Toronto in 1975 to attend Osgoode Hall Law School.

Among the issues in Jewish education in general today, the biggest is the level and availability of subsidies, Steiner said. "Costs are only going up."

As well, he said, day school enrolment is an issue. Although the number of Jewish day schools in Toronto has proliferated in recent years, Steiner pointed out that less than 50 per cent of local Jewish children – perhaps 35 to 40 per cent – are enrolled.

"For somebody with two, three or four kids and an upper middle class income, it's still a big strain."

Steiner estimates that his volunteer commitments take two to six hours a week and, now that he is an associate member of the board of governors for the Jewish Agency for Israel, three or four trips a year to Israel.

With a work week that is usually about 50 hours long – longer when he is involved in a trial – he said that finding time for everything is just a matter of planning. "You put [volunteer commitments] in your calendar and work around them."

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Coast to Coast

Program launched to strengthen Jewish identity

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Concerned that Jewish communal identity is weakening, FEDERATION CJA has launched what it hopes will become a community-wide effort to reverse that decline through educational and cultural projects aimed at children and youths.

Generation J is to be an ongoing program, backed initially by $1 million in seed money from the federation, which promises to contribute a further $678,000 per year for an indefinite period.

Federation president Marc Gold and his immediate predecessor Richard Vineberg, who is chairing Generation J, describe the program as a long-term investment.

"This initiative is imperative for the survival of the Jewish community in Montreal, and I'm not overstating that," Gold said. "I'm concerned that in 10 years, we'll be a community of Jews, not a Jewish community."

However, Gold stressed that this money is being made available not as an end in itself but as a stimulus to others, whether organizations or individuals, to similarly invest in the future of the community or come up with creative ideas to make being Jewish meaningful to the young.

Generation J has already attracted about $300,000 from other sources, mainly U.S.-based foundations.

The money is to be spent, not to be used to create an endowment, although if enough funds were raised, that would be ideal, Gold said. The $1 million has come from the federation's reserves, not from the 2007 Combined Jewish Appeal. The continuing contribution of $678,000 will come from the annual campaigns.

One group that will immediately benefit from the new money is the Jewish day schools, which will receive a total of $250,000 more per year to subsidize students who don't pay full fees. This amount will be on top of the current $2.55 million the federation allocates to the schools for this purpose.

The new Academy for Performing Arts at the Segal Centre will also benefit. This is an arts education program for children and teens, being run in conjunction with schools.

Up to 230 children will be able to go to a Jewish summer camp thanks to the increased funding.

Another priority is more follow-up with young adults who have participated in organized trips to Israel, such as Birthright Israel and March of the Living. The federation is seeking to engage these young people in social action, Israel advocacy, Jewish culture and environmental issues.

> ***'Imperative for the survival of the community'***

New projects include:

- providing Jewish-content books and magazines to families with young children through such American-based programs as PJ Library and BabagaNewz;
- a moot court of Jewish Law to teach high school students concepts in Jewish law and their relevance to current issues;
- the West Island Jewish Learning Centre for Young Families, where families in that area can become familiar with Jewish holidays and Shabbat, and take parenting classes.

The federation is seeking to collaborate with its own agencies, as well as with schools, synagogues, camps and other community organizations in furthering the objectives of Generation J.

A total of $300,000 from the $1 million seed money is being made available to fund other ideas. Non-profit or community-based organizations serving the Jewish population in Quebec can apply for one-time grants of up to $30,000.

The new funding brings the total the federation is allocating in 2008-2009 to Jewish education, both formal and informal, and other projects that strengthen Jewish identity to nearly $10.8 million, Vineberg noted.

Although Montreal probably has one of the most cohesive communities in North America, according to such measures as synagogue membership, day school attendance and charitable giving, the federation does not think this community is immune from "the precipitous decline in the number of affiliated Jews and an alarming upsurge in rates of assimilation" being observed elsewhere, Gold said.

He sees this trend as an inevitable result of an open, pluralistic society and of a globalized, electronically connected world.

Marc Gold

He said the flexible nature of Generation J is a recognition that youth today connect with their Jewishness in different ways, and that there are, in fact, multiple ways of encouraging a sense of belonging.

Gold acknowledged that some parties may think all the money should be put into the Jewish day schools, but that would not serve the objective of reaching out to those not connected to the community in this way. Not everyone would send their children to a day school, even if cost was not an issue.

"Generation J is not a passing fad; it's a long-range commitment to change the conversation in our community about what it means to be Jewish," Gold said.

Correction

The article "Iran 'preparing for another Holocaust'" (*CJN*, May 8) incorrectly identified Richard Marceau as a Bloc Québécois MP. In fact, Marceau is a former Bloc MP who is now a senior adviser on government relations with the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Netivot opens doors to She'arim students

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Grade 6 students at the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, which serves children with learning disabilities, now have a place to go within the Jewish school system next year.

Last week, the board of Netivot HaTorah Day School approved in principle a Grade 7 program for 14 children who are in Grade 6 at She'arim, which will close in June because of financial difficulties.

It is the third of three Jewish day schools to offer a place to She'arim students, following the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and Associated Hebrew Schools.

Last month, it was announced that 18 She'arim students entering Grade 8 would be housed at TanenbaumCHAT's south campus on Wilmington Avenue for a one-year program to be taught by the community high school's special education teachers.

Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Campus in Thornhill will have a program for up to 20 She'arim children in Grades 3 to 6.

The three schools will work together to share resources for the new programs, which will constitute, "in effect, a school within a school at three educational facilities," according to a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto press release.

The federation will provide funding for the cost of education over and above the usual tuitions for the host schools, said federation spokesperson Howard English. The dollar amount is still being worked out, he added.

The long-term future of the program will be discussed after this year, English said. "The goal is certainly for these [programs] to be longer-term, as they affect She'arim kids. The programs are for She'arim kids. That's not to rule out permanent programs for children with learning disabilities, [but] these schools already have programs for children with learning disabilities."

Netivot's board approval is subject to the signing of a memorandum of understanding with federation.

"Our primary priority has always been the well-being of She'arim's students, and educating them as a group within sensitive settings that meet their unique needs," federation chair David Koschitzky said in the news release. "We commend Netivot, TanenbaumCHAT and Associated for making this their priority as well and for acting so decisively on behalf of She'arim's children."

"Netivot is proud to assist the children of She'arim and the community in providing quality, caring education in an atmosphere that is consistent with the spirit of She'arim," Netivot president Stuart Lewis said in the federation release. "We're also enthusiastic about working in close collaboration with Associated and TanenbaumCHAT, which are recognized for their high educational standards."

ELECTRIC ATMOSPHERE

At Netivot HaTorah Day School's 6B2 Invention Convention, student inventors were challenged to design an electric toy that could move a distance of one metre, or create a machine that would perform a specific function or task. Here, from left, Yoav, Jacob and Dov describe their invention and reflect on their work as a group.

[Rebecca Ansel photo]

IN PERSON

Kati Marton

Monday, May 26th, 7pm

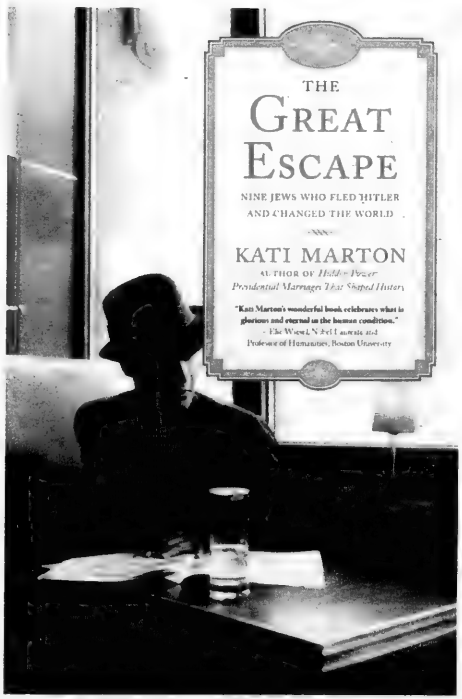
Indigo Manulife Centre

Extravagantly praised by critics and readers, *The Great Escape* by bestselling author **Kati Marton** tells of the breathtaking journey of nine extraordinary men from Budapest to the New World, what they experienced along their dangerous route, and how they changed America and the world.

Book signing to follow.

Indigo

indigo.ca/events



Coast to Coast

Most reports on Israel's 60th were quite positive

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The Canadian news media gave substantial attention to Israel's 60th anniversary, much of it more positive than some might have expected, given the media's well-known predilection for emphasizing the negative.

Editorial comment is often a good indicator of the media's mood.

In "A call to courage" (May 8), the *Globe and Mail* reflected on the life of Yossi Harel, the captain of the famous illegal immigrant-bearing ship Exodus, who recently died in Israel at age 90. Harel, the *Globe* wrote, "symbolized as much as the life of any man could the hope, courage and resilience that is the story of Israel."

The editorial continued: "[W]hat has been achieved in Israel represents not only a triumph for the Jewish people but a lesson for others. The country's per capita GDP places it in the world's top tier. Its universities are world-class research institutions. In a region defiled by despotism, Israel is a beacon of freedom and democracy. In a region tainted by cronyism and arbitrary measures, Israel is governed by the rule of law. This is a day for celebration."

Still, the paper was not overly sanguine. It recognized the dangers that confront Israel, in particular from Iran, and it acknowledged also that "comprehensive" peace eludes Israel, even though the outlines of a peace agreement with the Palestinians are understood.

The *Toronto Star*'s editorial, "Israel's 60-year triumph of hope," also paid homage to the country's remarkable achievements in its brief modern history: "The Jewish state is a vibrant democracy, a Mideast military power, the centre of a revived Hebrew culture, and a high-tech economy."

The *Star* showed considerable sensitivity to the political complexity in which Israelis consider their future. The paper acknowledged that while a majority of Israelis – approximately 70 per cent – support the idea of a Palestinian state, they need to be assured of their security. Yet Israelis confront a rejectionist Hamas in Gaza and endless barrage of rockets and mortars and ominous threats from Iran. The challenge remains for Israel to be able to negotiate with a reliable Palestinian partner that is capable of delivering security while, as the *Star* also notes, Israel needs to articulate a broad strategic vision (a point that's also made by numerous Israeli analysts.)

Editorial comment in the *National Post* and a wide array of CanWest papers across the country also drew attention to what Israel has achieved in 60 brief, action-packed years under conditions of hostility and conflict that might well have paralyzed most other countries in the same position.

The title of the *Calgary Herald*'s May 10 editorial, "Existence of Israel a miracle, let alone that it's a democracy" encapsulated this assessment and was representative of views across the land.

Such views were not merely confined to editorial comment, but were also reflected in news reports such as Oakland Ross' balanced, fair-minded stories from Jerusalem for the *Toronto Star*, including, "Still far from peace at 60: By almost any measure, Israel is a success story," May 3; and Peter Goodspeed's "Israeli home front less of a battle front" (*National Post*, May 3), which managed to sympathetically capture the complexity of Israel's situation.

There were also numerous human-interest stories that looked at personal experiences related to Israel's founding.

To take but one example: CBC TV News correspondent Peter Armstrong (*The National*, May 8) followed up on the story of a Canadian, Milka Elner, who had moved at age 25 from Montreal to Israel at its founding. Joe Schlesinger first profiled her for CBC at her kibbutz during Israel's 30th anniversary. Armstrong found her again, now 97 and still articulate, wishing that "we should live together with the Arabs in a quieter way." Armstrong described how the kibbutz itself has changed over the years while still "clinging to its socialist roots."

Armstrong also interviewed Arieh Handler, who was also present 60 years ago at the founding of the state. Handler reflected on the long-held hope that Israel could be a light unto the nations and regrets that it has come up short.

But what nation – founded on high aspirations, yet confronted with six wars in 60 years – could have fulfilled such a mission?

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Howard & Karen Tenenbaum and Alain & Nicole Petcho announce proudly the engagement of Shira & Yves. Grandparents, Anne Tenenbaum, Barney & Sally Nurgitz.

Mazel tov to Justin Atkin as he becomes a bar mitzvah on May 17. With love from Maggie, Danny, Amanda and the extended small village.

Happy 65th birthday to Stan Corbett from family and friends.

Mazel tov Pearl & David Viner on your 65th wedding anniversary. With lots of love from your children and adoring grandchildren.

Mazel tov to our dear son Jordan Aaron Brodkin (Jory) on the occasion of your bar mitzvah! All our love, Mom, Dad, Adina (and Maddie).

Mazel tov to Ned Austin on the birth of Lori's son Preston, your first great-grandson.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
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1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205,
North York, ON. M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES. What's New deadlines: Monday, May 26 is the deadline for the June 5 issue, Thursday, May 29 is the deadline for the June 12 issue and Thursday, June 4 is the deadline for the June 19 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, May 22

JOURNEY TO JUDAISM

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation offers "A Messianic Rabbi's Journey To Judaism." After 19 years working to convert Jews, **Hillel Permison** renounced Christianity and returned to Judaism. Hear his story. 8 p.m. 416-789-3213

Saturday, May 24

B'NAI SHALOM SERVICES

Join B'Nai Shalom, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue in the Mississauga, Oakville, Burlington area, for Shabbat service. Following kiddush, **Dr. Michael Briks** discusses rare Holocaust items he has collected. 10 a.m. 905-901-9889 or www.bnaishalom.ca

Sunday, May 25

WALK WITH ISRAEL

Join the community rain or shine. Kick off starts at 9:30 a.m. at Coronation Park, Lakeshore Blvd. W. and Strachan Ave. www.walkwithisrael.com

CPR COURSES

Pride of Israel offers two Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) clinics, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. and 1:30-5:30 p.m. Learn this important skill or refresh your knowledge. $45. Reserve, 416-226-0111, ext.10.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc, singles 50+, for walk in the Grange Park Area. Meet at 10 a.m. at The Four Seasons Centre, 145 Queen St. W. RSVP, walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

DOORS OPEN TORONTO

Congregation Darchei Noam is featured as multicultural places of worship and historic sites across the city are open to explore. 2-5 p.m. 864 Sheppard Ave. W.

IN SYNC AT THE SHUL

The Beach Synagogue presents "In Sync at the Synagogue," a variety show with vocalists **Susan Litchen** and **Karen Gold** singing in English, Hebrew or Yiddish, poetry by **Sharon Singer**, humour with **Gay Claitman** and more. 2-4 p.m. 416-694-7942 or www.beachsynagogue.com

ALL-OUT ISRAELI EVENING

Holy Blossom Temple presents a concert celebrating Israel@60 with Six13, a cappella ensemble that performs Jewish music with 'doo-wop' style, and Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir joins the Holy Blossom Singers under the direction of **Cantor Benjamin Maissner**. 7 p.m. $25, youth under 25, $5 with a non-perishable food item. Tickets, 416-789-3291, ext. 224 or visit www.holyblossom.org.

NESHAMA CARLEBACH

Celebrate Israel@60 when Adath Israel Congregation presents "**Neshama Carlebach** in Concert" 7:30 p.m. $18. Tickets, 416-635-5340.

Tuesday, May 27

LUNCH & LEARN

Beth Tikvah presents **Marilyn Herbert** reviewing *Exit Ghost* by **Philip Roth**. 12:15 p.m. $20. Reserve by 10 a.m. May 30. 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

NEIL SEDAKA IN CONCERT

Beth Tzedec Congregation 2008 Concert Series Musical Magic continues with a concert by **Neil Sedaka**. 7:30 p.m. Tickets, 416-781-3514, ext. 218.

WHITE AND GREEN

Jeremy Benstein, of Israel's Heschel Center for Environmental

Continued on page 23

Join us from 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Celebrate sixty years of Israeli achievement on Ilan Ramon Boulevard (corner of Bathurst & Lebovic Campus Drive)

Festival will feature:
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To Create Opportunities For Jewish Young Adults With Physical And/Or Cognitive Challenges To Participate Fully As Valued Members Of The Community; To Enjoy A Meaningful And Dignified Quality Of Jewish Life.

What's New

Continued from page 22

Learning and Leadership, speaks on "White and Green: Judaism, Israel and the Challenge of a Sustainable Environment" at Darchei Noam Congregation. 7:30 p.m. 416 638-4783

DIABETES: NEW APPROACHES

Dr. Michael Sarin, of the Rumsey Centre, Toronto rehab institute, will discuss "Diabetes: New Approaches to Treatment" at the general meeting of the Jewish Diabetes Chapter. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $1. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403

Wednesday, May 28

LIVELY AFTER FIFTY

Members of the L.A.F. (Lively after Fifty) group of Jewish Women International are invited to the 10th anniversary reunion luncheon. Info, **Lucy**, 416 630-5318.

JEWISH JOKERS GROUP

The Jewish Jokers, Humour and Trivia Group meets at 7 p.m. at the Antibes community centre. $3. Call **Irv Helpert** for info, 416-661-2541.

TAKE MY HAND

Support Ali's Journey, benefiting education, research and support of young adults with cancer, and enjoy an evening of music celebrating Canadian talent including **Louise Pitre, Jackie Richardson, Matthew Barber, Peter Katz, Kellylee Evans, Bob Lanois, Dave Borins**, Grand Analog and more. 7:30 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. Tickets, 416-872-1111.

BOND WITH ISRAEL

Beth Emeth Synagogue hosts "Bond with Israel @ 60 Gala Concert" with the Nafsheinu Orchestra conducted by **Heshi Kuhnreich** featuring **Aaron Bensoussan** and **Avi Albrecht**. 7:30 p.m. $36, reserved seating $54. Tickets 416-633-3838 to purchase.

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Jill Culiner will speak on "Finding Home: In the Footsteps of the Jewish Fusgeyers" at the Jewish Genealogical Society meeting. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Non-members $5. www.jgstoronto.ca

Other News

AFTER THE HOLOCAUST

Beth Tzedec Congregation hosts **Prof. Stephen Berk** for the weekend of May 24-25, discussing "Life After Death and in the Face of Death: European Jews and Israel Encounter a Post-Holocaust World." Shabbat pulpit lecture, "Jews in Germany: An Oxymoron?" Lecture following service, "The Jews in Poland: Living in the Shadows." Lecture at seudah-shlishit, "Muslims, Jews and Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Europe." Sunday, May 25, 10 a.m. "The Middle East at the Crossroads." 416-781-3511

AUDITIONS NOTICE

Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre is seeking actors for the following plays, *A Glimpse of the Light*, a musical by **Ben Finn**, Nov.12-23, and *The Dybbuk* by **S. Anski**, Feb. 25-March 8, 2009. Auditions, May 27 and 29, 5:30-10 p.m. To book an audition send resume and photo to teatron@sympatico.ca or 41 Warwick Ave, Toronto, M6C 1T7 or call 416-781-5527.

LITERARY LEVEE

Hadassah Miriam Chapter holds a "Literary Levee" featuring **Sidura Ludwig** reading from her novel *Holding My Breath*, a book swap and light kosher buffet. Thursday, May 29, 6-9 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre. Tickets, **Erin**, 416-996-1029.

FRUM SINGLES WEEKEND

Singles 27-39 are invited to a weekend retreat at the Holiday Inn in Grand Island, N. Y. for an event sponsored by Sasson V'Simcha, The Orthodox Union and NCSY, May 30-June 1. Program includes **Rabbi Reuven Bulka**, **Frank Buchweitz** and **Rebbetzin Judi Steinig**. 416-256-4497.

FOLK CHOIR CONCERT

The Toronto Jewish Folk Choir celebrates Yiddish music and Israel@60 at its spring concert, Sunday, June 1, 2 p.m. at the Leah Posluns Theatre. $23, seniors and students, $19, children 12 and under free. Tickets, tjfolkchoir@sympatico.ca or 416-636-0936 (evenings, weekends) or 416-593-0750.

BROADWAY BOUND

Medina Theatre presents a staged reading of *Broadway Bound* by **Neil Simon**, Sunday, June 1, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Sinai Congregation. $5. 416-785-0344 or 416-633-2057

ZAREINU MOVEATHON

Zareinu 2008 Moveathon is comprised of a pro-tour bike ride along the Niagara escarpment, June 1, with a 50 km, 100 km or 162.5 km challenge, and a community festival in Downsview Park, June 22. The events raise funds for a treatment facility and school for children with a wide range of physical and developmental challenges. www.moveathon.com.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 32

A MUSICAL CELEBRATION

Beth Radom Congregation hosts an evening of song and celebration "Israel@60: A Musical Celebration." with Israeli singer **Mickey Lewin**, Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir conducted by **Benjamin Maissner** with soloists **Cantor David Rosen** and accompanist **Nadia Adler**. Sunday, June 1, 7:30 p.m. $18. Tickets, 416-636-3451, ext. 24

HESCHEL GALA

The Toronto Heschel School is holding a gala honouring Nobel Peace Prize recipient **Elie Wiesel**, Monday, June 2 at the Direct Energy Centre. $180 and additional sponsorship opportunities available. Tickets, 416-635-1876, ext. 332.

SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

Beth Chabad Israeli Community Centre's "Spirit of Community Dinner" takes place Wednesday, June 4 at the Riviera Parque Centre with guest speaker **Rabbi Yossi Jacobson**, honouring **Bill Fisch** and **Sam Ciccolini** and entertainment by **Gershon Wachtel**, **Asher Laub**, and Zemer Orchestra. 905-709-7770.

KNITTERS NEEDED

Knitters are needed to knit mittens, hats and scarves for inner city school children. Wool is provided. Mountains of Mittens is a project of JWIC. 416-630-9313 or info@jwicanada.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215.

Effective Parenting. A four-session group to learn what parents can do to raise a happy, motivated and well behaved child. For parents of children ages 2-11 years. Discuss how to nurture self esteem, encourage problem solving, increase communication and setting limits. Begins Wednesday, May 28, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

One Family, Two Homes, a three-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children participate in separate age appropriate groups and discuss, feeling better, deal with some of the myths and know where to get support. Begins Thurs. May 29, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Temple Sinai Social Club hosts **Jack Kugelmass** on "Moses and Golda: Would They Daven Together?" a humorous look at the Jewish community. Sunday, May 25, 7:30 p.m. $7, guests $10. R.S.V.P. 416-487-3281.

Seniors Mixed Bowling every Tuesday, 1 p.m. at Playtime Bowl, 33 Samor Ave. **Milty**, 416-633-2206.

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC, meet friends and enjoy stimulating programs. Wednesday afternoons, contact **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org for infomation.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Wed. May 28; Sunday dance, June 8. Seniors walking group, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Info about club activities, Tues.-Thurs. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Rabbi Flanzraich will speak on "Organ Donation in Jewish and Civil Law." Tues May 27. 10 a.m. $3, non members $6.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Lag b'Omer Concert with The Mickey Lewin Duo featuring **Mickey Lewin** and **John Marmora**, Friday, May 23, 1:30 p.m. in the assembly room.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

BJCC 6th Annual Golf Tournament Thursday, June 26 at Glen Eagle Golf Club. Call **Jim**, ext. 371, for information.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Classes meet twice weekly for four weeks. Register, ext. 0

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Film Talk & Bagels, "Israel and Beyond" with **Shlomo Schwartzberg**, Sun. May 25, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. $9. Ext. 606.

Cooking With **Itka**," classes offering healthy, meatless lunches for kids. Sun. June 1, 1-3 p.m. $18/ $36 per family. Ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

MNjcc Community Choir Concert, Wed. June 4, 8 p.m. at Al Green Theatre. $10, $20 family.

Jazz @ the J, Ron Davis Sextet, Thurs, June 19, 8 p.m. $15 Students, $24 Advance, Day of show, $28. Ext. 0

2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition submission deadline is May 31. Guidelines, contact **Esther Arbeid**, ext. 606 or esthera@mnjcc.org.

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Gladys Korman	May 4/08	3560 Bathurst St (Apotex)
Rosslyn Fienberg	May 7/08	3600 Yonge St
Henry Cohen	May 8/08	135 Antibes Dr
Kenneth Kagan	May 9/08	352-A Spadina Rd
Florence Fields	May 9/08	3000 Bathurst St
Sela Cheifetz	May 8/08	22 Walmer Rd
Lawrie Merkur	May 9/08	640 Roselawn Ave

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HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Mollie Posen	May 3/08	429 Walmer Road

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
HARVEY BORLAK ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th - 11:30 a.m.
Mount Sinai Memorial Park
986 Wilson Avenue
YMHA section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
FRIDA TOMA ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 1st at 11:30 a.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St. north of Major Mackenzie
Community Section Row 1, Section 5 (IIIIi), Lot #4
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
EVELYN ZACKS ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th, 11:30 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Toras Emeth, Section 46
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
BEN PINKUS ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th, 12:00 noon
Mt. Sinai Memorial Park
986 Wilson Ave.
Pride of Israel Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
LILLIAN HERMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th, 1:30 p.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Bathurst, south of Steeles
Stashiver Society New Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
MARY SMALL ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 25th, 1:00 p.m.
Mount Sinai Cemetery
Canadian Hebrew Benevolent Assn Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling. To place any other family related notice, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date.
(416) 391-1836

YIDDISH CORNER
Edited by: ALEK SILVER
י י ד י ש ־ ו י נ ק ל
רעדאַגירט פון: אַלעק סילווער

דער פרילינג קאָנצערט פון דעם טאָראָנטער יידישן פאָלקס כאָר
פון אַלעק סילווער

מיר האָבן ערשט באַקומען די גוטע נייעס אַז מיר ווילן זיך טיילן מיט דער טאָראָנטער יידישער געזעלשאַפט אַז מיט מוזיק ליב־האָבערס בכלל. דער פרילינג איז שוין דאָ. געווען הייַנטיקן יאָר אַ שוועריקע וויַנטער מיט אַ סך שנייען אַז איצט קען מען שוין אַנהייבן פילן, ווי עס ווערט וואַרעמער פון וואָך צו וואָך. איצט דאַרפן מיר וואַרטן אויפן קאָנצערט פון טאָראָנטער יידישן פאָלקס כאָר. דאָס איז טאַקע די גוטע נייעס, וואָס מיר ווילן זיך טיילן מיט אייך. דער קאָנצערט איז שוין צוגעגרייט און ער ווערט געשפילט ווערן

זונטיק, דעם 1טן יוני, 2008
3 אַזייגער נאָכמיטאָג
אין דעם לעאַ פּאָסלונס טעאַטער.

ווי אין די פריערדיקע יאָרן ווערט דער כאָר פֿרעזענטירן דאָס בעסטע, וואָס זיי קענען אין ביז איצט האָבן זיי קיין מאָל נישט אָנטוישט די צושויער. דאָס הויפּט־ווערק ווערט זיין נאָך אַ מוזיקאַליש ווערק, פון קאָמפּאָזיטאָר וולאַדימיר חֶפֶץ, געבויט אויף אַ שיינער, קורצער, אויטאָביאָגראַפישער דערציילונג „אויפן פידל". געשריבן פון שלום עליכם. ווי איר זעט איז דאָס אַ צוהאָמענשפּיל פון צוויי פּעיקע יידישע ליטעראַרישע פֿערזענלעכקייטן.

ווען ווילאַדימיר חֶפֶץ האָבן מיר שוין געשריבן אין לעצטן ווינקל ווען דעם קאָנצערט פון יידישן פאָלקס כאָר. ער איז נעווען דער, וואָס האָט געשאפן די מוזיק צו דער קאָנטאָטע: „די לערערין מירע" געשריבן פון א. סוצקעווער. חֶפֶץ איז נעווען איינער פון אונדזערע בעסטע קאָמפּאָזיטאָרן, וועלכער האָט געשאפן מוזיק אין יידיש, ענגליש, רוסיש און אין אַנדערע שפּראַכן. מיר האָבן אויך דערמאָנט, אַז ער האָט געשאפן מוזיק צו צוויי פון אונדזערע בעסטע יידישע פילמען: „מירעלע אפרת" און „גרינע פעלדער".

א צווייטער טייל פון דעם קאָנצערט ווערט זיין דאָס פּייערן ישׂראלס 60־יאָריקן „יום העצמאות". פונקט ווי אַלע אַנדערע יידישע אַרגאַניזאַציעס, ווערט אויך דער טאָראָנטער יידישער פאָלקס כאָר פּייערן דעם דאָזיקן יום־טוב מיט אַ ציקל לידער, ספּעציעל צוגעפּאַסט פאַר דער געלעגנהייט. צווישן די לידער וועלן זיין: „שיר לשלום", דאָס לידּ, וואָס איז געזונגען געוואָרן בייַ דער גרויסער פאַראַמלונג, וווּ דער פּרעמיער־מיניסטער יצחק ראַבין איז ברוטאַל דערשאָסן געוואָרן. א צווייט ליד ווערט זיין „המלחמה האחרונה", געשאפן נאָך דער מלחמה אין 1973 וווּ א פאטער גיט א צוואג צו זיין קינד, אז דאס וועט זיין די לעצטע מלחמה. צום באַדויערן איז דער צוואג נאָך נישט דערפילט געוואָרן.

די אַנדערע לידער וועלן זיין: דאָס קיבוץ־ליד „שיר העמק"; „מה יפים הלילות בכנען"; נעמי שעמער „מארש מעלאָדיעס". עס וועט אויך איינגעשלאָסן זיין דעם פאַרשטאַרבענעם יידישן קאָמפּאָזיטאָר רושאַ ווייַנצווייג „עם ישׂראל חי" — א ליד וועלן לעבך געבליבענע פון דער שואה, וועלכע בויען קיבוצים אין נגב נאָך דער צווייטער וועלט־מלחמה. אויך וועלן געזונגען ווערן לידער אין אַנדערע שפּראַכן.

פאַרגעסט נישט — דער קאָנצערט איז:

זונטיק, דעם 1טן יוני, 2008, 3 אַזייגער
נאָכמיטאָג אין לעאַ פּאָסלונס טעאַטער.

On Campus

Hillel awards 'celebrate achievement'

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

The hard-working student volunteers of Hillel were able to relax at the organization's annual student awards night.

Held May 12 at Ryerson University, the awards honoured a year's worth of volunteer participation and initiatives on campuses throughout the GTA.

"This is a special evening to celebrate achievement," said Hillel board member Alan Berdowski. "There's no higher calling than the giving of yourself for something you believe in."

Berdowski, the first speaker of the evening, took time to reflect on Hillel's work during the past school year.

"We've had high-profile events," he said. "Hillel keeps growing in popularity. We've done tutoring, volunteering in Israel and community rebuilding missions."

One of the many guests at the event was Amir Gissin, consul general of Israel for Toronto and Western Canada, who congratulated award recipients on their efforts to help the Jewish community.

"Israel appreciates [your work]," he said.

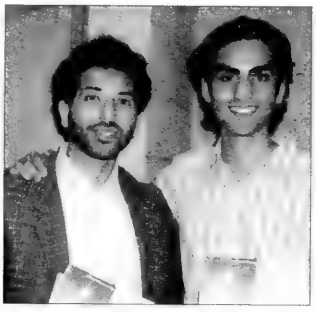
Gissin said he was impressed that students gave of their time.

"You have a price to pay," he said. "Those who volunteer, the only thing they give up is time, but you are out there taking a risk. You have alternatives. You study and work and have no time to spare. The work is difficult, yet you choose it."

Gissin went on to speak about the future of Hillel's volunteers.

"Eventually, the young people that work for Hillel and take responsibility to lead, these are the people who make a difference. I'm full of admiration for the work you do. My only hopes is that next year this room will be too small," he said.

This year's room wasn't too small, but it was packed with young Jews. According to Zac Kaye, the executive director of Hillel, there are some 18,000 Jewish students on GTA campuses, and Hillel reaches more than 7,000 of them.



Above: Allie Caperfain and her father, Ron, show off her award. Below are award winners, Glendon College York University students Mayer Elharar, left, and David Seni.

"We [stay connected] with actual e-mails, phone numbers and addresses," he said. "We are one of the most successful organizations in connecting with students."

Attracting so many people for an awards night didn't seem possible when Hillel first held the event 12 years ago, Kaye said.

"We started in a small room above a pub at the University of Toronto. We had to persuade students to come. Since then, we've grown into something special," he said.

Kaye also credited this growth to choice.

"Students don't have to get involved," he said. "There are so many other things they can do with their time, but they do tremendous things."

Some volunteer initiatives included CHANGE, a global awareness committee that's part of Hillel at U of T. The committee was run by Allie Caperfain, who received the University of Toronto campus award.

The cast of Hillel's student-run production of *Anything Goes* won the Outstanding Arts and Culture award, and Hayley Fisher was recognized for using a full-sized bathtub at York University to collect toiletry items for a shelter.

From left are Arielle Branitsky, Lea Kaplan and Jaime Reich. [Rita Poliakov photos]

Fisher collected two bathtubs worth of toiletries and won the David Liss award for her efforts.

The final award was not given to a student. Instead, the Founding Friend of the Campus Award went to Mark Anshan, director of public affairs for UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, for his work in the Jewish community.

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Don't be a wimp; go for custody

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator for 26 years

Question. I am a single mother. My child is three and a half years of age. His father is not in his life and, of his own choosing, has not seen him or taken any interest in him for over a year and a half. Also, I receive no child support and don't want it. I just want to be able to travel with my son, but need the father's written permission or Foreign Affairs Canada says that I should get a Court order for full custody. Then, I can get a passport without his permission. Do I really need a full-blown custody trial just to travel with my son?

Answer: I would first request that dad consent to a Court order to give you sole custody, without any access. Also, ask for child support based on his annual income after he discloses what he earns. There is no reason why you should not seek it since you are entitled to custody (or at least primary residential care and control).Don't be a wimp. If dad says no or doesn't answer, then I would sue for sole custody in your local Ontario Court of Justice. If he fails to file an "answer" to the Court action, then you win almost automatically. After a prescribed time, I can "note him in default" — that entitles you to ask the Judge for a custody and support judgment at a Court hearing without his being further notified. The Judge only hears your evidence.

Sometimes there is no oral evidence in such cases. In a default hearing, the Judge will occasionally even allow all the evidence to be reviewed in writing. If dad does file an answer in which he claims for custody himself, joint custody, or access — or if he wishes to defend the child support claim — the matter could lead to a contested trial. However, in 90 per cent of these cases the matter is settled before a Judge well beforehand at a series of one to three consecutive mediation-type sessions (called a case conference, settlement conference and trial management conference). In these sessions, Judges work hard to convince parties to settle based on their experience.

In many cases like yours, primary caregivers obtain Court orders for the right to travel, child support and, at least, for primary care and control if not outright sole custody. If the fellow wants it he gets some form of access scheduled, or just left open. And trials are becoming increasingly rare.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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N.B. shul sells its building

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — One era in Saint John, N.B., is ending, but the president of the city's lone synagogue is confident that a new one is just beginning.

Shaarei Zedek Synagogue has been sold, after serving the Saint John Jewish community for 88 years. Once a thriving centre of nearly 300 families and 1,400 Jewish people, the New Brunswick port city's shul now has 55 members – families or singles – 13 of whom live away. Another 13 are very elderly and mostly inactive.

"We have about 29 active family memberships, and of those, only 15 are really active," said president Norman Hamburg, adding that the costs of maintenance and upkeep of the large shul are becoming overwhelming for the congregation.

The building and its adjacent community centre, home of the venerable Saint John Historical Museum, had been for sale for the last five years and were finally sold to the city earlier this year.

Both will close at the end of November.

"It's going to be used as part of urban renewal," said Hamburg. "It will be disappointing to lose Shaarei Zedek, a building that can seat 550 people and is considered by many to be the most beautiful synagogue in the Atlantic region. But our members recognized the cost factors and, when we voted on the sale, only one of 30 attending said nay."

Shaarei Zedek, a Conservative, egalitarian congregation, began as an Orthodox shul in 1919 in a building that formerly housed a Christian church, built in 1865. It became Conservative in the 1950s and continues to hold Friday night and Saturday services, rarely missing a minyan.

Hamburg said the community plans to build another shul and community centre. "With a new, smaller, more efficient building, our costs would be cut considerably."

The museum, established in 1986, is still active, with thousands of visitors stopping in each year. Increased cruise ship traffic, and tourism generally, have meant strong visitation.

Much museum support comes from Saint Johners living far from their place of birth and growing-up years. It's administered by a board that's separate from the shul and has Jewish and non-Jewish members.

Hamburg said the community is looking about 15 years ahead as it plans a new shul and museum.

"We feel Saint John is in a boom period, with growth from the energy industry and a new medical school to be built here in the next two years. Both should attract new Jewish people. Any number of members joining the shul would be a huge boost for us."

Hamburg, a lifelong Saint John resident, said the money from the sale, plus funds held in investments, will support construction of a new building and museum.

He added, with a tinge of sadness in his voice, "Building new is the only option. If we don't have a home, we would really just fall apart [as a community]."

The sound of ceilings breaking

IDEAS ON IDENTITY

By Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

I had the privilege of breaking yet another glass ceiling in Toronto this month. And I broke it together with a young bat mitzvah girl, so the symbolism was profound both for me and for her.

Here was a "veteran" of Toronto's patriarchal past standing on the bimah with this generation's newest Jewish adult female member, reading from a Torah scroll in a shul that has never had a woman read from the Torah before, and certainly has never had a woman rabbi leading the service.

This girl's family has a long and respected history with the shul. The shul is struggling to keep young people engaged, and is clothed in a "sort of Orthodox" nostalgia, although few of the members could be classified as truly Orthodox, either in practice or in theology. Yet the one tradition the shul clings to tenaciously is that women don't participate in any public leadership roles in the service.

Don't ask about the interesting negotiations that went on in order to "permit" this historic bat mitzvah to happen.

Suffice it to say, it happened, and things will never be the same.

Yes indeed, things will never be the same – because they shouldn't be. Judaism has survived and thrived because it has evolved (do we still sacrifice animals?) adapted (did Moses give a sermon in Yiddish?) and adopted (even haredim use cellphones, and those sects that disdain the Internet seem to have fantastic websites themselves.)

We are lucky to have young people committed enough, passionate enough and sensitive enough to care about preserving their roots while branching out into the new. We count on these young people to lead us into a renaissance of Jewish life that starts from the principle that nothing stands still.

As I said to you from the bimah, my young bat mitzvah friend, always keep in your heart the advice of Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the first chief Ashkenazi rabbi of Israel: "The old shall become new, and the new shall become holy."

We build a new Judaism with not only reverence for the past, but true excitement for the changes that lie ahead.

If we are to survive not as a relic but as a living people, we will grow and we will change. That is inevitable. How we manage those changes so that we are not unrecognizable will be the deciding factor, not whether we change at all.

As the first bat mitzvah to read from the Torah at this shul, you stood on the bridge between the past and the future.

Actually, that's not true. In fact, you were the bridge.

Today's young girls don't have a lot of patience for a tenacious clinging to ideals that don't make sense anymore on a political, spiritual, legal or moral level. They look around them and see a whole world of opportunities that are modern and that fill them with self esteem. When they look to the Jewish establishment, and especially to their synagogue life, do they see the same?

I know one young girl who now sees herself as both "just" a bat mitzvah – "Of course I'll read from the Torah!" – and as a pioneer – "I will actually read from the Torah?"

Those few verses sung out loud – and proud – will reverberate for a long, long time, and in ways and places that we can't yet imagine.

Jewish Life

Worthy and unworthy aid

Money Matters

By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

Tragically, natural disasters are a relatively common occurrence. The scene is familiar – pictures of destruction and death, with pale-looking survivors searching eagerly for help. Calls go out for money to help rebuild lives and property.

The recent cyclone in Burma (Myanmar) has created a second tragedy that, from a moral point of view, surpasses the natural one. The refusal of the country's "leaders" to accept aid, thereby causing so much death and suffering, is one that taints the image of God in which man was created. A lesser-known display of moral bankruptcy is the fact that ample warning about the impending disaster was given and nothing was done to avert it.

This moral tragedy raises the question of whether one should provide aid to those whose wounds are self-inflicted. This issue has wide ranging implications and would include the appropriateness of giving a liver transplant to an alcoholic, cancer treatment to a smoker, medical treatment to a wounded (attempted) suicide bomber or financial help to a person who refuses to look for a job.

While each question has unique factors and must be judged individually, the question of helping those who appear unworthy of such help reveals much about a society. While some might recoil at even asking the question – after all, we must not stoop to the low level of others – others may wonder why we would consider helping those who don't want our help and may in fact want us dead. Both arguments have much logic – ethical dilemmas always contain many shades of grey.

It's crucial to note that the question only pertains to those who themselves are the cause of their own misfortune. We may not punish innocent victims because of their evil leaders. And while people often get the leaders they deserve (even in non-democratic regimes), this does not justify disregard for human suffering.

With rare exceptions, Jewish ethics demands that we help even those who are unworthy of help. We must separate the person from the deed. While one may argue that the recipient may deserve his self-inflicted wounds, and perhaps that is even true, the spectre of those who are able to help ignoring the pleas of the suffering takes an unacceptable moral toll on us.

When the need is great, one must offer help and ask questions later. Thus, one who claims to be hungry should be given food, despite our contrary suspicions, whereas one must investigate a person's claim of not having anything to wear.

Yet there are times when we must not bail a person out. The Talmud rules that if one sells himself into slavery, the community must pay to redeem him. However, should that person then sell himself into slavery again, the community must let him remain enslaved, even until he dies.

However, the crucial issue is not whether we should help the unworthy, but rather, given the limited resources that we have available, what is the best way to allocate them. This question is the crucial one facing the health care system in Canada, for example, and touches upon the core values of society.

Should factors such as age, family history, ability to pay, citizenship status, and the moral makeup of the person play a role in determining where scarce resources will be allocated? And if they should – which in some ways they must – to what extent? Surely one factor that must be considered is the effectiveness of the resources spent. Thus, it could very well be that aid to those who "refuse" it should not be given, not because they are unworthy recipients, but because such aid will yield much greater results elsewhere.

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Birth of Israel on the Internet

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

"While the UN talked, the Jews were carving Palestine with a sword. In a whirlwind week, they seized Haifa, attacked Jaffa, won Tiberias on the Sea of Galilee and tried to cut the Arab supply road into Jerusalem. For the first time since the Romans levelled Jerusalem 1,800 years ago, a Jewish army ate Passover matzah and bitter herbs around campfires in the field. Said Jewish Agency Chairman David Ben-Gurion: 'We stand on the eve of the Jewish state… heartened by the victories of our army… We have just begun to buckle on the sword.'"

– *Time* magazine, May 3, 1948 **[tinyurl.com/6ycggl]**

This spring, we are being inundated with reports about Israel's first 60 years, its successes and its failures. But what those articles can't do is capture what it was to live through those early harrowing months both in Israel and around the world. To get a unique feel for those times, I've searched for original reports, photos, films and documents that were created back then and are now available online. In other words, a snapshot of what you might have been able to learn about the new State of Israel if you had an Internet connection back in 1948.

Just after the establishment of the state, *Time* decided to feature King Abdullah of Transjordan on its first cover story about the fighting. The article paints this picture. The Arab Legion "destroyed the Jewish settlement of Kfar Etzion and four others. In southern Palestine, Egyptian troops crossed the border into the sandy wastes of the Negeb [sic] Desert to seize Jewish settlements on the road to Gaza. In northern Palestine, where Haganah was trying to secure the Galilee region, Syrian and Lebanese detachments attacked Jewish settlements. Egyptian air force planes swooped over Tel Aviv in the first strafing and bombing raids of the war." **[tinyurl.com/58grwg]**

It wasn't until August that *Time* put an Israeli, Ben-Gurion, who was then prime minister, onto its cover. The tone of article was considerably different than that of the earlier one. "The new Israelis walked with a confident swagger along beach front at Tel Aviv. They talked confidently – indeed, stridently – of a state of 10 million, not necessarily confined to the present boundaries of Israel." The article also feels like a primer on the country when it tells readers about the revived language of Hebrew, once a "dead language, a language of scholarship and liturgy for centuries… not to be confused with Yiddish." **[tinyurl.com/6ycggl]**

Speaking of Hebrew, you can read the entire front page of the May 14 edition of *Yediot Ahronot*, the "newspaper of the Land of Israel." The headline reads, "The State of Israel will be established at 4 p.m." Other articles talk about how the Jewish forces have entered Jaffa and the last British soldier has exited the country. **[tinyurl.com/6axggx]**

Two days later, the *Palestine Post* proclaimed, "STATE OF ISRAEL IS BORN." You can look at a reproduction of the front page **[tinyurl.com/3frsbk]** as well as other highlights where you'll learn that Etzion settlers had been taken prisoners of war; Acre had been captured by Jewish forces; and "a big surprise of the local tennis season was the defeat of the veteran champion, Finklekraut, by Apel in the Palestine Tennis Championships." **[tinyurl.com/4nlk8s]**

The *Post* has also put together some image galleries of the era including photos of:

- Jewish forces moving on foot from Ramle to Lod in 1948;
- donkeys being mobilized for Jerusalem street cleaning to keep typhoid at bay during the gas shortage; and
- raising the flag in Umm Rashrash (now Eilat), marking the end of the war. **[tinyurl.com/5sl62a]**

For more, go to Google images **[tinyurl.com/654b2k]**, CBC News **[http://tinyurl.com/45gcw3]** and to Israelimages. **[israelimages.com]** Once there, type the number 1948 into the search box. You'll find many classic shots such as the Irgun ship; the Altalena on fire near Tel Aviv; a woman on guard in Kibbutz Nirim; and the classic shot of Ben-Gurion declaring the establishment of the state.

This site offers and interesting bonus feature. If you see an image you like, you can attach a note and e-mail it as an electronic postcard.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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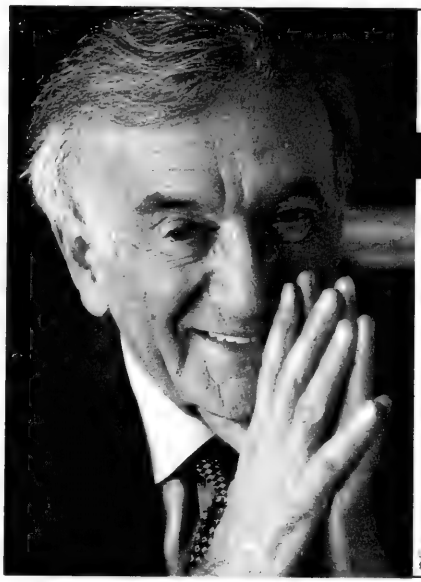

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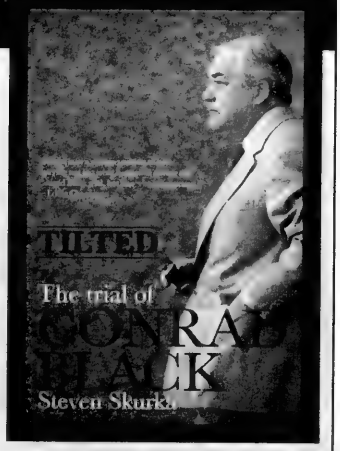

Health & Lifestyles

Tribute to raise funds for Israeli ICU

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Center is honouring Dr. Bernard Goldman, a Toronto heart surgeon and Shirley Anne Haber, an activist, at its 2008 Tribute Dinner, to be held May 28 at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

The medical centre, located in Kfar Saba, about five kilometres from the Arab village of Kalkalia and 30 kilometres northeast of Tel Aviv, is the seventh largest general hospital in Israel. It's affiliated with the Sackler School of Medicine at Tel Aviv University.

Funds raised at the dinner will go to the centre's intensive care unit (ICU), which with its six beds, now admits and treats about 600 critically ill patients a year.

Prof. Brian Fredman, chair of the the Meir Medical Centre's department of anesthesiology, critical care and pain management, said from Israel that the hospital provides medical services to a population of 700,000.

"Due to improved medical capabilities, increase longevity and intifadah-related trauma, our current intensive care facility is unable to cope with the ever-increasing patient load. As a result, patients are often denied intensive care admission."

For some years, he said, the hospital has been making plans to relocate its ICU to a larger facility, and to that end, space was designated, architectural plans were drawn up, and a budget allocated.

"Accepting the fact that there are no public funds available for developing essential medical services, we are forced to seek help from friends who have both financial means and the wish to improve the plight of the simple citizens of the State of Israel," Fredman said.

Considering that the lack of adequate ICU facilities compromises the treatment that patients receive, he said, it was decided to begin the building process despite the hospital's inability to finish the project.

"As of now, the infrastructure is complete, but without additional funds, we are unable to continue," he said.

Goldman, who has operated, taught or lectured in a number of Israeli hospitals, said he visits the country often and knows virtually all its heart surgeons. "I am intrigued with the Meir Medical Centre, because it took in a huge influx of patients during the [2006] Lebanon war. The needs of the emergency department are unique. I am happy to stand for [this] hospital and recruit support."

Haber, who for seven years has devoted herself to countering anti-Israel bias in the media, said the hospital plays a crucial role in the life of Israel. "Located across from an Arab community and just north of Tel Aviv, it deals with Arabs and Israelis. I am totally inspired by the hospital, and the work it does."

Call the Canadian Friends of Meir Medical Centre at 905-770-5118.

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Summer Fashion

BEAUTY SHOP

BY STACEY MICHAELS AND FRANCINE BIRKEN

Dedicated in memory of Carol Wise.

With summer just around the corner, it's time to give your face and body a healthy tan and protect them from the nightmare of a sunburn. Make sure to use a moisturizer with an SPF factor of 15 or higher.

When the warm weather hits, you may feel that a foundation is too heavy for your skin; so try using a tinted moisturizer and use a dab of concealer under the eye area. There is also nothing better than the appearance of a healthy glow, which you can achieve with a sweep of a bronzing powder.

For your daytime look, make sure to use lighter shades of shadow on your lids, and for evening, make sure to enhance them. Be sure to line your eyes with eyeliner and use waterproof mascara, as this is the best for the hot days ahead. Carry your lip-gloss and/or lipstick with you to keep your lips moist and fresh looking.

Rich, deep conditioners for your hair will help keep the frizz away and protect it from the sun.

Lastly, be sure and sprinkle your feet with foot powder before wearing your favourite sandals. This will not only help with sweat but it will reduce the chance of your developing blisters. Make sure to put on your hat and sunglasses and enjoy those beautiful summer days that lie just ahead.

HAIR: Maurice Fiorio tells us that for summer, edgy bobs, pixie crops and the fringe remain popular, still with lots of texture and movement. Fringes can be full or to the side. A crop is more masculine, but can be extremely sexy on the right woman. Still, stylists must be cautious with this style, as it doesn't suit all face shapes.

Waves, curls, braids, ponytails, updos, and backcombing are all in for the summer. Don't be afraid to accessorize these looks with a simple clip or thick hair band.

In terms of colour, we're still keeping it tone on tone to add depth to the hair. It must be very natural looking with soft, subtle highlights, avoiding bleached or artificial looks. Colours are going to be brighter and lighter, with focus on honey, auburns, caramels and soft blonde tones.

STACEY'S TIPS

SPA AND SKINCARE: Shed your winter blues and dead skin with new **Alyria** Resurfacing Body Care. With summer fast approaching and winter clothes vanishing from your wardrobe, so too should the layers of dead skin that have been hibernating during the cold winter days be eliminated. Resurfacing Body Care embodies what you should look for in a hydrating, exfoliating and softening body lotion. So throw away your exfoliating body products, abrasive scrubs and loofahs that scrape off dead cells! Instead, make room for new **Alyria** Resurfacing Body Care that takes care of both exfoliating and hydrating your skin in a safer and more soothing way. It gets rid of keratosis pilaris, known as chicken skin, smoothes away calluses on your feet, prevents ingrown hair and essentially hydrates your body all over. Make this all-in-one lotion your skincare staple throughout the year.

Moringa Bath and Body range

This season, the spotlight will shine its brightest on new **NeoStrata** Oil-Free Smoothing Lotions Level 3. While oil-free lotions have various attributes, exfoliation is generally not one of them. But new **NeoStrata** Oil-Free Smoothing Lotions and the daytime version with SPF 15 promote outstanding skincare benefits that will allow a healthy glow to shine through without the unattractive oily sheen.

Introducing dermaDNA by **Dermaglow** Cellular DNA Assessment Test and Treatment Line – the first and only product that measures existing cellular DNA damage in the skin due to UV exposure and is clinically proven to reverse and repair DNA skin damage and prematurely aging skin. Try it today!

By the time we reach 40, signs of aging – loss of firmness and noticeable wrinkles – are easily apparent. **Lancôme Men** introduces Rénergy 3D, which offers triple-action effectiveness so that the skin is instantly tightened and firmed and wrinkles are erased. The **Lancôme Men** range is also proud to announce the arrival of Energizer Total, a concentrate specifically developed for men's skin and designed to provide optimal exfoliation day after day, to boost cell metabolism and to give intense comfort. Also in the **Lancôme Men** range, don't miss Age Fight Anti-age Perfecting Fluid; Hydrix Gel Moisturizer and Balm Moisturizer, both with micro-nutrients; High Definition Shave Foam; Ultimate Cleansing Gel and Exfoliating Microdermabrasion.

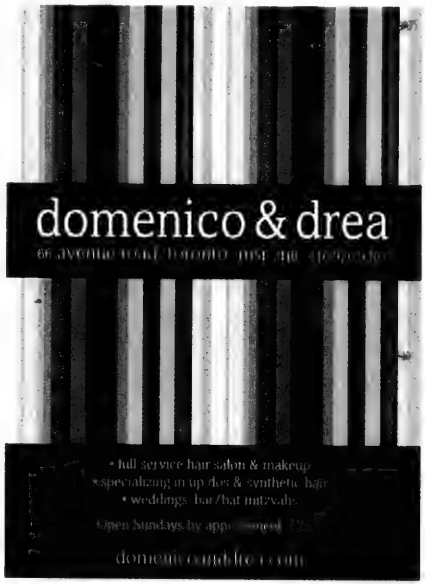
Give your special lady the royal treatment with a gift that has stood the test of time from **Yardley** of London. An institute in luxury bath care, with products rich in English lavender, known for its calming, therapeutic properties, **Yardley**'s array of creations from talc to foam baths, and moisturizers to soaps, are sure to let her be queen for the day, 365 days a year.

Beauty flash: curl up to gorgeous, luscious lashes with four essential grooming tools from **Tweezerman** – Classic Lash Curler, Supercurl Eyelash Curler, Corner Lash Curler and Folding Lashcomb.

Move over ladies. Men have become major players in the personal grooming arena. Now reliant on products that tweeze, trim and clip, an increasing number of men are maximizing their daily regimens to secure a winning appearance while using the legendary grooming brand **Tweezerman Professional**. Be sure to try HIS Deluxe Trimmer, HIS Facial Hair Scissors, HIS Moustache Scissors, HIS Deluxe Nail Clipper Set and HIS Deluxe Grooming Kit that brings four essentials into one sleek, convenient carrying case.

The Body Shop unveils the Moringa Bath and Body Range, a delicately fragranced set of six cleansing, exfoliating and moisturizing products that benefit from sensual, floral hints based on the flowers of the moringa tree, and a delectable assortment of moisturizing and protecting community trade ingredients. The products feature moringa seed oil, named "the miracle moisturizer" for its high level of protective oleic acid.

Continued on page 30



Summer Fashion

BEAUTY SHOP

BY STACEY MICHAELS AND FRANCINE BIRKEN

Dedicated in memory of Carol Wise.

Continued from page 29

Introducing new Oil-Free Makeup Remover Towelettes, from **Almay**, with aloe, cucumber and green tea. They nourish the skin as they remove waterproof and long-wearing makeup while they instantly dissolve and lift away makeup, oil and dirt without irritation. The makeup remover is oil-free, 100 per cent fragrance-free, hypoallergenic and leaves no greasy residue.

Discover how celebrities stay looking and feeling great all day and all night with **Airplus** for her with new Ultra Arch, Heel Savers, Save My Soles, Aloe Socks, Steppies and Hug my Heels. In addition, don't miss the new **Airplus** Ultra Arch and Heel Savers made especially for men.

Prevent a rear view nightmare and make panty lines invisible thanks to **Secret**'s Medium Control Thigh and Tummy Shaper Pantyhose, Firm Control Uplift Bottom Shaper Pantyhose, Medium Control High Waist Shaper Panty and Medium Control Thigh and Tummy Shaper Capri.

FRANCINE'S TIPS

CONCEALER AND FOUNDATION: Revlon ColorStay Mineral Foundation is a must for all the brides to be who want flawless looking skin. The foundation is a lightweight, loose powder foundation that covers the imperfections and won't clog pores. It remains on the skin for up to 16 hours and is oil-free, fragrance-free and non-irritating.

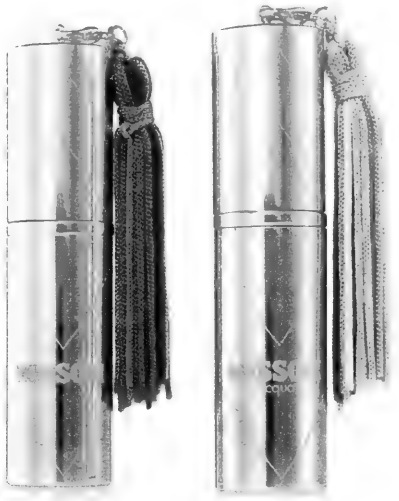
Almay Face introduces a wide range of concealers, foundations and powders including a Line Smoothing Collection for dry skin, the Nearly Naked Collection for normal to combination skin and the Clear Complexion Collection for oily skin. They all are lightweight in feel and help smooth skin to keep it young and more supple.

BLUSH: Revlon announces New ColorStay Mineral Blush and New ColorStay Mineral Bronzer for women who want natural, seamless blush-bronzer colour. The minerals are rose quartz, mother of pearl and topaz, which are all good for your skin. Not only are these products non-irritating, they are also fragrance free.

Returning this summer is Bronze Goddess Luminous Liquid Bronzer by **Estée Lauder**, a sheer, liquid bronzer with subtle shimmer that delivers a radiant, sun-kissed finish to the face, shoulders and décolletage.

Marcelle is launching two new products: the new I-Bronze Sun-Kissed Glow Moisturizing Cloths and I-Bronze Self-Tanning Cloths. These new cloths are specially designed to give the skin a healthy summer look in one easy step – streak and mess-free, for an easy to carry with you tan.

The Body Shop is proud to introduce the New Limited Edition Summer 2008 makeup collection, consisting of the Sun Lustre Bronzer packaged in a retro-style compact embossed with a beautiful ornamental motif that delivers a light-diffusing moisture-enriched bronze shimmer that is simply stunning.



Missoni's refillable purse sprays are perfectly sized to fit into the smallest of clutch bags

Continued on page 31

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Summer Fashion

Beauty Shop

By Stacey Michaels and Francine Birken

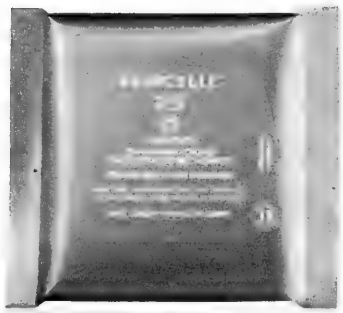
Dedicated in memory of Carol Wise.

Continued from page 30

EYES: New for this summer, **Cargo Cosmetics**' new Melt-proof Make-up Collection is a limited edition kit of long-wearing makeup that doesn't melt, smudge or run. By the pool or at the beach, this makeup looks natural and stays put. The Melt-proof 3-in-1 Eye-Cheek-Lip Palette is a creamy palette of bronze and coral shades designed for eyes, lips and cheeks.

By popular demand, **The Body Shop** is launching a refreshing new Limited Edition Shimmer Cube palette in the latest seasonal shades. Each block of colour can be removed from the larger cube so that you can pop your favourite shade into your bag.

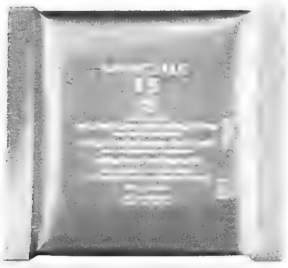
A genie in a bottle – get one wish – instant lashes. **Caryl Baker** introduces The Lash Extender, a unique professional formula especially for lashes. It will instantly and dramatically lengthen, add volume to and strengthen lashes.



Marcelle I-Bronze self-tanning cloths

LIPS: This June, brides will be able to kiss their grooms, sample their cake and keep their lip gloss on for six hours. **Revlon** is proud to introduce ColorStay Mineral Lipglaze, available in more than a dozen colours with an easy-to-apply applicator wand.

Add a touch of glamour with the new, limited edition Bronze Goddess Sheer Lip Tint SPF15 by **Estée Lauder**. This season there are the limited edition shades of Fuchsia and Bronze, and these creamy and emollient lip conditioning sticks create sheer colour, contain vitamins C and E and shea butter to nourish and moisturize.



Marcelle I-Bronze moisturizing cloths

FRAGRANCE: For the perfect summer fragrance, certain perfumes work better then others. Try to find the ones that are transparent citrus-based or flowery scents that are fresh. Are you looking for the ultimate expression of glamour, fashion, style and sensuality? Get ready for **Kimora Lee Simmons**' new fragrance, Baby Phat Fabulosity. It is a radiant, fruity, oriental scent that brings out the fabulous in all women.

Coty Beauty Inc. announces the launch of Céline Dion Sensational. The fragrance is a modern, luminous floral created by Maurice Roucel of **Symrise**. The packaging mimics the silver and white rays of spotlights criss-crossing the stage, announcing the arrival of something powerful, someone of great magnitude.

Take a little **Missoni** fashion wherever you go. **Missoni** introduces two new refillable purse sprays, perfectly sized to fit into the smallest of clutch bags. Whether it's for a weekend away or as an office essential, **Missoni** summer offerings combine elegance with ease.

The Aqua Lily Collection is the newest fragrance line from **The Body Shop** featuring five products that are ideal for layering and have a delicate, fresh, floral-based scent. So for a fragrance that is a harmonious symphony of fresh, floral notes with a soft, musky finish, turn to the irresistible Aqua Lily Collection this season.

Enjoy all these wonderful products and have a great summer.

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Feature

Canadian receives IDF award for excellence

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Natasha Stern grew up in Toronto in the most ordinary way. Like many of her peers, she was educated in the Jewish school system and had plans to go on to post-secondary school in North America.

But after she took a year off between high school and university to live, learn and work in Israel nearly two years ago, Stern, 21, decided to make aliyah through Nefesh B'Nefesh.

Today, Stern is a corporal in the education corps of the Israel Defence Forces, and just last week, she was one of 120 IDF soldiers who were honoured at the annual Independence Day ceremony May 8 at Beit Hanassi by Israeli President Shimon Peres, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defence Minister Ehud Barak and the chief of general staff, Gabi Ashkenazi.

Stern, a lone soldier who began her service about 14 months ago working with olim who enlist in the army, was presented with the Presidential Award of Excellence by Peres and Ashkenazi.

Although Stern said she is honoured to receive the award, which includes a $1,000 scholarship through the Soldiers Welfare Association, she didn't decide to join the army for the accolades.

"I believe that Jewish people should be living in the Jewish homeland. This is the Jewish homeland, and I think I should be living here," she said.

"[I was taught] that Israel is an important place – gotta give money, gotta go visit – but I just really believe that we have this state and everyone has to chip in. There is no reason that it should just be Israelis fighting because they were born here."

Natasha Stern accepts her award from IDF Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi, and left, Israeli President Shimon Peres.
[Sasson Tiram photo]

Although Stern's parents, Ellie and Arthur Stern, were initially reluctant to accept their first-born daughter's decision to move to Israel, they quickly understood how important it was to let her go.

"She was so sure about what she wanted to do, and it was the right thing to do, and it is a great thing to do. She had to follow her dreams," her mother said, adding that she is proud of her.

"The initial reaction, like anything, is the emotional one," her father added. "But… I realize that my daughter is someone who is very committed and she has always been that way… She had that attitude and nothing was going to get in her way. Like any parent, you have to do a paradigm shift and say it's in the best interest of the child. We had to step out of the way, no matter how difficult it was."

He said that when Stern went on the March of the Living four years ago, her Jewish identity was reinforced.

"Before she made the decision to make aliyah, she had years of concretizing who she is as a Jew. Now that she knows who she is as a Jew, what does she have to do? What role does she have to play for the Jewish people? What kind of difference can she make?" Arthur said.

Although there were many experiences in her life that led her to the ultimate decision to make aliyah, Natasha said that spending Yom Hazikaron in Israel during her gap year was what triggered her desire to move to Israel and serve in the army.

"Yom Hazikaron was the day where I saw so much mourning and I thought there was no way that these kids – and they are kids – died just so that we could do Birthright and do March of The Living. They died so that we could move here, make it better, improve and add and give, and keep [Israel] going," Natasha said.

"It is one of the most meaningful decisions I've ever made. It is sometimes the worst thing ever, but sometimes the best thing ever. It's really hard. It's not a joke. It's really hard for everyone in different ways."

Natasha said she is humbled to be one of 120 soldiers who were recognized for their contributions, but she doesn't want it to detract from the work that every other soldier is doing.

"Everyone works so hard in the army. I believe that a lot of people give everything they can."

Before getting the news that Natasha would be receiving the award, her parents had joined an adult group of the March of the Living who travelled abroad from April 28 to May 11.

When they applied to participate on the march, which starts in Poland and ends in Israel, they had no idea that they would be in Israel on the same day that their daughter would be publicly recognized as an outstanding soldier.

Natasha's 18-year-old sister, Alex, who is currently studying in Israel, was also there to witness the ceremony.

Another aspect of the event that can be chalked up to fate is that Natasha's grandmother and great-grandmother were liberated from Auschwitz-Birkenau on May 8 – the same day Natasha received her award.

"This is everything that a child of a survivor, that a survivor, dreams of. It was my mother's dream being realized. It just sent chills down my spine," Arthur said about watching his daughter shake hands with Peres.

"Next to childbirth – she's done good in a lot of dance recitals – but next to childbirth, this was right there."

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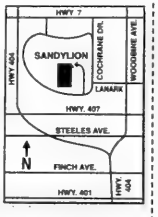

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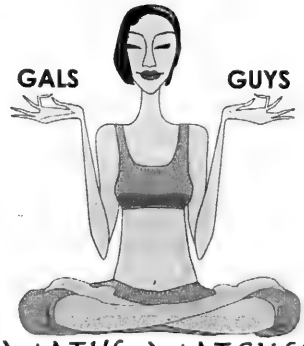

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U.S., Israel want 'tangible action' on Iran nukes

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JERUSALEM — The United States and Israel agree on the need for "tangible action" to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's spokesperson said Friday, after a visit by U.S. President George W. Bush.

"We are on the same page. We both see the threat... And we both understand that tangible action is required to prevent the Iranians from moving forward on a nuclear weapon," Olmert spokesperson Mark Regev said.

Regev described diplomatic efforts so far to exert pressure on Iran as "positive," but added: "It is clearly not sufficient and it's clear that additional steps will have to be taken."

Asked about the option of using military force, Regev said: "Leaders of many countries have talked about many options being on the table and, of course, Israel agrees with that."

Senior officials in Jerusalem said last Thursday that Israel is fully satisfied with the results of Bush's visit, including policy on Iran's nuclear program.

"In talks with the president of the United States during his visit, it was made clear that Bush's statements on the subject of Iran's nuclear program are fully backed in practice," a senior official said.

The president's attitude on Iran was well-known in Israel, and the expectation had been that he would use forceful language against Tehran, both during talks with Israeli officials and in his address to the Knesset, not only on the nuclear question but on Iran's role in the region.

During meetings with Olmert and Defence Minister Ehud Barak, more data was presented to back the desire for a reassessment of an American intelligence report that concluded that Iran had halted its nuclear weapons program.

One Israeli source said that it is hoped that the new information would influence the administration's stance on Iran's nuclear program.

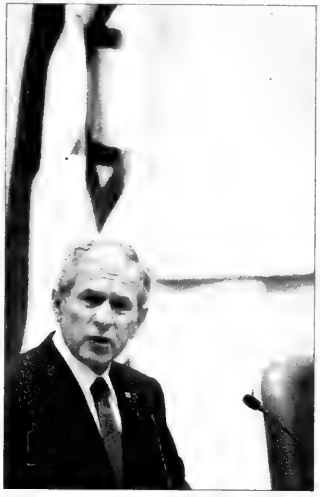
The source said that Olmert would discuss the subject during his visit to Washington in a week.

Bush ended his three-day visit to Israel on Friday and headed for Saudi Arabia.

The president and first lady Laura Bush flew out of Tel Aviv's Ben-Gurion Airport after a morning at Bible Lands Museum in Jerusalem, where they viewed artifacts from the time of biblical writings and spoke with young Israelis about hopes for peace.

In his address to the Knesset last Thursday, Bush promised unflinching U.S. support. "Citizens of Israel, Masada shall never fall again, and America will always stand with you," he said.

Bush added that calls for negotiations with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad are akin to the efforts to appease Hitler before World War II.



U.S. President George W. Bush speaks in the Knesset. [RNS/Reuters photo]

The president opened his speech by saying in Hebrew: "Happy Independence Day." His address focused on the alliance between the United States and Israel.

"Israel's population may be just over seven million. But when you confront terror and evil, you are 307 million strong, because America stands with you," Bush said.

"You have raised a modern society in the Promised Land, a light unto the nations that preserves the legacy of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. And you have built a mighty democracy that will endure forever and can always count on America to stand at its side."

He noted that Israel's Declaration of Independence "was the redemption of an ancient promise given to Abraham, Moses and David – a homeland for the chosen people in Eretz Yisrael."

The president also presented his vision of Israel in the next 60 years. "Israel will be celebrating its 120th anniversary as one of the world's great democracies, a secure and flourishing homeland for the Jewish people."

His address was interrupted no less than 14 times by loud applause.

"America stands with you in breaking up terrorist networks and denying the extremists sanctuary. And America stands with you in firmly opposing Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions. Permitting the world's leading sponsor of terror to possess the world's deadliest weapon would be an unforgivable betrayal of future generations. For the sake of peace, the world must not allow Iran to have a nuclear weapon," the president said.

Bush accused Ahmadinejad of seeking to return the Middle East to the Middle Ages by calling for the destruction of Israel.

"Some seem to believe we should negotiate with terrorists and radicals, as if some ingenious argument will persuade them they have been wrong all along," he said. "We have heard this foolish delusion before. As Nazi tanks crossed into Poland in 1939, an American senator declared: 'Lord, if only I could have talked to Hitler, all of this might have been avoided.' We have an obligation to call this what it is – the false comfort of appeasement, which has been repeatedly discredited by history."

After the speech made by German Chancellor Angela Merkel to the Knesset in March, it was hard to expect a more pro-Zionist speech. But as a former Knesset speaker, MK Reuven Rivlin, put it, "I wish our leaders would make speeches like this." Rivlin described Bush as "manifesting the Zionist vision."

Contrary to the applause Bush received for his address, the speech by Olmert was less popular and stirred considerable controversy.

Olmert promised that when there is a peace agreement it "will be approved by a large majority in the Knesset and it will be supported by the vast majority of the Israeli public."

Two MKs from the National Union, Zvi Hendel and Uri Ariel, left the plenum in protest, complaining that the event was "used to promote a political agenda that is opposed by most of the Israeli public."

Hendel issued a statement calling on Olmert "to learn from the president of the United States what Zionism is."

Throughout exchanges among the rival Israeli politicians, Bush appeared to be enjoying himself.

Olmert diverged from his speech to say that "we will bring before the Knesset an agreement that is based on the vision of two states for two peoples. This agreement will be approved by a large majority in the Knesset and the entire nation."

On Iran, Olmert said that "the seriousness of the threat demands that no means be discounted." However, he made it clear that "a uniform international political and economic front against Iran is currently in place, and tougher and more effective sanctions are a necessary stage, even if it is not the final stage, on the right way to block the Iranian threat."

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Bin Laden vows to 'fight' Israel for Palestinian land

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JERUSALEM — Al Qaeda will continue the fight against Israel and not give up an inch of Palestinian land, the terror group's leader, Osama bin Laden, said in an audio recording released last Friday.

"We will continue, God permitting, the fight against the Israelis and their allies… and will not give up a single inch of Palestine as long as there is one true Muslim on earth," the Saudi-born bin Laden said in the recording, posted on an Islamist website.

Bin Laden said Israel's anniversary celebrations were a reminder that the country did not exist 60 years ago and was established on land seized from Palestinians by force.

"This is evidence that Palestine is our land, and the Israelis are invaders and occupiers who should be fought," he said.

Bin Laden noted that decades of peace initiatives have failed to establish a Palestinian state and that the West has sided with Israel.

"The participation of western leaders with the Jews in this anniversary celebration confirms that the West backs this Jewish occupation of our land, and that they stand in the Israeli corner against us," he said. "They proved this in practice by sending their forces to southern Lebanon."

He also said western media has, over the years, painted Israelis as victims, and the Palestinians who were displaced from their land as terrorists.

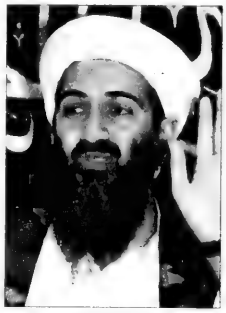
The authenticity of the recording could not immediately be verified, but the voice sounded like Bin Laden's.

Laura Mansfield, an analyst who monitors Islamist websites, said bin Laden appeared to be changing his emphasis.

"In his initial messages, bin Laden's focus was on the removal of U.S. forces from [Saudi Arabia], but in recent years, he has more closely wedded himself to the Palestinian issue."

The announcement appeared on various Islamist message boards on the Internet, with a banner announcing Israel's anniversary as the topic, according to Mansfield.

The speech is addressed to "western peoples" and titled "The Causes of Conflict on the 60th Anniversary of the State of Israeli Occupation," the SITE Institute monitoring group said.



Osama bin Laden
[File photo]

In a March 20 message, his second in 2008, bin Laden urged Muslims to keep up the struggle against U.S. forces in Iraq as a path to "liberating Palestine."

Al Qaeda has vowed attacks on Jews both inside and outside Israel, and it regularly expresses support for the Palestinians.

The group is widely blamed for a suicide attack on an Israeli-owned hotel in Kenya and a simultaneous failed attempt to shoot down an Israeli charter jet near Mombasa airport in Kenya in 2002.

But despite calls by Al Qaeda supporters for the terror network to establish a presence in Palestinian areas, U.S. intelligence officials see no evidence it has done so. It's believed Al Qaeda faces competition for turf in the territories from the well-established Hamas.

In related news, Israeli military intelligence chief Amos Yadlin told *Ha'aretz* that in two years time, every community within 40 kilometres of Gaza, including "Ashdod, Kiryat Gat, even Be'er Sheva," could be vulnerable to rocket fire.

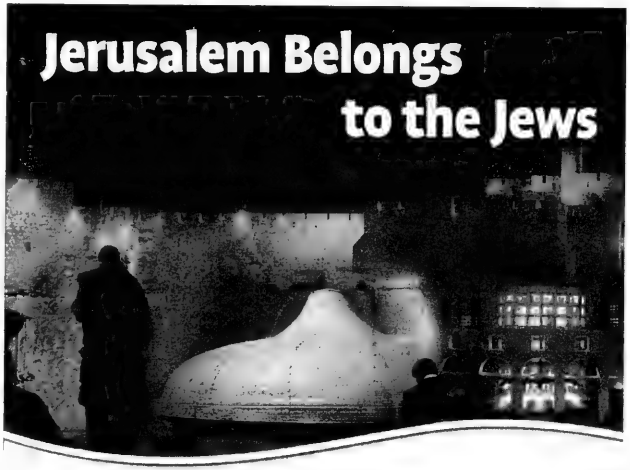
The May 14 attack on an Ashkelon shopping mall, which wounded about 90 people, made Yadlin's statement, offered before the attack, prophetic.

In discussing Israel's strategic situation vis-a-vis Iran, Hezbollah, Syria, the Palestinian Authority and Hamas, Yadlin said Hamas is trying to create deterrence against Israel similar to that of Hezbollah in Lebanon. Part of this effort involves broadening the range of its missile strikes in Israel.

Yadlin said Hamas already has significant capabilities. It has several dozen rockets capable of striking targets within a 20-kilometre radius, and it wants to extend that range.

"If this matter is not dealt with, Hamas will bring more cities within its range of fire," Yadlin said.

He noted that Hamas is preparing its defensive positions in case Israel invades Gaza. "Hamas' ground deployment is based on subterranean fortifications, explosive devices and snipers. Hamas has also set up a number of brigade-size units," Yadlin said.



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The 20 Year Search for the Legal Truth
Dr. Jacques Gauthier LL.D.

Dr. Gauthier, a non-Jewish Canadian lawyer specializing in International Law, spent 20 years researching the legal status of Jerusalem. The result was a 1,300 page doctorial thesis. Mr. Gauthier will present an eye-opening examination detailing the International legal claim for a united Jewish Jerusalem. This is a must attend event for those who are sincerely interested in promoting and defending the Jewish people's right to Israel's eternal capital.
Mr. Gauthier has had a diverse practice in areas including public and commercial international law, corporate and commercial law, immigration law and trademark law. In addition, he has served as legal counsel to the governments of Ontario, France, Spain and Mexico. Mr. Gauthier holds a doctorate in International Law from the University of Geneva, and was named a Chevalier of France's Ordre Nationale du Mérite.

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Israel Briefs

Hamas nixes talks

Hamas turned down two offers of direct talks with Israel, JTA has learned. The offers were made during meetings last month between former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and leaders of the terror group, sources said. Hamas officials turned down both proposals, saying they preferred Egypt's mediation in the Gilad Schalit kidnapping and don't trust Israel on other issues because of what they termed past peace process failures.

Rockets hit synagogue

Three Qassam rockets were fired into Sderot from Gaza last Thursday evening, one of which struck the yard of a preschool adjacent to a shul, causing extensive damage to the building but no casualties. Several passersby were treated for shock. Earlier Thursday, three rockets slammed into the Sha'ar Hanegev regional council. No injuries or damage were reported. Defence Minister Ehud Barak warned against hasty military action against Gaza fighters, a day after a rocket fired from the Hamas-controlled territory hit a shopping mall in the coastal city of Ashkelon, wounding some 90 people. "After the events of yesterday, the blood boils and the gut wants to react," Barak said in Jerusalem. But he added: "It is more important to exercise judgment and to follow a policy of think first, act later."

Ban's language protested

Israel's mission to the United Nations is seeking clarifications after a communique from Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon's office made reference to the word *nakba*. The UN chief reportedly telephoned Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to express his solidarity with the Palestinians on the day they mark the *nakba*, the Arabic word meaning "catastrophe" that's used to refer to Israel's founding. Danny Carmon, Israel's deputy ambassador to the UN, told Israel Radio that the term "*nakba* is a tool of Arab propaganda used to undermine the legitimacy of the establishment of the State of Israel, and it must not be part of the lexicon of the UN."

Kadima discusses Olmert

Several Kadima MKs gathered last Friday to discuss the ongoing investigation against Prime Minister Ehud Olmert. It was the first meeting of its kind since the news first broke of the police probe of Olmert, but the participants said the meeting was merely a "theoretical discussion" and not an attempted putsch. No senior party members were present. No public figure from Kadima has publicly denounced Olmert since the latest investigation against him came to light. However, recent comments by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni about the importance of having "a moral spine and inner compass" were believed to be directed at Olmert.

–from Ha'aretz and JTA

Four London synagogues vandalized

JTA

LONDON — Four synagogues were vandalized in two London neighbourhoods last week.

Dozens of anti-Semitic and anti-Israel slogans were spray-painted last Wednesday night on shops, pavements and walls outside the synagogues.

Residents of the Stamford Hill and Clapton Common neighbourhoods were "shocked" Thursday to see some 40 slogans such as "Jihad to Israel" and "Jihad to Tel Aviv," according to media reports.

A spokesperson for the Community Security Trust, which provides for the safety of British Jewry, said the community already was on high alert after receiving threats from supporters of the Al Qaeda terrorist group.

Police said investigators were looking into footage from surveillance cameras and that forensic teams had recovered a canister of spray paint.

Australia to take Ahmadinejad to court

JTA

CANBERRA — Australia is preparing to take Iran's president to the International Court of Justice for "incitement to genocide" and Holocaust denial.

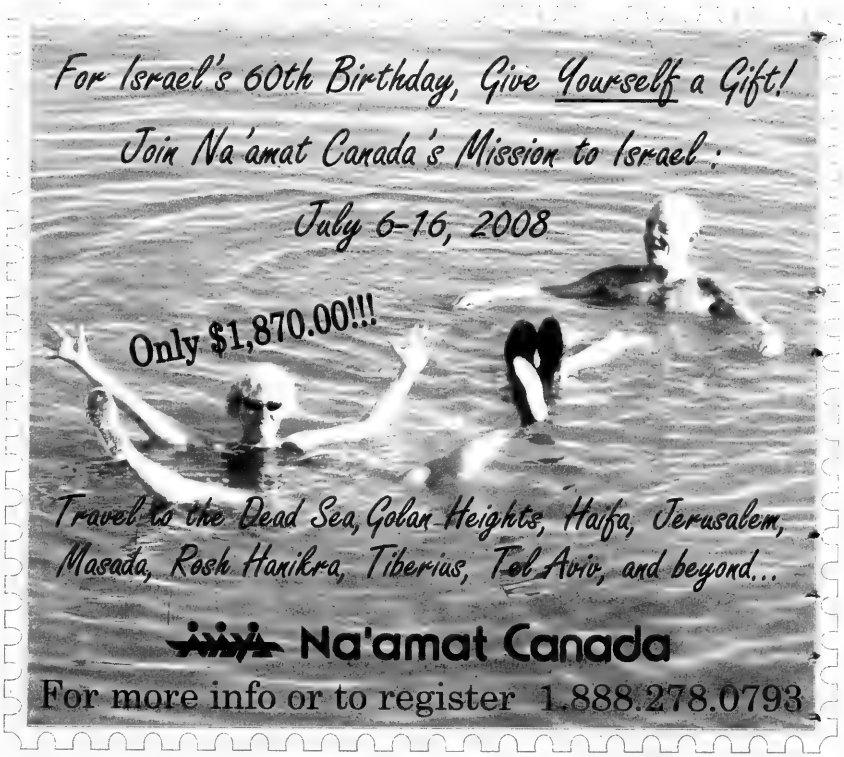
Kevin Rudd made a pre-election pledge in October that a Labor government would use the 1948 genocide convention to take legal action against Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for threatening to "wipe Israel off the map."

"The Iranian president's repeated extraordinary statements, which are anti-Semitic and expressing a determination to eliminate the modern state of Israel from the map, are appalling by any standards of current international relations," Rudd told Sky TV last week. "They are an incitement of international violence."

Also last week, *The Australian* newspaper quoted Attorney General Robert McClelland as saying: "The government considers the comments made by Iranian President Ahmadinejad, calling for the destruction of Israel and questioning the existence of the Holocaust, to be repugnant and offensive. The government is currently taking advice on this matter.

"The alternative to not using these international legal mechanisms is considering wholesale invasion of countries, which itself involves, obviously, expense but more relevantly, of course, the potential for significant loss of life," McClelland said.

Australia is the only country that appears to wish to pursue Ahmadinejad through the international court. According to legal experts, a successful conviction would be difficult to obtain.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Educator recalls Israel's birth pangs

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Sixty years ago, Arlazar Dormachovsky was roused from his sleep by bombs over his neighbourhood in Tel Aviv.

It was May 15; 1948, mere hours after Israel had declared itself a nation, and Egyptian planes were already doing all they could to make that proclamation null and void for the nascent nation of 600,000.

"The ceasefire was in 1949, but I don't think the War of Independence has ever ended," Arlazar Eliashiv said with a sigh.

The family changed its name to Eliashiv from Dormachovsky soon after independence was declared, abandoning a White Russian past for an Israeli future.

In an interview, Eliashiv, one of the Montreal community's best-known educators, recalled the birth pangs of the Jewish state with a combination of wistfulness, nostalgia and melancholy, a time when the jubilation that came with being born into the family of nations was forced to co-mingle with the horrendous human sacrifice that war inevitably wrought.

Even in his own neighbourhood and on streets nearby, people died during this period, although life carried on. In most ways, "it was a very happy society," he said, whatever privations and hostilities there might have been.

Eliashiv was born in 1933 in Tel Aviv, and was only 15 when the modern State of Israel began. His father, Zvi, and mother, Lea, had arrived in Palestine from what was then White Russia in the early 1920s and settled in Tel Aviv, where Zvi did labour work before securing a government job after independence. Eliashiv had a younger sister, Maya.

The family first lived in the southern area of the city, at the time just a large town, but later moved to an apartment further north.

Their address was 25 Ranak St., where they lived in a third-floor walkup with 1½ bathrooms that the Eliashivs shared with another family.

"For Shabbat, we used to buy a live fish that swam in the bathtub before we used it," Eliashiv recalled.

For him, the War of Independence began in earnest about six months before independence was declared, when the United Nations agreed to the partition of a Jewish state in Palestine. The whole country-to-be danced in the streets, even as furious Arab attacks against Jews began almost simultaneously all over the area, Eliashiv said.

Despite that reaction, it was pretty heady stuff, a dream to be fulfilled, this countdown to having your own country. Eliashiv's childhood lacked just about every luxury. At times, food and other items were rationed, but he had a strong family upbringing, and to keep up with what was happening, the family had "underground" radio broadcasting reports from the Haganah, the pre-state militia.

Eliashiv hated the British occupiers and "the way they treated us." He recalled a British soldier shrieking at him as he stood on his balcony during a curfew. Although only an adolescent and too young to fight, Eliashiv did his part to resist the British in the build-up to independence. When "illegals" made it to the ocean beaches of his city, for example, the Haganah asked residents to mingle with them right on the sand to confuse the occupiers. Sometimes, though, this backfired, with "legitimate" residents getting shipped off to Cyprus.

Teens like Eliashiv were put to work. Even before the 1947 partition vote, at age 13, he and his peers at public school had a form of "pre-army" training, a sort of "extended gym" that involved "running five or six kilometres at six o'clock in the morning."

Between the partition vote and the declaration of independence, Eliashiv said, there were curfews and blockades of ships. On more than one occasion, Jews were hung by the British.

When he was 14, Eliashiv and his schoolmates were approached by the Haganah and asked one-on-one if they could help.

They did, distributing *Hachomah*, an illegal daily bulletin, in storefronts. "There were always two of us, one slapping on the glue, the other slapping on the paper," he said. "We always worked in pairs and contributed in our own small way."

At that young age, with independence virtually imminent, he and his peers were also trained to use hand grenades and sten guns, a type of submachine guns.

Arlazar Eliashiv, then about 20 years old and a sergeant-major in the Israeli infantry.

"We used to compete over who could put it together fastest," he said, adding that parents did not really worry about their sons doing this type of training. "It was simply a part of life."

Then independence, and the war for a nation's survival was truly on. Six neighbours were killed in one Egyptian bombing run, and Eliashiv remembered 18 children who were killed during an outing.

"We watched the funeral during school time."

Families, including the Eliashivs, placed sandbag fortifications outside their homes in order to protect them from barrages of bombs.

Eliashiv said he would have liked to be more "part of the action," but he was too young, and like others his age, went to kibbutzim to help out while men of fighting age were absent.

"We stuck together," he said. "Life in the city continued. They didn't close schools or theatres or kindergartens. There were many, many sad events that happened, but morale was very strong."

The 1949 armistice brought an end to that war, but 60 years later, there is still no end to hostilities.

"You know," he said, "every anniversary is a happy occasion. You appreciate the great achievement of the in-gathering, the economy, all kinds of achievements. On the other hand, when you hear the number of soldiers that have died and what terrorists have done, it makes you sad."

Eliashiv, who is head of the Canadian Zionist Federation's Eastern region, also spent decades combating assimilation and teaching the modern Hebrew language and culture to generations of students at United Talmud Torahs and Herzliah High Schools. He also taught for many years at Concordia University, and was among the first to teach about the Holocaust in Montreal.

He was also largely responsible for the city's first participation in the March of the Living. His wife, Hanna, whom he met in Montreal, has for many years been a vice-principal of Judaic studies at Bialik High School. They have three children, Oz, Tamar, and Joey (Yoel), whose stage name is Joey Elias and who has become one of Canada's better-known stand-up comics.

Even though Eliashiv has lived in Canada for more than 40 years, his heart and sensibility remain very much "*ba'aretz*" (in the Land of Israel), especially when he recalls the eve of independence and the War of Independence, when the sense of kehilah and commonality of purpose was the strongest of all bonds.

"There was more idealism then," he said, despite the hardships.

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Toronto-born artist creates music 'out of love'

By RUTH MESTECHKIN
Special to The CJN

A few months ago, Brooklyn-based singer Chana Rothman played a show in Vermont. And it wasn't close to anything she had envisioned. It was a snowy day in a remote town, and the audience wasn't entranced by Rothman's melodies.

"These people were not my demographic," says Rothman. "And there was this one guy, he kept talking to his neighbours who were trying to listen."

But the 32-year-old musician wouldn't let the crowd's distractor win with his antics.

"This guy was literally sucking attention away from me. This is something I learned: if you give that person the attention they want, they'll be on your side," says Rothman.

Chana Rothman, who recently released her album called *We Can Rise*, doesn't shy away from experimenting with any and all musical styles.

She asked the man to help her out with a song, assigning him a solo role.

"He loved it," Rothman says, smiling and taking a sip from her cup of mint tea in the Toronto Annex's Grapefruit Moon restaurant. "And after the song was over, he turned back to his friends. But he signed the e-mail list."

The Toronto native says music has always been closely woven to her life. She grew up playing the flute, and then tried her luck at guitar when she was 16 at an international music camp. She wrote her first song, a "cheesy break-up song," about a year later. She later relocated to Colorado where she taught at a Hebrew school.

Four years later, in 2003, Rothman returned to Toronto, but she felt unfinished.

She journeyed south again, to Connecticut, and worked at a Jewish nature centre called Teva. That's when she started writing music that she said she finally understood the context for. Even though she's been recording since she was 20, her current album, *We Can Rise*, is what she considers her first. It came when she decided that her career was taking front seat. She also met Michael Dorf, a major organizer in the New York music scene.

"He said to me, 'You're really talented. Do you have enough stuff for an album?' And I was like, 'I have enough for 10 albums!'" recalls Rothman. "It felt really validating."

Rothman says since starting, she's grown more confident in her performances. She currently teaches at Jewish day schools in Brooklyn and Manhattan, and organizes song-leading, which brings the community together through music. With the tools she's grasped, Rothman's shows have netted a new edge.

"When you're with a bunch of 15-year-olds and they're not feeling your music, you have to do something different, because otherwise you've lost them. Most adult audiences are more polite, but you've still lost them," says Rothman, propping her knee up on the patio bench to rest her elbow.

"I've learned in the past few years to incorporate all the things that I've learned working with young people into my live performances, so I've become really interactive."

Her song-leading uses music as a tool to pass along values and construct community, something that she loves about Judaism.

"You see everywhere in the media that people are searching for meaning. This is such an individualistic society right now in North America, and we're being taught only to look after ourselves," she says. "To build community is not to force something on somebody else, but to give them a sense that they belong to something larger than themselves."

Rothman recognizes the plethora of possibilities that music comprises in its chords.

"I love when people write a song, put it to music, and it captures something inside of you that makes things true for you," she says. "I've always had an inner rhythm. I would always make up beats and hear things in the windshield wipers."

Even at Rothman's bat mitzvah, a cantor couldn't take all the credit: she led the whole service. For Rothman, singing is an avenue for tying communities together.

"I think music can be so many things, and it gives people an outlet they might not have, and it makes things feel safe or exciting," she says. "Imagine the world without music – it's crazy!"

Lately, Rothman's been experimenting with new styles: on her album, she integrates hip-hop and reggae, more than she had before. And her melodic fusion doesn't stop at genres. Rothman uses language too, blending Hebrew into her lyrics.

"Right now, this is where I'm at, and I get a lot of strength from it," she says. "Judaism was something that I loved, that I thought I could own."

She hopes that those listening to her music gain comfort, like the comfort she's gotten from songwriters who mean something real to her.

"I hope it gives people a stronger sense of pride in who they are," she says. "And I hope the messages that I'm saying are ones that work for people and make them feel heard, and make them feel like change can happen in the world."

Rothman is still seeded with doubts, and sometimes questions if she has the right to create music.

"But then you go and look at the crap that people put out there. And you're like, I better do this. Because if I don't, then someone else is going to," she says. "You're doing it out of love."

Rothman's already got her calendar marked up, too: she plans on recording another album, and has visions to collaborate and create cross-cultural programming events, and aid non-profit organizations with the revenues. This summer, she's trekking to Israel, touring and performing at Jewish summer camps. She also hopes young people will follow their passions, as best they possibly can.

"I hope that the choices I've made will give people the strength and comfort to be like, OK, I can do this. I'm sitting on the shoulders of other people who gave me strength, people like Ani DiFranco and Bob Marley. People who envisioned something that didn't exist and went and did it because they believed in it," she says. "I hope what I'm doing can be that for other people."

Chana Rothman's CDs are available at HMV, iTunes and Amazon, as well as Israel's bookstore & Judaica in Toronto.

CHECK OUT OUR BLOG @ HEEBONICS.CA

Documentary focuses on a homeless teen in Jerusalem

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Early in *Naf*, there is a scene in which Naftali and his girlfriend are in a heated debate about whether he should be taking advantage of Christian missionaries, duping them into believing he believes in Jesus, so he can stay in their youth shelter.

To lie for the sake of personal safety – one of many dilemmas for a homeless teenager.

Directed by Moshe Alafi, and presented at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre as part of the recent Toronto Jewish Film Festival, the documentary *Naf: Street Kid* follows 16-year-old Naftali Yawitz, who spent 2½ years living in the streets of Jerusalem. He left his haredi parents' home in England at 13.

The protagonist of the film is neither entirely bad nor entirely good. He is both a hero and a victim, with deep flaws. Indulging in petty crime, he steals money from cab drivers. He is a drug dealer who passes off baggies of oregano to unsuspecting buyers.

Yet there are some moments that show Naf's good character.

He refuses to sell drugs to a certain addict and spends a long time arguing with her about why he cannot conduct such business, for moral reasons, lest she risk overdose. He visits the Kotel to pray to "Aba" – the heavenly Father – for good fortune. He dons tfillin and tallit in a downtown square. How much of this is a show for the camera no one can be sure. But who of us should refuse a boy the opening to come home again, even if initially through superficial actions?

This street kid does not wholly live in a world of sex, drink, drugs and party-induced stupors, the film tells us. His ambition is to make life better for himself – to keep hope alive, however misguided the course.

He wants a career in rap music, and Naf negotiates with the Israel Defence Forces radio station to play his CD.

Moshe Alafi

As a representative of 350 homeless youths, Naf wants an acknowledgment from the Jerusalem City Council that street kids need more, and better quality, attention. Exasperated, he later resigns from his position, doing so by sending a handwritten letter of protest. The viewer learns that, for Naf, the sting of indifference is worse than life's pain .

"Naf has a goal. He fights for something. He doesn't accept his situation," said Alafi at the film's Q&A. "I'm not a social worker, but my duty as a filmmaker is to raise this problem up."

Naf has the strength to keep on fighting when many are indifferent to him. He is to face in court the middle-aged neighbour who sexually abused him, but the trial is postponed twice without prior notice. Enraged, Naf raises his voice to the prosecuting lawyer and is promptly escorted away by security, left to weep on a courthouse foyer bench.

Alafi's direction is discreet, without contrived closeups or hamhanded focus on the grittier aspects of homelessness. Pulling strings of empathy, however, is not the film's thrust.

Naf is injured in a street brawl, of which little is shown. No doubt the four-inch gash in Naf's skull is one of many bodily scars he has. It's through this that we meet Chana, a social worker who makes a complaint to the authorities on his behalf. It is through her the viewer learns that love is thicker than blood – for a homeless boy, she is all he has for family.

She is his protector after he is caught selling drugs. It is she, on camera, who quietly protests at the courthouse that a 16-year-old cannot be rehabilitated by throwing him in jail.

The film is not an investigation into the issue of the some 39,000 abused and neglected street kids in Israel. Though it is a documentary on street life, there are no interviews with government officials, social workers or many other street kids. Through Naf's story, Alafi conveys the message that without something to open our eyes to the higher possibilities of life, we might all be Nafs.

At the Q&A, Alafi told the audience that as of last Yom Kippur, Naf has returned to observant Judaism, works full time at a supermarket and is engaged to be married.

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Jewish stars collaborate on Yehudah Gilden CD

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Anyone familiar with Orthodox Jewish music in Toronto knows the name and talent of pianist, composer, singer, teacher and arranger Yehudah Gilden.

Gilden has served as lead singer and keyboard player for the Nafsheinu Orchestra, led the Eitz Chaim Boys Choir and taught Jewish music to students at Associated Hebrew Schools. He has also performed at social events.

Several years ago, Gilden was stricken with Parkinson's disease, a degenerative disorder of the central nervous system that impairs motor skills and speech. Although he carried on for a few years, he soon could not sing, play an instrument, walk steadily or teach.

Friends and admirers of his work – including Dovid Kirzner, lead singer of the Nafsheinu Orchestra and part of the Dovid and Dovid group; internationally known singer and composer Abie Rotenberg; and Toronto chazzan and singer Shlomo Simcha – decided to produce a CD of Gilden's compositions.

The idea was both to publicize his work and to provide some financial assistance for Gilden and his family.

Toronto's Orthodox Jewish music community responded enthusiastically. Heshi Kuhnreich of Zemer Orchestra led a combined choir of singers from the Zemer and Nafsheinu orchestras; the Achdus Choir, composed partly of members of the now-disbanded Kol Chaverim choir; and the Eitz Chaim Boys Choir.

The organizers decided to approach Jewish music stars, to raise the impact of the CD and to show how far Gilden's influence has extended. Those who agreed to take part included Avraham Fried, Shloime Dachs, Baruch Levine, Yaakov Shwekey, Yossi Piamenta, the singing groups Lev Tahor and Shalsheles, and Yakov Young, a former Torontonian and a Gilden protege. They recorded their songs wherever they were, generally in New York or Toronto, and the music was mixed here. The arranger was Yisroel Lamm.

None of the performers was paid.

Rotenberg said that whenever it was possible and Gilden was up to it, the organizers brought him to the Toronto studio to add his unique touch to the recordings.

And unique is a word that can be applied to the CD *Harei Yehudah*. The production is professional and polished, providing a recording that is stirring, moving and a treat to the ears.

In the recording studio.

Yossi Piamenta and the Oziel Choir combine Middle Eastern, country and reggae styles in the Shabbat song *Ma Yedidut*, while Abie Rotenberg and Shlomo Simcha and the Achdus Choir give a moving *R'tzey* from Eichah (Lamentations). Shalsheles' three-part waltz for the well-known *Eitz Chaim Hi*, the prayer said while replacing the Torah in the Ark, and *Yehi Shalom* by Yaakov Shwekey, sung with violins and background vocals by the Achdus Choir, are lush and melodic.

The CD comes with a video featuring scenes from the recording sessions, an explanation of how the project came to be, interviews with the performers and production crews, Gilden and his wife, Tammy, and tributes from Gilden admirers.

Slightly embarrassed by all the praise (Rotenberg described Gilden as "gentle, kind, deeply religious – such a sweet person"), Gilden was especially struck by how everyone worked together so well.

"I got very emotional about the *achdus* [togetherness and unity] and camaraderie I saw during the production," he said.

Gilden said he misses teaching, adding that "the Associated kids, teachers and parents have been a great source of support."

When you are ill, he mused, "you need a reason to get up every day. Music is my raison d'être."

Although he is unable to perform, he wants to continue in the music world in whatever way he can.

He studied classic composition and music at the University of Kansas and at the Hart School of Music at the University of Connecticut.

"If anyone had told me that in 20 years, I would wind up so involved with electronics and stuff like that, I would have laughed."

In 1974, he decided to go to study in Israel for a year. He came back 11 years later, he said, an Orthodox Jew, with a wife and family.

When he began to compose specifically Jewish music, he found that "the words speak to me. Sometimes the melody comes first, but not usually. Sometimes in the middle of davening, a verse begs to be set to music."

The Gildens are dealing with their situation with a calm and all-consuming faith. How else could they both say that the song on the CD that means the most to them is *Mah Oshiv*, a psalm of David, that asks: "What can I give in return to HaShem/For all his kindness to me"?

Harei Yehudah can be ordered through several sources on the Internet or by writing to JF of Canada, 69 Charleswood Dr., Toronto, Ont., M3H 1X5.

Auditions Notice

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now in its 6th season, is seeking actors for the following plays at the *Leah Posluns Theatre:*

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

JEWISH HIP HOP GROUP WILL KEEP HOLY BLOSSOM HOPPING

Holy Blossom Temple presents **Six 13**, a Jewish a cappella hip-hop group from Manhattan, as the last of its musical heritage series under the guidance of **Cantor Benjamin Maissner**.

The six-man vocal band delivers "an all-out Israeli evening" involving thumping "beatbox" arrangements, soulful harmonies and songs that range from hip-hop dance tracks to rock anthems; they sound like a full band using nothing but their voices.

Devised as a celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut and a tribute to Israel at 60, the concert also features the Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir and Holy Blossom Temple Singers. Adults $25; youths $15 or $5 plus the donation of a non-perishable food item. May 25, 7 p.m. www.holyblossom.org

* * *

Am Yisrael Chai: Launched by Israeli businesswoman and philanthropist **Galia Albin** on the eve of Israel's 60th Independence Day on May 7, Live Hatikva is an initiative meant to educate Jews around the world about the words and history of the Israeli anthem. Hundreds of Jewish communities from Israel to Argentina, New York to the Netherlands, congregated simultaneously on that day to sing *Hatikvah*, thereby setting a Guinness world record for "most people singing an anthem simultaneously." Albin would like the initiative to become an annual feat.

"*Hatikvah* (*The Hope*) is the song of the Jewish people," she said. "It has been sung for many years, even prior to Israel's existence as a state, and is still heard in a multitude of forms and styles in Jewish communities all over the world." For more details, visit the website www.livehatikva.org.

* * *

Judy Singer Painting & Drawing: Discover your creative self in a beautiful studio setting with artist and York University professor **Judy Singer**. Her Mini Spring Course ($160) runs Wednesdays from May 28 to June 18, 1 to 3:30 p.m. Her intensive four-day workshops ($450) are geared to all levels and include lunches and refreshments; they run July 7 to 10; and August 11 to 14, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Singer's fall courses ($200) run Thursdays Sept. 4 to Oct. 2; Wednesdays Oct. 29 to Nov. 26, 7:30 to 10.00 p.m.; and Tuesdays Oct. 28 to Nov. 25, 1 to 3:30 p.m. Paint with like-minded people at the Open Studio, Tuesdays 7:30 to 10 p.m., $40 per session. Her studio is at 224 Armour Blvd. Inquiries and registration, 416-638-9014 or e-mail judy@gotfryd.com.

* * *

Names in the News: *Damages*, a one-act play by *Globe and Mail* arts reporter **Michael Posner**, has been chosen for inclusion at the 2008 Toronto Fringe Festival. Featuring well-known actors **Harvey Atkin** and **Howard Jerome**, it will be directed by **Kayla Gordon**, executive director of the American Jewish Theatre and former artistic director of the Winnipeg Jewish Theatre.

The play deals with two men, a rabbi and a haberdasher, both Holocaust survivors. Although they have been estranged for 30 years, one unexpectedly visits the other, seeking damages for wrongs committed against him.

Posner's nephew, **Ari Posner**, is writing some original music for the play – as he did for **Jennifer Gould**'s Juno-winning children's CD, *Music Soup*. *Damages* will receive seven performances during the festival, which runs July 2 to 13.

* * *

Music Notes

• Tickets are now on sale for the 11th annual Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre community choir concert. $10 individuals, $20 family of 5. Al Green Theatre, Wednesday, June 4, 8 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Jazz @ the J presents the **Ron Davis Sextet**. $15, $24, $28. Al Green Theatre. Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **Shlomo Schwartzberg** focuses on the topic "Israel and Beyond" at the next Film Talk. $9 admission includes bagels, coffee and film clips. Miles Nadal JCC, Sunday, May 25, 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 606, or esthera@mnjcc.org

• Jerusalem Defined is a group show of giclee prints by **Gina Godfrey**, photographs by **Beverley Abranson**, spiritual works by muralist **Ian Leventhal** and a large installation by fabric artist **Rochelle Rubinstein**. Until May 30. System 4 Gallery, 70 Wingold Ave. 416-741-5542.

• Author and TV personality **Ellie Rubin** discusses key issues concerning contemporary women in her talk "What Keeps You Up At Night?" as part of the Royal Ontario Museum's ROMLife series. $27. Wednesday, May 28, 6 p.m. 416-586-5797, www.rom.on.ca/ programs/lectures

• Submission deadline is May 31 for the 2008 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition, which features a professional reading as the prize. For more details and submission guidelines, contact Esther Arbeid, 416-924-6211, ext. 606, esthera@mnjcc.org.

Neil Sedaka to appear at Beth Tzedec

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

This Saturday evening at 10 o'clock, a crew of workers is set to descend upon the main sanctuary of Beth Tzedec Synagogue to transform it into a state-of-the-art concert hall for an appearance, on May 27, by one of the biggest musical stars – Neil Sedaka – to have ever performed in a Toronto synagogue.

Working through the night and probably much of Sunday, the crew will hang a curtain over the Holy Ark, build a huge vinyl stage that protrudes into the audience, erect several large scaffolding towers for professional lighting standards, and remove numerous pews from the extremities of the 2,000-seat sanctuary to improve the sightlines.

Sedaka, famous for such musical hits as *Breaking Up Is Hard To Do*, *Calendar Girl* and *Laughter in the Rain*, has agreed to the rare synagogue concert because of his personal relationship with Cantor Simon Spiro, a former pop-music performer from London, England, who worked with some of the biggest names in the music industry before arriving at Beth Tzedec two years ago.

"We're building a brand-new stage, and we're extending the stage with an apron that juts into the audience," Spiro said. "It's a way of bringing the artist right into the audience."

Spiro is singing a couple of numbers with Sedaka, who is bringing his own five-piece band and stage technicians for the rare gig. According to the mellow-voiced cantor, few synagogues anywhere would be able to meet the technical demands required to host the likes of a top-notch entertainer such as Sedaka, who does some 50 or 60 shows in major concert halls around the world each year – most recently in Australia and Manila. "It's a show that's never been put on in a synagogue before, a show that few synagogues could put on to this magnitude," he said.

Because a few wealthy friends of the congregation are sponsoring the concert, tickets begin at a reasonable $36 and go up by increments. The $250 VIP package includes a post-concert reception at which guests may be photographed with Sedaka, which is "something you don't normally get to do," Spiro said.

Sedaka is of Turkish-Jewish descent, and his name likely derives from the Hebrew word "tzedakah," meaning compassion or charity. The program will consist of many of his popular favourites and probably one or two Yiddish standards in recognition of his audience. The concert begins at 7:30 p.m. and the ticket hotline is 416-781-3514, ext. 218.

Neil Sedaka

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James Chatto, Toronto Life

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Books & Authors

From Canadian civilian to Israeli army commando

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Aaron Cohen, a Canadian Jewish boy from Montreal, made aliyah in 1997 by way of Beverly Hills, Calif. He was not your garden variety immigrant. Obsessed by the exploits of the Israeli army, he joined one of its special forces, Sayeret Duvdevan, whose stock-in-trade is counter-terrorism. As a member of this elite squadron, Cohen, often masquerading as an Arab but once disguised as an American journalist, hunted down Palestinian terrorists in the West Bank. In general, his targets were planners and fundraisers rather than suicide bombers.

And herein lies a crackling tale of high adventure. In *Brotherhood of Warriors* (HarperCollins), Cohen and his co-author, Douglas Century, trace a young man's remarkable trajectory from Canadian civilian to Israeli commando. It is quite a performance.

Cohen, born in Montreal in 1976, was the scion of an old established Jewish family. When he was small, his parents separated, and he spent the next number of years bouncing between homes in Montreal and Miami. When his self-absorbed mother – a film and television writer and producer – married Abby Mann, the screenwriter who won the 1961 Academy Award for *Judgment at Nuremberg*, Cohen moved to Los Angeles.

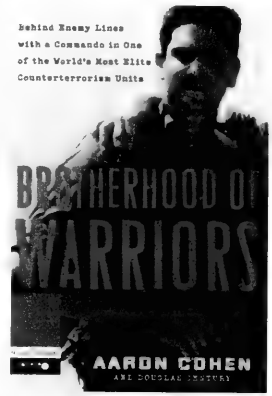
Mann was indifferent to Cohen, treating him "like a piece of furniture." The boy rebelled and had problems with authority. In the ninth grade, he was enrolled at a military academy in the Niagara Peninsula in Ontario. The school's headmaster, a Canadian army colonel who had been involved in Middle East peacekeeping in the 1970s, admired the Israelis. His admiration rubbed off on Cohen. As the young man studied Hebrew, he dreamed of settling in Israel, becoming a citizen and enlisting in an all-volunteer special forces squadron.

He arrived in the Promised Land with a duffel bag of clothes, a few Hebrew books and a cellphone, eager to fulfil his Zionist dream. He worked in a kibbutz fish pond until it was time to try out for the special forces. The *gibushim*, or tryouts, tested him to his physical and mental limits. He sprained an ankle, but persevered. "There was no way I was going to quit," he writes with typical bravado.

Cohen did not have the right stuff for Sayeret Matkal, the legendary special force he aspired to join, but was recruited by Sayeret Duvdevan, which was formed during the first Palestinian uprising.

He describes the training regimen as brutal. "In the United States and European democracies, our instructors' behaviour and institutional hazing would be considered sadistic, borderline criminal, an open invitation to class-action lawsuits." To survive, he adds, "we had to become emotionless, automatons, pure fighting machines."

Having survived the first phase, he was transferred to a top-secret Duvdevan base in the West Bank that resembled a Palestinian village. There he morphed into a commando. He learned how to use the short-barrelled M-16 gun and fire accurately from the window of a moving vehicle. He learned *krav maga*, a "full-contact fighting" martial art. He carried 70 pounds of gear on his back on difficult forced marches. He picked up the rudiments of conversational Arabic, how to look, talk and act like a Palestinian and how to disguise himself as one.



The gruelling training hardened Cohen, altering him forever. "It [hard-wired] a brand of aggression that [became] impossible to turn off," he writes. Yet he revelled in his new identity. "Clearly, I was getting something vital out of the Israeli army that I hadn't gotten from my dysfunctional show business family back in L.A. The bottom line for me was this: I'd never been happier. I had earned a place among the world's best fighters, and I had been granted tremendous responsibilities to do an important job. I loved being accepted into Duvdevan more than anything I could ever have imagined."

On his first mission as an undercover operative, his unit was dispatched to Ramallah to arrest a Hamas terrorist. Cohen's job, in a supporting role, was to secure the perimeter while an entry team flushed out the suspect from a house. To his credit, he admits that he was frightened, nervous and skittish. The operation unfolded perfectly, without a shot being fired.

Whenever possible, he says, violence was avoided: "Terrorist leaders and masterminds are no good to us as corpses. We want the information they can provide."

Yet fisticuffs occurred. Once, posing as a reporter, he "interviewed" a senior Hamas official at a cafe. As they talked, Cohen formed a "strong, genuine connection" with him. But when Cohen received a signal to incapacitate him, he reverted to form, jumping across the table and punching him in the face as hard as he could, with the result that Cohen needed 15 stitches to close his knuckle wound. On another occasion, Cohen was attacked with a knife by a middle-aged Palestinian woman. In self-defence, he struck her with his rifle butt, splitting open her chin.

In the only case of deadly force he mentions, Cohen opened fire on a Palestinian teenager, a Hamas courier, who had ambushed him. He hit him between the eyes, killing the Palestinian youth. Cohen was devastated: "I didn't sign up to kill kids."

He describes still more operations, including a complex one tasked with the mission of arresting a Hamas official who had organized a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv in 1996. On this operation, which went off without a hitch, Cohen posed as a sweet corn vendor as his companions stormed a wedding in progress.

At this point, he was burned out. "It takes a special type of personality – an intense level of commitment – to function long-term as a professional warrior," he says.

Having decided to quit after three years of service, Cohen booked a flight back to the United States in the summer of 2000. He does not really explain why he left Israel after resigning from the army. In Los Angeles, he was depressed, subject to radical mood swings. Having regained his bearings following a six-month stint as a drill instructor at his old military academy in Canada, he returned to Los Angeles and began working for a company specializing in "celebrity security."

For the next year and a half, he was in charge of a detail that protected actor Brad Pitt's mansion in Hollywood. Cohen is virtually mum about this chapter in his life, but it must have been incredibly boring.

In short order, he established his own company, IMS Security, staffed exclusively by ex-members of Israel's special forces. "Our reputation spread fast, and we started signing up several big-ticket accounts, doing celebrity protection for A-list stars such as Jackie Chan and Arnold Schwarzenegger."

IMS also guarded private Jewish schools in southern California. In the main, Cohen's focus was counter-terrorism: firearms training, SWAT-like takedowns and hostage crisis management.

Since the terrorist events of Sept. 11, 2001, Cohen's expertise has been in even higher demand. "I knew that the United States was far too vulnerable to Islamic terrorist attacks and I hoped I could do my part to sound the alarm," he observes.

By any yardstick, he has succeeded, both as a security consultant and in this engrossing book.

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147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
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320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY
345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
379 CLOCKS/WATCHES
380 CLOTHING
382 COUNSELLING
385 COMPUTER
386 DANCING
387 DECORATING
390 DRIVING
392 DRY CLEANING/LAUNDRY
394 EDUCATION
395 ELECTRICAL
398 ELECTRONICS
400 ENTERTAINMENT
402 FINANCIAL
404 FITNESS & WEIGHT LOSS
405 FURNITURE
406 GARAGE DOORS
407 GIFTS
410 HEALTH & BEAUTY
412 HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING
415 HOME IMPROVEMENTS
416 HOME INSPECTION
419 INTERNET SERVICE
420 INVITATIONS/PRINTING/CALLIG.
425 JEWELLERY
427 JUDAICA
430 LEASING
431 LANDSCAPING/LAWNCARE
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435 LIQUIDATION
438 LOCKSMITH
439 MAKE-UP
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*Dollar Value Sale Of MLS Listings Sold

#1 in Toronto - Luxury Homes Sales over $2,000,000*

THE HAZELTON $7,500,000

Ultra luxury penthouse in the heart of Yorkville. Designed with Old World European flair balanced with small scale exclusivity. Amenities include pool, fitness centre & spa & 24/7 concierege.

OLD FOREST HILL RD. $3,395,000

Sleek & modern. 11 ft ceilings, expansive windows & hosts of Fr. doors, w/o grdns. Open concept. Family room with built-in entertainment centre. 2nd level office with built-ins & wall-to-wall computer desk. Fin. low. level.

FOREST HILL - $6,280,000

Metron Construction w/Carol MacFarlane interior. Orig. staircase & paneling. 2nd level sound proofed music room w/programmed sound system. Htd stone flrs thru-out 3rd level exercise rm & spa, office. Wine cellar, work shop.

HEART OF FOREST HILL $2,295,000

Impressive wrought-iron gated residence in Lower Forest Hill. 2-storey foyer, grand staircase w/skylight. 9'ceilings. Large principal rooms. 5 br's, 6 bth's. Many-walk-outs to terrace, pool & cabana.

HIGH POINT RD. - VACANT LAND - $4,880,000

Rarely does a 2 acre lot in the Bridle Path become available. Fabulous opportunity to build your dream home. Superb location, close to some of Toronto's best public & private schools. Easy access to downtown.

THE CHEDINGTON – $2,250,000

Private elevator access to 3,012 sq. ft. Elegant details include: walnut floors, textured walls, expansive windows, high ceilings, French doors walk-out to 2 covered terraces. Fab ravine views. 24/7 valet & concierge.

YORKVILLE TOWN HOME $3,880,000

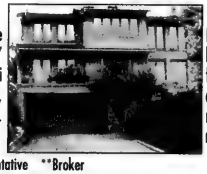
Stunning ~ Den Bosch & Finchley w/ Brian Gluckstein. 9' ceilings. Fr. doors open to terraces, courtyards & balconies. 3 + 1 br's, 5 bth's. Pvt gdns & pool. Coach house style garage.

SUMMER HILL – $1,725,000

Charming home w/ impeccable details. Dining & living rms. w/ open concept & high ceilings. Wall-wall & floor-ceiling windows w/ skylights & Fr.dr. w/o to terrace. 4 + 1 br's. Landscaped gdns by Janet Rosenberg 2 car gar.

FOREST HILL - $3,880,000

Sophisticated & elegant, Lorne Rose architect. 10' ceilings (main), 9' (2nd), cherry paneled lib, Bellini kit. Approx 4300 sq. ft. 4 + 2 br's, 5 bth's. Fin. lower level (2,000 sq. ft.). Wine cellar. Waterfall & pond.



GLEN PARK – $1,449,000

Delightful home, beautifully landscaped, large front verandah. Family room w/ f/p, b/i walnut shelves & sliding glass drs to terr. Eat-in area in kitchen & sun room. 5 br's. Finished lower level rec room w/wet bar.

*Sales Representative **Broker

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LAKE SIMCOE Magft. 10 AC family compound - Newly Blt. Big Bay Point - (45 mins. to Tor.)

$5,595,000 - Nothing spared! So outstanding! Secl'd 5000 s.f. on each level w/multi walkouts to pool, beach-sand/sunsets/ (4 fp, 2 granite kit., screened Florida rm., 3 abutting lakefront lots, add your 2 guest homes. Includes full designer contents (Efte). Unique home, not to be missed

LAKE SIMCOE STONE MANSION - off Lake Dr., Keswick $4,850,000.

Gated 2.5 AC enclave 1200' point of peninsula, newly blt., masterly architecture of finest stone/timber/ glass. Grand spaces 6000' PLUS, screened blt't. Rm +++DVD available upon request. Additional large space to finish as guest quarters or additional bedrooms, etc

LAKE SIMCOE MAJOR ESTATE (gorg. Sand Beach - 45 mins.to Tor.)

$3,790,000. Gated 2.75 acre, 175' rare sand beach. Outstanding quality & design. 7300 s.f. + gorg. 805 s.f coach House, 5 fp., 7 bath, pool, dbl. boat house.

LAKE SIMCOE 'S PRESTIGIOUS area of KEMPENFELT BAY 2.5 AC 250' lakefront

$2,600,000. South Shore, no cliff! 1 yr old 7300 s.f. + 1300 s.f. unfin'd space. The BEST quality/features/amenities. (45 min to Tor).

LAKE SIMCOE 6.5 AC Wooded SECLUSION- $1,975,000 (45 mins. to Tor.)

Muskoka feel! 2 great res. + 3rd smaller one. Shows 5 star, full contents incl'd - the best.

LAKE SIMCOE Big Bay Point ENCLAVE

$1,100,000. App. 1 AC. 112' lakefront, custom 3400' stone/br., open plan glass, post/beam fr. 2 fp. Boat hs., Bunkie, prof. shuffle board & horse shoes.

LAKE SIMCOE Big Bay Point $950,000

Gorgeous 150' south facing lot, gated/hedged/treed. Great Cott. Boat house, possible severance.

LAKE SIMCOE- $699,000

Lot value, very nice 100' level lot, older cottage, 45 minutes to Toronto.

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HOUSES FOR SALE

BIG BAY PT – LAKE SIMCOE $1,050,000

Renovated Ranch Bungalow, Fabulous great rm, Cathedral Clgs, Frpl, Skylights, hrdwd flrs, new kitchen, wonderful view of Lake & sunsets. Move right in!! Natalie Kopman* Ext 315

FABULOUS THORNHILL WOODS $424,500

Stunning 3 bdrm freehold townhouse. Hardwood floors, 2½ baths, Walk-out basement, built-in garage, private fenced yard & more. Kimberley Thorne* Ext 265

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FOREST HILL PRESTIGIOUS 10,000 S.F. CHATEAU $4,699,000
Very Private Spacious Principal Rooms, Chefs Kitchen, Lib Cons, Sep Apt, Indoor Pool, Entertain Areas. Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

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Exquisite New Home to be Built. Lorne Rose Designed, Approx 3500' Plans Available to View. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

UPPER VILLAGE FABULOUS FAMILY HOME ON 50 FT LOT!
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BAYVIEW/YORK MILLS SECLUDED CRESCENT 75 X 131 FT
Meticulously Maintained, Grac'us Fam Home on Desirable Cres. 4Bdrm, 4Baths, Mn Flr Fam Rm, Den+Fin Bsmt! Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY HOME IN CASA LOMA AREA $1,198,000
Spac'us 4 Bdrm, 4Bath, FP [SOLD] m DR, Eat-in Kit, Mn Flr Fam + Pwdr Rm, Sep Ent to Bsmt Rec Rm. Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

SPECTACULAR PRIME YONGE/SHEPPARD CUSTOM BUILT
$1,178,000. New, next to park! 50' x 120' lot, 4 bdrm, 6 bath, high ceilings, finished W/O basement. Boris Abramov* 905-881-7653

649 BRIAR HILL AVENUE! S/E CORNER CHAPLIN CRES!
$1,150,000! Incredible 4+1Br, 4Bth! Mn fam+2pce! Nanny ste! Fab 47x125'! Move right in! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

CUSTOM BUILT HOME - FAYWOOD/SHEPPARD $1,149,000
Near Completion, 3600 Sq. Ft., 50 x 150 ft, Top Quality Finishes Thruout, 4 Bdrms, 4 Baths. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

NORTH/BAYVIEW PROPERTIES

HUGE POOL SIZED LOT! YORK MILLS /BAYVIEW!
$2,249,000! Stunning 5bdrm, 1.5 yrs new! Huge 60x160' widens to 100'! 2nd flr lounge! Excellent location! Debi Stone* 416-226-1987

LUXURIOUSLY APPOINTED RAVINE LOT
Thornhill Woods customized home, fully finished basement, wooded ravine, $150K in Luxury Upgardes. V. Zemelman* 905-881-7653

BUY NOW AND BUILD LATER
Great Investment Potential!! Currently generating over $4,000per/mth. Great location on a 51x242 ft. lot. L. Reznik* 905-881-7653

MARKHAM GEM!!
Fabulous Monarch Built Home with Many Upgrades including a Gourmet Kit & Hrdwd Flrs throughout. M. Atkins** 905-881-7653

GORGEOUS 4 BDRM VOGUE BUILT HOME IN THORNHILL WOODS
Immaculate and Totally Upgraded Home on Great Street with Main Floor Tile. Must be Seen! Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

THORNHILL WOODS!!
Fabulous 4 Bdrm Home on Sought After Street w/Limestone and Hardwood Flooring on Main. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

A MUST SEE IN HIGH DEMAND AREA
Custom Kitchen, 9 ft. ceilings, hardwood floors, 4 bdrm + Nanny Suite, great home for entertaining. Lahav Reznik* 905-881-7653

NORTH/BAYVIEW PROPERTIES CONT'D.

THORNHILL WOODS LOADED GEM ON A QUIET STREET
4 Bdrm Home with Deep Lot + Professionally Finished Basement with Nanny Suite and 3 Pce Bath. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

DETATCHED IN THORNHILL
4 bdrm/4 bath, 2 kitchens, fin bsmnt w/separate ent, 9 ft. ceilings, hardwood on main floor, neutral décor. N. Sarova* 905-881-7653

LOCATION LOCATION LOCATION!!!!
Detatched 3 bdrm/4bath, large family room, new windows, Central Air, great street, deck. J. Engel* 905-881-7653

IMMACULATE ACORN TOWNHOUSE
Hrdwd flrs, glass backsplash, Miele dishwasher, mn flr lndry, top of line appl's, just move in & enjoy. Veronika Goldberg-Vajda* 905-881-7653

BEAUTIFUL 7 YEARS OLD HOME ON 41FT WIDE LOT
Large Rms, upgraded kitchen, family rm, oak stairs & parquet on both flrs, 9ft ceiling, entrance to grge. B. Abramov* 905-881-7653

THORNHILL WOODS END UNIT TOWN – REDUCED TO SELL!!
Aspen Ridge Built with Finished Lower Level, Hardwood, 9' ceilings on Main, Feels Like a Semi. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

WEST PROPERTIES

EXCLUSIVE TOWNHOME
Overlooking The Credit River. Professionally Decorated, and Landscaped. Marc Atkins** 905-881-7653

CONDOMINIUM PROPERTIES

253 MERTON STREET! YONGE S/DAVISVILLE!
$469,000! Amazing 2Br, 2 bth, S/E corner ste w/balcony+panoramic views! Parking+locker! Gorg'us! Sandon Schwartzben** 416-226-1987

PRICE REDUCED TO SELL FOR QUICK SALE
Spectacular 2 bdrm, 2 bath P.H. condo w/9ft. ceilings, hardwood floors & upgraded kit, steps to TTC. Lahav Reznik* 905-881-7653

HOGGS HOLLOW SHANE BAGHAI BUILT 2BR PENTHOUSE!
$430K! Upscale, quiet building upgrd hrdwd, granite flrs. Cherrywd 'Paris' kitchen, 2 lckrs, 1 prkg 10++! Olga Guvenal* 416-226-1987

FULLY RENOVATED TWO BDRM IN PRIMROSE
$269,000. Large 2 bedroom, new kitchen & bath, laminate floors, crown mouldings, mirrored closets. A. Pock* 905-881-7653

1055 BAY ST! "POLO CLUB" PENTHOUSE!
$274,900! Bay S/Bloor! Spectacular west facing 1+1Br, 1Bth w/ panoramic city+lake views! Sandon Schwartzben**416-226-1987

RENTAL PROPERTIES

CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURAL MASTERPIECE FOR $10,800/MO.
Sitting on Escarpment, 3 Bdrms, 4 Baths, Roof Top Terrace, Overlooking City, Garage. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

PRIME COMMERCIAL SPACE BATHURST/EGLINTON $2900/MO.
Approximately 1300 sq ft, Ideal for Showroom, cooking school, office, event venue, 1 parking. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

OUT OF TOWN PROPERTIES

LAKEVIEW 3+1 BR RAISED BUNGALOW 45MIN N. OF TO.
1.78 Acres, No Exit St. Well priced, only $308,900. 45 minutes north of Toronto. Walk to lake & park. Rahman Y.* 905-881-7653

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BATHURST/STEELES – 58'X 131'
Large 4 Bdrm Sidesplit, Fin Bsmt, Dble Gar, Huge Fam Rm w/Walk/out, Close to all amenities, Must see!! $575,000. *Ted Waxman

STUNNING OVERSIZED RARE 4 BDRM
In the Manor, Finished Basement with 3 Additional Bedrooms & 2 Rec Rooms, Updated Baths, All New Windows, Newer Roof & Furnace. Must See! *Carey Rosenzweig

"THE MANOR" COZY 3 BDRM BUNGALOW
Fin Bsmnt With Sep. Entry for Tenant/In-Law, Updated Baths, Newer Windows, Close to Shul, TTC & Schools. *Carey Rosenzweig

HOUSE FOR LEASE

FOR LEASE – CLARK & HILDA
Large 2 Bdrm Split Plan layout, Mirrors, Sep Shower Stall, Balcony, U/g Prkng, Great Location, Close To All Amenities! *Ted Waxman

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2 NEPTUNE – SENIORS BLDG
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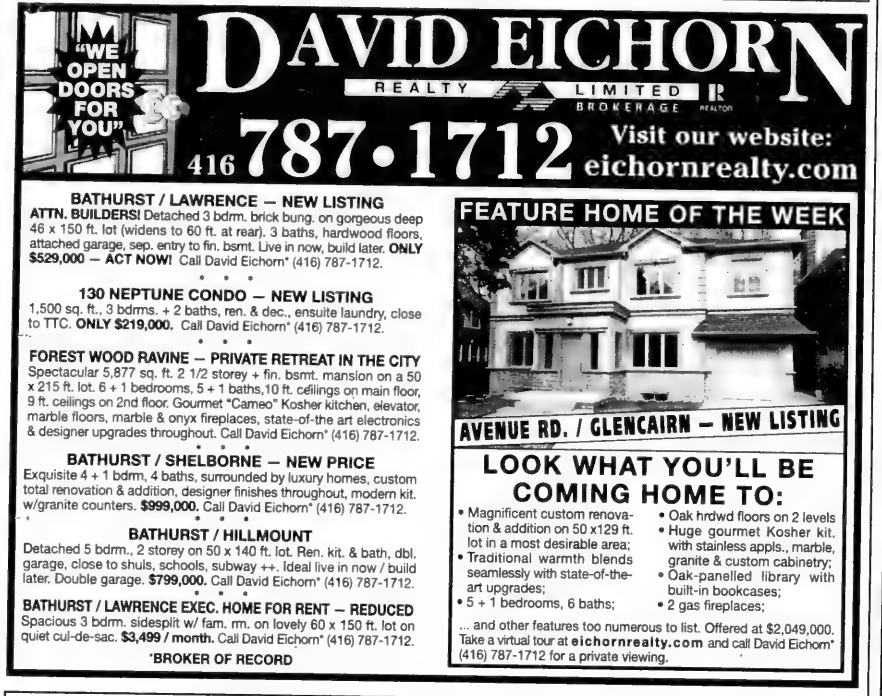

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ATTN. BUILDERS! Detached 3 bdrm. brick bung. on gorgeous deep 46 x 150 ft. lot (widens to 60 ft. at rear). 3 baths, hardwood floors, attached garage, sep. entry to fin. bsmt. Live in now, build later. **ONLY $529,000 — ACT NOW!** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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130 NEPTUNE CONDO — NEW LISTING
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Spectacular 5,877 sq. ft. 2 1/2 storey + fin. bsmt. mansion on a 50 x 215 ft. lot. 6 + 1 bedrooms, 5 + 1 baths,10 ft. ceilings on main floor, 9 ft. ceilings on 2nd floor. Gourmet "Cameo" Kosher kitchen, elevator, marble floors, marble & onyx fireplaces, state-of-the art electronics & designer upgrades throughout. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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Exquisite 4 + 1 bdrm, 4 baths, surrounded by luxury homes, custom total renovation & addition, designer finishes throughout, modern kit. w/granite counters. **$999,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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Detached 5 bdrm., 2 storey on 50 x 140 ft. lot. Ren. kit. & bath, dbl. garage, close to shuls, schools, subway ++. Ideal live in now / build later. Double garage. **$799,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

• • •

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Spacious 3 bdrm. sidesplit w/ fam. rm. on lovely 60 x 150 ft. lot on quiet cul-de-sac. **$3,499 / month.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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AVENUE RD. / GLENCAIRN — NEW LISTING

LOOK WHAT YOU'LL BE COMING HOME TO:

- Magnificent custom renovation & addition on 50 x129 ft. lot in a most desirable area;
- Traditional warmth blends seamlessly with state-of-the-art upgrades;
- 5 + 1 bedrooms, 6 baths;
- Oak hrdwd floors on 2 levels
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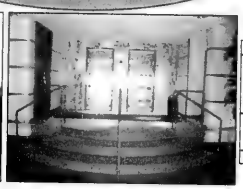

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CJC applauds Kenney

Continued from page 1

carrying 350 Indian immigrants was turned away from British Columbia. Other events to be memorialized include the Chinese head tax and the internment of Ukrainian Canadians during World War I.

"Our government believes history is important and we need to remember the good as well as the bad. There were moments in Canadian history we are not proud of, but that doesn't mean we can't learn from them," said Alykhan Velshi, Kenney's director of communications.

The Community Historical Recognition Program was first announced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in June 2006.

"The program will fund community-based projects that will allow communities affected by Canadian wartime measures and immigration restrictions to have their experiences acknowledged in a way that is meaningful to them. Eligible projects could include monuments, commemorative plaques, educational material and exhibits," a government news release states.

Denying the St. Louis' passengers landing in Canada was "an unjust immigration restriction if ever there was one," Velshi said.

Farber said Congress pressed its case for a St. Louis memorial after the Conservatives took office. He applauded Kenney for his knowledge of the incident even before Congress made its case.

"He's an aficionado of history and was fully aware of the tragedy of the St. Louis," Farber said. "More important, he was aware of the importance to teach future generations about the dangers of a racist immigration policy."

Between 1933 and 1948, only 5,000 Jewish refugees were allowed into Canada. When the St. Louis sailed into Halifax harbour, director of immigration Frederick Charles Blair wrote to the prime minister, Mackenzie King, that the refugees were not qualified to enter Canada.

In *None is Too Many*, authors Irving Abella and Harold Troper document how Blair pursued a policy, approved by the prime minister, that restricted Jewish immigration. As a result, Canada had the worst record of any western country in admitting Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis, Abella and Troper write.

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Teenage Calgary ski jumper on national team

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

As sports go, it's one of the most spectacular.

Freed of earthly constraints, if only temporarily, ski jumpers soar with the eagles, traversing 100 to more than 200 metres through the air before touching down again.

It's a sport that's certainly not for the faint-hearted, yet Nata de Leeuw, though only 17, has been jumping for about six years, in the last couple of years almost exclusively on "normal" hills of 85 to 109 metres in length. Today she finds herself ranked 12th in the world – and that after a season she humbly described as "not that great."

Nata de Leeuw

Great season or not, she's the second-ranked Canadian female ski jumper according to the International Ski Federation (FIS) and a member of Canada's four-skier national team.

At her last international event, the World Junior Championships in Zakopane, Poland, she finished 12th, her top finish in the 2008 season. "I didn't do very well," she said on the phone from her home in Calgary. "I had an off day."

In 2007, an altogether better year for her, her best performance was second place at the Continental Cup in Lake Placid, N.Y. She also registered one third-place finish and three fourths that season.

In 2008, by contrast,17th place in the Continental Cup in Bairsbronn, Germany was her best finish beside the World Juniors.

De Leeuw's farthest jump is 115 metres and she shrugs off a query as to whether she gets nervous soaring through the air for such a distance.

She's used to it now, she replied. "You start off with small jumps, just a few metres and you extend it. Going to the bigger jumps was a little scary."

De Leeuw took up ski jumping about six years ago, but she's been on skis since about age two. For years, she was a downhill skier, but she always liked the small jumps she encountered.

One summer she enrolled in a multi-sport summer camp that included ski jumping. Summertime skiers usually jump on plastic surfaces that simulate snow.

"I thought it was a lot of fun, and you get to be in skis the year round," she said of ski jumping.

Around the time she began ski jumping, her little brother, Yukon, 15 now, also took up the sport. Like big sis, Yukon excels as a ski jumper. He's a member of the Alberta provincial team and his longest jump, again like big sis, is around 115 metres. This past winter, Yukon travelled abroad for international competitions and was the youngest skier participating, Nata (short for Natalie) recounted.

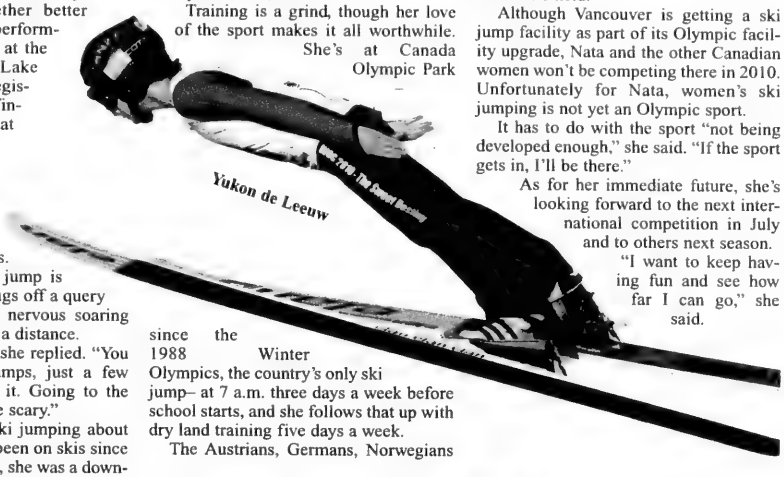
Top jumpers share some characteristics, Nata said. "You need a lot of quick, twitch muscles, strong leg muscles. You need to be quick and fearless."

Everyone falls now and then, she continued.

Her worst accident? "A bad one last winter [2007]" in which she broke her nose.

A grade 11 student at the National Sport School, Nata, like others in the program, is given the opportunity to miss class to attend competitions. It sounds like fun, but it's not a particularly glamorous life on the road – just the four national skiers and their coach, tooling around Europe in a van, she said.

Training is a grind, though her love of the sport makes it all worthwhile. She's at Canada Olympic Park since the 1988 Winter Olympics, the country's only ski jump– at 7 a.m. three days a week before school starts, and she follows that up with dry land training five days a week.



Yukon de Leeuw

The Austrians, Germans, Norwegians and other Europeans dominate the sport, and Europe is where all the major competitions are held.

Although Vancouver is getting a ski jump facility as part of its Olympic facility upgrade, Nata and the other Canadian women won't be competing there in 2010. Unfortunately for Nata, women's ski jumping is not yet an Olympic sport.

It has to do with the sport "not being developed enough," she said. "If the sport gets in, I'll be there."

As for her immediate future, she's looking forward to the next international competition in July and to others next season.

"I want to keep having fun and see how far I can go," she said.

Nata showing her stuff

Memories of Passover

By MICHAEL GORDON

The Senior Side of Life

Passover, like many of the Jewish or other religions' holidays, flourishes as a combination of family reunification, religious rituals and the sharing of food, a key component of most religious festivals.

People often have associations about Passover because it is almost universally celebrated in one way or another and most Jews have long-standing vivid recollections of Passovers past.

At one recent seder, the memories of previous experiences were recalled by family and friends seated around the table. The focus of recollections ranged from the effects of wine on the young and the dishes served to how one recipe was different from another and how our forebears conducted their seders compared to how we do it now.

A Passover phenomenon that I observed this year at a seder was the introduction of new versions of the Haggadah, which were used alongside older standard versions, as well as a revered grandparent's old Haggadah. In terms of the conduct and flow of the seder, it was at times a humorous challenge as each person's reference point was periodically different from the one being read from and the flow of the narrative was at times interrupted. This could be interpreted as a positive expansion of the Passover story experience or an impediment to completing the chronicle and getting to the meal while the readers were still conscious enough to enjoy it.

The experience reminded me of a previous experience from which all of us can learn, and which I understand as a geriatrician, but which is sometimes perceived with some expression of amazement – that is, having an elder in the family, especially one who is experiencing cognitive impairment, being able to effectively conduct the seder from an original Haggadah, with the appropriate rhythm and tones that he had used throughout his years of leading seders. This might be the same person who cannot remember the details of a conversation that occurred 10 minutes before.

The importance of this observation is that those of us who deal with aging parents and relatives have to understand that so-called "memory loss" as the hallmark of dementia is somewhat of a misnomer. It is not remote memory per se that is lost – in fact, distant memories are often vividly retrievable. It is the immediate recall and retention component of memory that is the main attribute of the memory impairment we see in dementia.

This phenomenon, for the lay person, often seems counter-intuitive. I have heard family members say and I once had a medical legal case that reflected this: "I can't believe my father does not remember what he had for breakfast a half hour ago, but can tell me the whole menu of the first Passover he had when he arrived in Canada from Poland in 1938."

In the legal case, a lawyer who was asked to assist in a will change erroneously believed that because he could reminisce with the patient about his knowledge of the lawyers' father from 40 years previously, he should be able to change his will, about which he could remember nothing 15 minutes after the substantial and materially important changes were made.

The message to loving family members is: let your aging and cognitively impaired parents use their past memories to advantage and as creatively and socially meaningfully as possible. If you are going to introduce changes to ingrained patterns of participation, be prepared for some chaos during the transitional stage, an occurrence that may be worthwhile, depending on what in the end you wish to achieve. And most importantly, get as much joy out of holidays with family and friends – a key to our Jewish traditions.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press).

CHOPPED VEGGIE SALAD W/ WATERMELON & FETA CHEESE

- 1 lb. plum tomatoes, diced, drained
- 1 1/2 c diced seeded watermelon
- 1 lg green pepper, seeded, cut into cubes
- 1/2 large English cucumber, seeded, cut into cubes
- 1/2 c thinly sliced radishes

DRESSING:

- 10 oz. feta cheese, broken into small cubes
- 3 tblsp olive oil, divided
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1/4 c sliced fresh mint leaves
- 1/2 c plain thick yogurt
- 1 tsp oregano

Toss salad ingredients with 2 tblsp oil in large bowl. Add 1/2 each of cheese, green onions, and mint. In processor, add remaining cheese, green onions, mint, oil, yogurt and oregano. Process just to blend (do not overmix or dressing will get thin). Season with salt and pepper; mix into salad.

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Epi on Education

Seymour Epstein

Having just spent a Shabbat in Lublin with the hundreds of Canadian students on the March of the Living, I have much to tell, but too much for one tiny column. My last piece dealt with human responsibility as one of the messages of Pesach, and I spoke to the young people in Poland about responsibility.

They needed to know why the Jewish community was investing time, money and energy in having them commemorate Yom Hashoah in Auschwitz and celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut in Jerusalem.

As our survivors age and leave us, we need to nurture witnesses who can act as the memory trust of the Jewish people.

I asked the young people to imagine how distant their grandchildren will feel from the events of 1939 to 1945 and 1948. After an experience as moving as the March of the Living, these young people must act on the responsibility to be witnesses – to both the unimaginable horrors of the death camps and to the realization of a 2,000-year-old dream that was the establishment of the State of Israel.

It's already the case that young Jews can't fathom the loss that was the Shoah, nor the level of depravity that produced it. And there is the constant danger that those born into Israeli statehood will take the dream and hope for granted.

But it's not enough to be merely a source of memory. Testifying to the truth is insufficient. These young people must act on their moral conscience and begin to fashion Jewish life in a creative mode.

The specific lesson learned in Lublin was that of Rabbi Meir Shapira, the founder of Yeshivat Chachmei Lublin, in whose restored building we prayed and studied over Shabbat. Here was a proud and courageous Jew who had a vision that was based on the past but creative in its surpassing the past – a modern, purpose-built yeshiva with ample room, electricity, and running water, and a kitchen that spared the students from *essen taig* (eating in different homes daily on charity).

Sadly, the yeshiva ended up in Nazi hands, but the lesson of pride and courage is not lost on us. Continuity is not enough. Creativity is what revives us constantly as a people.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

How great are we?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

We Canadians are not entirely honest with ourselves. We see ourselves as the world's peacekeepers, but we have not, as of yet, looked deeply at the horrifying way that we conquered, murdered and tore to pieces the societal fabric of our native peoples. We shelter ourselves from the pain of our past and, therefore, head into the future not knowing our true selves, misleading our progeny and wondering why our aboriginal people are so angry with the Canadian white man.

This same criticism about a lack of deep introspection can be applied to our Jewish community. We think of ourselves as one of the finest Jewish communities in the world, forever growing and with something for everyone. But we fail to really listen to the many community members who tell a story of their intense loneliness and inability to grow creatively as a Jew in Toronto. These stories are common.

I received the following letter from an observant Jewish woman who moved to Toronto in order to find a vibrant community, but eventually gave up and moved back home.

"Dear Avrum:

"I am not the most outgoing person and also for me to make a change and move to Toronto was a huge deal… When I went to many of the shuls, some people would say 'Good Shabbos' and move on or not say anything at all… People have no idea if you have lived in Toronto for years or if you're new. There are so many Jewish people in Toronto that I was just another person walking around. I did not find people to be all that friendly. I found people were always looking at me, wondering who I was and trying to figure me out.

"Toronto is so large and there is so much going on, and it's confusing and overwhelming. I felt like a small little ant coming in and out of the cracks in the sidewalk. My parents lived in Toronto in the 1970s and they said it was the same way then. Eventually, after a long time, they found people like themselves who were not from Toronto and in the same 'boat.'

"If it were not for my two friends I have known since high school, I would have gone crazy. One of them has lived in Toronto her whole life and finds it hard as well. I hope I was able to explain my experience in a clear way. Thanks so much. All the best. M."

How great is the Toronto Jewish community? Philanthropically, we are trendsetters, the "Go" square on the Monopoly board of the Jewish world. Outsiders visit our town regularly to collect funds for their respective charities, as the word out there is that money flows in our streets. We're good.

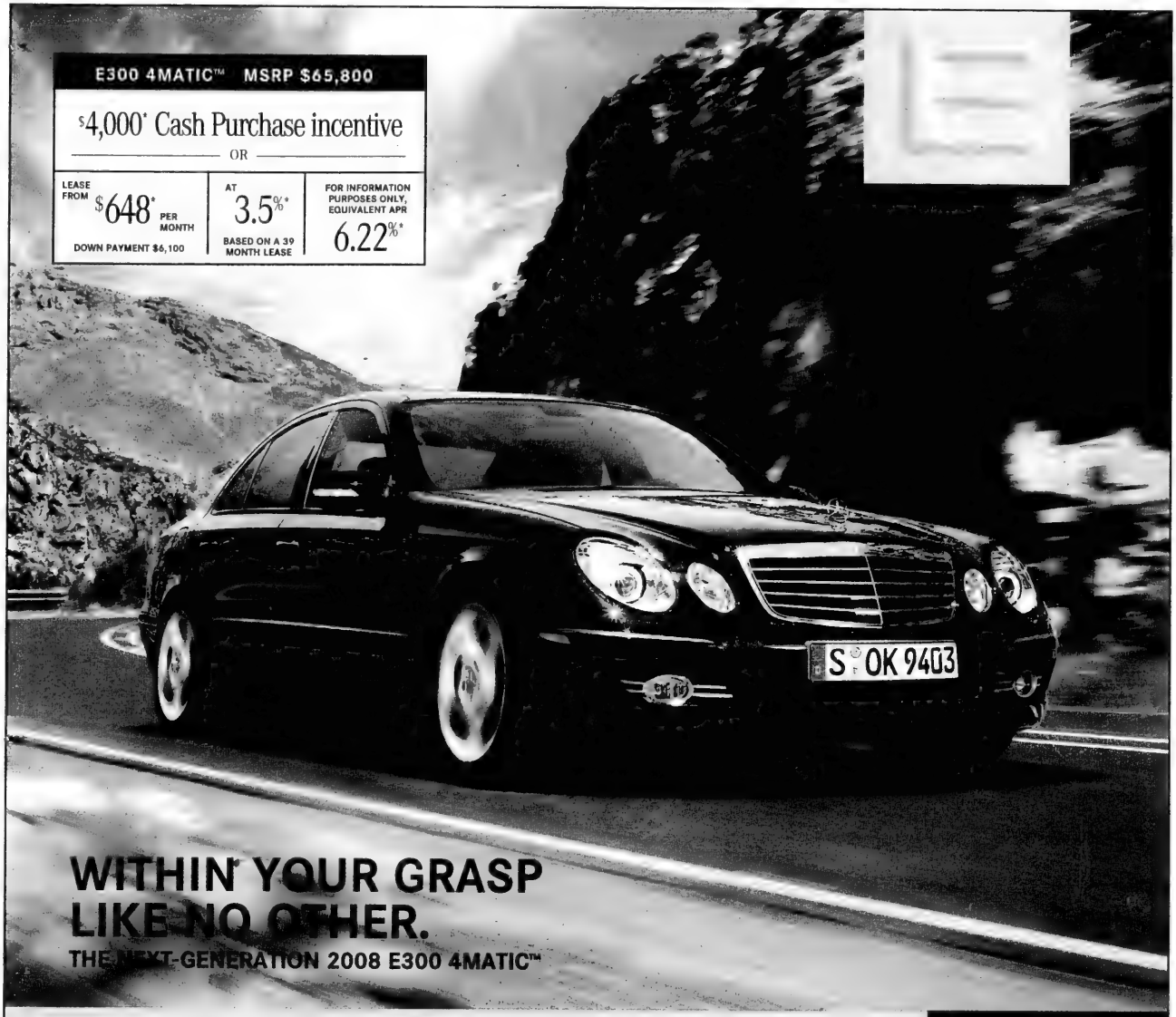
New shuls seem to open up every week, and you could visit a different kosher restaurant each week for a year and still face an unfinished culinary journey.

But in terms of our warmth, creative spirituality, acceptance and soul, I'm afraid we mirror our host country and are not exactly how we see ourselves.

Lorne Opler, a Torontonian who just returned to our community after many years of "estranging himself from it" and his faith, once wrote in the *Austin Chronicle* that his Jewish upbringing here was "insular" and made him unhappy and "frustrated by the lack of creativity and diversity." I will write more about Lorne's experience next week, as well as about others who have expressed to me their inability and unwillingness to live the lifestyle that's expected in our community, where a lawyer can be king, but a poet is silly.

I am a great supporter of our community and, therefore, think it's healthy to genuinely delve into our character, sometimes through the eyes of the disenchanted and those who feel like Lilliputians in an often overwhelming Jewish environment. Write me your thoughts.

Send e-mails to Avrum@veahavta.org. Sderot/Sudan/Tibet?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This Week

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National

Leadership crisis exists in Israel, says Birthright co-founder. *Page 6*

CHAT south named Wallenberg Campus. *Page 12*

On Campus

Hillel to get new home at UBC. *Page 23*

Arts & Travel

Investment banking was no laughing matter. *Page 37*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 14
Family Moments 19
What's New 20
Obituaries and Notices 22
On Campus 23
Health & Lifestyle 31
Just Between Us 32
Israel & the Jewish World 33
Arts & Travel 37
Heebonics 39
Books & Authors 41
Sports & Leisure 46

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Thousands walk for Israel

More than 15,000 people turned out for UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's annual Walk With Israel event last Sunday. The walk raised more than $500,000 for various charities and causes in Israel, with a focus on relief programs in Sderot and the western Negev. According to federation, this year's walk set a "recent record" for participation. ***Please see related story on page 19.*** **[*Dave Gordon photo*]**

Media critic wins al-Dura case

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Philippe Karsenty, the head of a French media watchdog group, is claiming victory in his long-running battle with France's main television news network over his claim that the purported death of Palestinian youth Mohammad al-Dura was faked.

A French appeals court ruled last week he did not libel television reporter Charles Enderlin and France 2 when he claimed its report on al-Dura's death was a hoax.

Karsenty has maintained that France 2 falsely claimed al-Dura, 12, was killed by Israeli soldiers in September 2000, early in the al-Aqsa (second) intifadah. The sight of al-Dura and his father huddled behind a concrete pipe at a crossroads in Gaza became an iconic symbol of the intifidah and was used to vilify Israel on an international scale. However, Karsenty believes the incident was staged, that al-Dura was never shot and that France 2 lied about the entire incident.

Philippe Karsenty

The Paris Court of Appeal vindicated that perspective, he asserted last week.

The language employed by the judge in supporting my position "was beyond any expectation," he said in a telephone interview from Paris. "The judge understood that the news report was truly 100 per cent fake. Every line of the verdict supports my assumption.

"The court said I have the right to [make] my statement – that the report was faked, that we've been duped by them."

Enderlin rejects that analysis. He said the court did not support Karsenty's claim the event was staged,

Continued on page 34

CJN wins awards

The Quebec Community Newspaper Association has recognized *The Canadian Jewish News* with awards for best website (www.cjnews.com) and for best special section (Weddings 2007, February 2007). In giving the first-place website designation to *The CJN*, the association described the site as "up to date with breaking news throughout the week," adding that "features like the Heebonics blog offer a fresh new voice. The downloadable version of the paper is a plus."

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Commission tells Quebec to fight anti-Semitism — see page 26

The News in Brief

CANADA

Parts Contract Signed

MONTREAL — Quebec-based aerospace and industrial products manufacturer Héroux-Devtek Inc. has signed a 10-year contract with Israel Aerospace Industries' LAHAV division to make parts for F-15 and F-16 fighter jets. They will be made at Progressive Inc., Héroux-Devtek's subsidiary in Arlington, Tex. The deal, which runs through 2018, is worth $10 to $12 million. Héroux-Devtek has its head office in Longueuil, Que.

Release Baha'is: CJC

TORONTO — Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) is calling for the immediate release of six unofficial leaders of the Baha'i faith in Iran who were arrested this month in surprise raids, along with another Baha'i arrested earlier. "There have been no charges laid to date in these cases, merely baseless inferences that those arrested were acting 'against the national interest' as 'agents of a foreign country,'" CJC said. Iran has previously accused Baha'is of spying for Israel.

WORLD

Workers Claim Abuse

DES MOINES — Former workers at the nation's largest kosher slaughterhouse allege they were sexually abused. The claims came a week after U.S. agents arrested 389 illegal workers at Agriprocessors in what was described as the largest raid of its kind in U.S. history. Meanwhile, the Conservative movement rejected a proposal to boycott the plant, which makes Aaron's and Rubashkin's products, out of concern a boycott might discourage Jews from keeping kosher, but its leaders say consumers should consider not buying its products for now.

Demjanjuk Denied

CLEVELAND — The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to hear an appeal by convicted Nazi camp guard John Demjanjuk to overturn his deportation order. Demjanjuk, 88, had argued that an immigration judge didn't have the authority to order his deportation. Demjanjuk was stripped of his citizenship in 1981 and extradited to Israel, where in 1993 he was acquitted by its Supreme Court of being the Treblinka death camp guard "Ivan the Terrible." He was stripped of his citizenship again in 2002 after new evidence showed he was a guard at another camp. In 2006, a judge dismissed his appeal to overturn a deportation order. The Cleveland-area resident denies helping the Nazis, claiming he was drafted into the Soviet army and captured by the Germans. Though the Ukrainian-born Demjanjuk's legal fight is over, he's unlikely to be deported, since neither Ukraine nor Germany will take him.

More Jews In U.K.?

LONDON — Britain's Jewish population grew for the first time since World War II, University of Manchester researchers said. The researchers say the number of British Jews increased in 2008 to 280,000 from 275,000 in 2005. They cited very high birth rates in haredi families. The number of British Jews peaked at 450,000 in 1950. But a researcher for the main umbrella body of British Jewry said reports of growth are premature.

Israeli Family Leaves Nfld. Church

ST. JOHN'S — An Israeli woman and her five children who had been living in sanctuary in a Catholic church in Marystown, Nfld., returned to Israel last week.

The family, who came to Canada illegally from Israel in 1996, had been living in the church's basement since the fall of 2005 after their application to stay in Canada on humanitarian grounds was rejected.

Angela Portnoy's husband, Alexi, was deported to Israel in 2006 after leaving the church to run an errand and was stopped by police for a traffic violation. The family's lawyer, Lee Cohen of Halifax, told the *St. John's Telegram* that the separation was becoming too much to bear, and that they hope to apply to return to Canada.

The Portnoys, two of whose children were born in Canada, were deported in 2000. They returned to Canada in 2001, but were ordered deported again in 2004. The couple say they don't want to live in Israel because they don't want their children to face army service and they fear mistreatment due to their Russian heritage.

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Israel's envoy looks back at year with satisfaction

'The Canada-Israel relationship is improving every week'

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Alan Baker, Israel's ambassador to Canada, is looking at his last few months in Ottawa with satisfaction tinged with some regret.

Satisfaction that the relationship between the two countries is as good as it's been in quite some time; regret that 10 years after Israel and Canada inked a free trade agreement, two-way trade remains stuck at the $1-billion mark.

Nevertheless, for Baker, the glass is a lot more than half full. "The Canada-Israel relationship is improving every week," he said in a telephone interview from Ottawa.

At the ministerial level, Canadian and Israeli lawmakers have good personal and working relationships. The countries' prime ministers, Stephen Harper and Ehud Olmert, "speak regularly on the phone," while their foreign ministers, Maxime Bernier and Tzipi Livni, are also in frequent contact. John Baird, Canada's environment minister, is slated to travel to Israel where he will meet his counterpart at an environmental conference, while Stockwell Day, Canada's minister of public safety, recently attended a conference in Israel and met with Avi Dichter, his Israeli counterpart.

Throw in the bilateral agreements between the two countries' police forces in the areas of drug smuggling and anti-terrorism, and for Baker, all in all, it's been a pretty good year.

"I like to think it's because of the ambassador, but realistically, it's a mixture of everything," he said. "The present Canadian government is very supportive of Israel… There are ongoing bilateral developments and they are much better than it has been in years. Harper is a leading influence in his attitude to Israel, but it's also due to a commonality and mutuality of interests."

Alan Baker

Canada's potential assistance in peace talks is valued, Baker said, given its reputation in the international community, as is its assistance to the Palestinian Authority in training police.

Canada's experience in making multiculturalism work can also serve as a model in the region. "Canada can help bring the Palestinians from a psyche of terror to one of living together," Baker added.

At the United Nations and its Human Rights Council (UNHRC), Canada has built upon a speech given by former UN ambassador Alan Rock in which he criticized divisive resolutions that did not advance peace.

At the UNHRC, "Canada has opposed one-sided resolutions" and the attempt by "Muslim states to hijack the agenda," Baker said.

He applauded Canada for withdrawing from Durban II, the follow-up to the notorious UN World Conference Against Racism in 2001 that critics said turned into an anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist event.

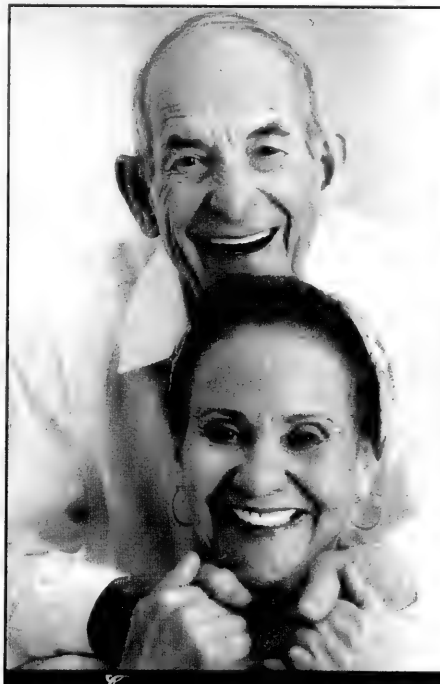
Despite those positive developments, Baker said, work remains to be done. "The bilateral commercial relationship is still disappointing to me."

Ten years ago, the two countries signed a free trade agreement, but he believes that it's been underutilized.

Concerns over security may have been a factor in limiting Canadian interest seven or eight years ago, but that shouldn't be a factor now, Baker said.

Israel is a "superpower" in high tech, with leading developments in the medical, agricultural and computer fields, and the chip inside the Blackberry was developed in Israel, he added.

Continued on page 30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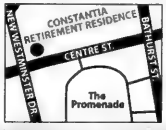

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Think of Jerusalem

In the ongoing celebrations for Israel's 60th anniversary, we must not lose sight of the 41st anniversary next week on the 28th day of Iyar, (June 2) of the reunification of Jerusalem.

Yom Yerushalayim is also a happy, grateful day of the heart.

My colleague, Sheldon Kirshner, writes in his column this week about Jerusalem, which he accurately describes as "a world unto itself."

It is difficult to imagine too many other cities on earth that, like Jerusalem, is the veritable tip of so many diverse, competing, compelling, comforting and distressing icebergs.

Countless roads converge in Jerusalem. The ones we see are only a handful of the roads we have actually travelled.

No matter where we are today on earth, to borrow and paraphrase from Rabbi Nachman of Bratslav, we have all travelled at some point through Jerusalem.

From the editor's desk

For anyone wishing to go there – again – there are no shortages of tour-guide books to Jerusalem. But two books that recently came across my desk appear particularly interesting, informative and helpful.

* * *

Jerusalem Step by Step, by Dr. Batya and Avigdor Kornboim (The WizeGuide, Haifa), is a uniquely imaginative guide and aid for anyone, tourist or Jerusalemite, walking in the city.

In fact, the book is not a book. It is a handy, convenient, sturdy binder of 12 small booklets. Each booklet is a chapter in the overall 12-chapter work.

Each booklet, apart from the first, the introduction, is a self-contained instructional guide to a specific neighbourhood walk in the city.

The 11 dedicated neighbourhood walks are: The Jewish Quarter; Mount Zion; Mea Shearim; Nahlaot; Yemin Moshe; Rehavia and Talbiya; Via Dolorosa, The Mount of Olives; Ein Kerem; The Israel Museum; and Wall-to-Wall Paintings (following the murals trail).

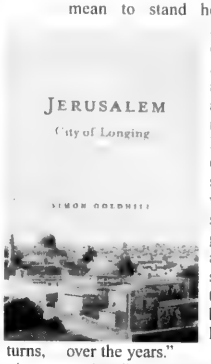
There is a great deal of material, cleverly, pragmatically and colourfully compiled in each of the booklets.

Maximum utility and high esthetics, it seems, were the two guiding production values of the booklets. Each of the booklets is removable from the binder, meant to be carried by the individual during his or her walk. The paper used is finished in high gloss, which enhances the bright colours of the scenes depicted. The language is, by turns, humorous and serious but always instructive. The street maps are clear and uncomplicated.

The information is eye-opening for the inquisitive tourist seeking further historical, religious, cultural, architectural, sociological, ethnic or other insight into the places, institutions and people he or she may meet along the way. It is also eye-opening for the hungry tourist seeking merely culinary insights to satisfy the growling stomach.

Jerusalem Step by Step should be available at the local bookstores. If it is not, the authors may be reached at wizeguide@gmail.com.

Jerusalem: City of Longing, by Simon Goodhill (Harvard University Press), is also an aid to the explorer of that golden city. But in a different way.



The author, a professor of Greek at the University of Cambridge, has written a work that explains the many-layered aspects of the city's history.

"This book is meant for the intelligent reader," Goodhill writes, "who wants to understand what it might mean to stand here or there in Jerusalem – to experience Jerusalem not just as a tourist site or as a day-to-day, mundane urban landscape but as a city where every space is layered with historical significance, religious intensity and extraordinary stories about the the people who have visited and lived in this city over the years."

Goodhill is a scholar who has written, in his words, "a tour guide for the thinking visitor."

In truth, all visits to Jerusalem lead the visitor to think, reflect, marvel and sigh at what the place is, what it was, and what we hope it may yet become.

Books that enhance an already tingling Jerusalem experience, such as these two, are to be coveted.

* * *

The caption in the photo that accompanied the Perspectives essay, *Telling the stories of Canadian Jewry*, last week contained incorrect information. H.M. Caiserman was the Secretary-General of CJC, not of the Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities. He was being greeted by David Rome after his fact-finding trip to Poland in January 1947. In fact, Caiserman was accompanied to Poland by Sam Lipschitz, former editor of *The CJN*'s Yiddish Corner.

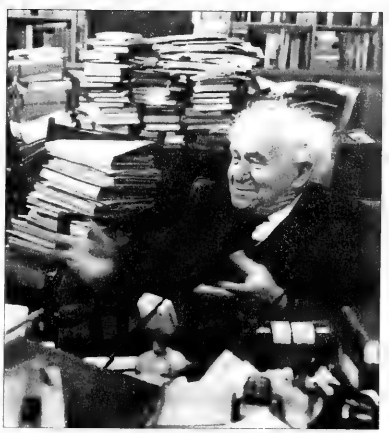
—MBD

See]N Celebrating 60 Years of Israel

THE FIRST PRIME MINISTER

David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) was one of the founding fathers of Israel and the country's first prime minister. After leaving public life, he retired to Kibbutz Sdeh Boker in the Negev. Affectionately known as "haZaken" (the Old Man), in later years he devoted himself to writing in his book-lined study. At left, he stands among the ruins of an ancient Nabatean city in Avdat, near his kibbutz in the Negev.

[WZPS photos by Werner Braun]



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Israel faces leadership crisis: Birthright co-founder

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Israel needs better leadership, the co-founder of Birthright Israel told a group of Jewish businesspeople in Toronto last week.

"Israel is not what it used to be. The government in Israel is about as poor as any [government] in the West. We need to have role models. Something has to change. If it doesn't come from them, it must come from us," philanthropist Michael Steinhardt said at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's "Bay St. Meets Wall St." event on May 21.

While Steinhardt continues to support Israel, he's critical of the direction it's heading.

"If you were a 17-year-old Israeli, who would your role model be?" he asked the crowd of some 200 people.

"I feel so upset that Israel is going on such a poor path… Israeli academics are leaving [Israel.] That's scary."

Steinhardt, a philanthropist who made his fortune as a hedge fund manager, co-founded Birthright – which offers free trips to Israel for Jews aged 18 to 26 – in 1999 and has also supported many other organizations in the Jewish community. He spoke about business and philanthropy at the Design Exchange on Bay Street.

Steinhardt left his Wall Street career in 1995 to devote his time to the Jewish community.

"Somehow the idea of spending a lot of time making money didn't fit my idea of values," he said.

"The Jewish world always interested me. I started working for day schools and became the co-chair of [the campus group] Hillel."

In 1998, Steinhardt approached fellow philanthropist Charles Bronfman about his idea for Birthright. Bronfman had already founded an organization called Israel Experience, which was sending high school students to Israel, but was not flourishing.

"I spoke to [Bronfman] about Birthright. He was awed by the magnitude of the idea, but he said, 'Let's try it.'"

When introducing Steinhardt, Bruce Leboff, who chairs federation's "Bay St. Cabinet," spoke about Birthright's success.

"By the end of the summer, a quarter of a million people will have been brought to Israel [on Birthright trips]," Leboff said. "Mr. Steinhardt is a great example of someone who gives of himself."

Event chair Evan Cooperman explained how Birthright influenced his life.

"The main reason I'm involved in the Jewish community is Michael Steinhardt," he said.

In 2000, Cooperman went on a Birthright trip and the tour guide asked him to share his dreams for the future.

He had an epiphany.

"I realized that most of my dreams centered on being successful and making a lot of money," he said.

Cooperman also realized that he needed to give back to his community.

"Michael Steinhardt gave me a free trip to Israel. [He] really connected me to the land and [encouraged] me to give back," he said.

Steinhardt said he co-founded Birthright for just that reason.

"To many [participants,] it's the largest monetary gift they've ever received. It touches off a spark. So many are vulnerable because they know so little. [I'm] trying to create fire from the spark," Steinhardt said.

When asked about the lack of charitable donations to Jewish causes, Steinhardt was blunt.

"Fifteen per cent of philanthropy [by Jews goes] to the Jewish world. This is not an accident," he said. "We give where our heart is. Our heart isn't so Jewish anymore."

Leboff said Steinhardt's heart is in Israel.

"He works towards revitalizing the Jewish identity to reach out to all Jews," he said.

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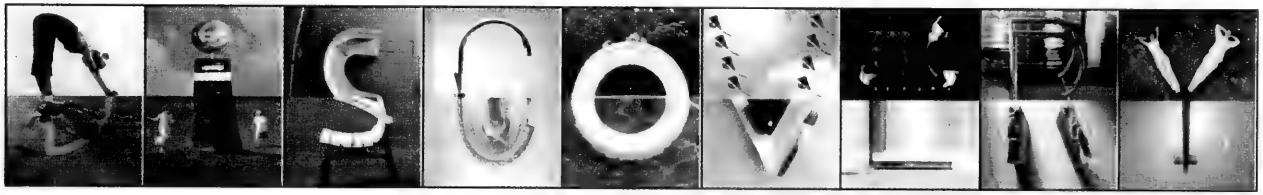

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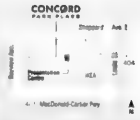

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Shocked and wary

After the surprise announcement last week that Israel and Syria had agreed to indirect discussions through the offices of the Turkish government, Iran's leadership was reported to have been "in shock." Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was said to have been "stunned" and "furious" at the news.

Judging by much of the Israeli media's reaction to the announcement, it seems a great many Israelis were also in shock. A poll conducted by Channel 2 television found that fully 70 per cent of Israelis are opposed to relinquishing the Golan Heights, even under the umbrella of a comprehensive peace accord.

In addition to the overwhelming opposition to quitting the Golan, most Israelis also suspect the bona fides of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's surprise announcement. Some 57 per cent think the talks are linked to the ongoing police investigation into the allegations that the prime minister accepted bribes from an American businessman while serving in previous government posts.

Syria's main objective in a peace treaty with Israel would be to retrieve the entire Golan Heights, the high basalt plateau north and east of the Sea of Galilee that it lost in the Six Day War. Israel's key objective would be to finally normalize relations with Syria and to pull Syria out of the Iranian orbit and away from Hamas, Hezbollah and all other radical Palestinians.

Talks are slated to take place in Istanbul in the near future.

But no sooner had the first stories appeared than the respective leaders tried to pull back to earth the skyrocketing expectations from the surprise announcement. Syrian Defence Minister Hassan Turkmani began an official visit to Iran Saturday at the invitation of Iranian Defence Minister Mostafa Mohammed Najjar. More likely, he was summoned to Tehran to explain Syria's "betrayal" of its Shia sponsor specifically and of the Islamic cause in general.

For his part, Prime Minister Olmert tried to assuage a skeptical and doubting populace on Sunday by implying that he would not necessarily accept previous governments' purported willingness to give back all or most of the Heights to the Syrians. "There are and will be very precise and meticulous preparations, to bring our expectations of the negotiations into line with today's reality, not that of 10 or nine years ago, and with the security and political sensitivities that stem from current realities and not from what we knew in the past. We will conduct serious and responsible negotiations, with all due caution."

It is not likely that Olmert's words were much of a balm to the itchy feeling most Israelis have at the thought of trusting the Syrians. Public pronouncements aside, Olmert knows that for any negotiations to yield positive results, he must tread very warily and always with the backing of a significant majority of his own people. For the moment, at least, that support is not there. Merely that old, familiar, uneasy itch that will not be salved.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel placed its armed forces on alert after Syria held military manoeuvres near the Golan Heights and attacked Israeli jets and a helicopter in eastern Lebanon. Syria insisted the actions were purely defensive.

Dry Bones ONE MAN SHOW
THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT IS NOT IN SECRET TALKS WITH SYRIA!
. . . IT'S PRIME MINISTER OLMERT WHO'S IN SECRET TALKS WITH SYRIA!
ISN'T THAT THE SAME THING?
APPARENTLY MR. OLMERT THINKS SO!

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Cotler's Israel motion didn't pass

The motion of support that reaffirms and re-articulates the unique bond between Canada and Israel, put forward by MP Irwin Cotler in the House of Commons on May 7, did not, as you suggested, receive unanimous support and was, therefore, not passed by the House ("Gratifying and grateful," *CJN*, May 15).

I wonder what happened? Who were the M's who voted against the motion? What parties do they represent? This is not idle curiosity. In advancing our causes, we are entitled to know who are our supporters and who are our detractors. These detractors are certainly entitled to their negative votes, but why must they remain anonymous?

Joseph J. Wilder
Winnipeg

* * *

Israeli and Palestinian narratives

As columnist Jesse Mintz asserts, it is true that there are chasms in the Israeli and Palestinian narratives and the new historians try to ostensibly address them ("Sixty years later," *CJN*, May 1). However, the real motive of some of the new historians, such as Illan Pappe, is to further their far-left ideology. Prof. Pappe has even been on record as saying the "facts matter less than the ideology."

Regardless, these post-Zionist historians have been busy uncovering perceived and real Israeli misdeeds as a way to bridge narratives. However, the problem is that as Israelis become more sensitized to Palestinian suffering (much of it self-inflicted), there has been little acknowledgment by the other side of Jewish suffering. Deir Yassin reaches mythical proportions, not unlike the deplorable attempts made to do the same for Jenin in 2002. The massacres of Jews in Hebron in 1929, the Arab riots and killing of Jews in 1936, the massacre at Gush Etzion and of Hadassah medical workers in 1948 are obliterated from the Palestinian narrative. Or more importantly, there is no acknowledgment of the invasion of Arab armies in 1948 in the Arabs' quest to destroy the nascent Jewish state. War just "broke out."

While one side tries to address some of the unpleasant facts of history, the other side deviates more from the irrefutable truth and revises it to meet its ideological objective – the elimination of the Jewish state. In fact, in many ways, the Palestinian narrative has become more extreme, attaching false labels to the Jewish state, such as "apartheid" and "ethnic cleansing," that do not hold up under honest scrutiny.

Reconciliation will come when both sides, not just one, address historical truths.

Norman L. Epstein
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Talking to the enemy

U.S. President George W. Bush sure picked the wrong place to equate talking to Hamas terrorists with Nazi appeasement ("President Bush visits Masada – U.S., Israel want 'tangible action' on Iran nukes," *CJN*, May 22). It was Israel's top warrior, the late Gen. Moshe Dayan, who could hardly be called an appeaser, who said: "If you want peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies." And someone should whisper these wise words of former U.S. president John F. Kennedy's in Bush's ear: "Let us never negotiate out of fear. But, let us never fear to negotiate."

William Bedford
Toronto

* * *

B'nai Brith expulsions

Kudos to Rafi Aaron for having the courage to condemn the expulsion of Lou Ronson, a man of integrity, from B'nai Brith Canada ("B'nai Brith expulsion," *CJN* letters, May 8). However, there are a few more very important members of Upper Canada Lodge who were also expelled: Sid Isenberg (incoming president of the lodge for 2008), who, incidentally never received a notice of expulsion from B'nai Brith; Mark Mittleman (past president), and Lloyd Lindsay (incoming third vice-president for 2008). Is it possible that B'nai Brith Canada is afraid of new blood and new ideas, and the possibility that the organization may return to democracy and transparency?

Goldie Cantor
Toronto

* * *

Disagrees with letter writer

My answer to Bernard Katz's inane, thoughtless and ignorant tirade about Israel, in which he writes that "Israel must stop double dealing, stop pretending to seek peace while travelling the same old paths of dishonour, immortality and death," is, "Nuts" ("Re-branding Israel," *CJN* letters, May 22). This is the same answer that Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, the defending general during the Battle of the Bulge, gave the Germans when they demanded that the Americans surrender.

Leonard Smith
Toronto

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Schalit

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Perspectives

Can Israel and Syria get to peace?

By ZVI BAR'EL
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd*

A day after Israel and Syria announced a renewal of peace talks after an eight-year hiatus, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner that both sides know what they need to do for peace.

"The Syrians know what we want, and we know what they want," Olmert told Kouchner.

Olmert told the French foreign minister last Thursday that talks with Syria would not detract from peace efforts on the Palestinian front, saying, "Israel intends to hold parallel peace talks [with the Palestinian Authority and Syria] without having one set of talks take precedence over the other."

The prime minister also said that Israel still hopes to reach a peace deal with the Palestinians by the end of 2008. He said that his meetings with PA President Mahmoud Abbas, and the meetings Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni has held with top Palestinian negotiator Ahmed Qureia, have been focused and serious.

Syrian President Bashar Assad

Earlier Thursday, Livni said Syria must distance itself from Tehran and cut ties to Iranian-backed groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas if it wants to conclude a peace treaty with Israel.

"Israel wants to live in peace with its neighbours, but Syria also needs to understand that it needs also full renunciation of supporting terror – Hezbollah, Hamas and of course Iran," Livni said in English.

Continuing her remarks to reporters in Hebrew, Livni called Syria's ties with Iran "problematic," referring to the Israel's accusations that the Islamic Republic sponsors Hamas and Lebanese guerrilla group Hezbollah.

"The Syrians also need to understand that… they must distance themselves completely from their… problematic ties with Iran," she said in Hebrew before the start of a meeting with Kouchner.

Defence Minister Ehud Barak addressed the talks in public for the first time last Thursday, tempering high hopes by saying that the road to peace is long.

"The Syrians know that concessions are a two-way street, and the distance from here to a peace agreement is vast," Barak said, speaking at a ceremony of appreciation for Israel Defence Forces reservists at the president's residence in Jerusalem.

"Peace will come only from a position of power and security," Barak said.

Deputy Israeli Prime Minister Haim Ramon also met with Kouchner and told him that while Israel is ready to make painful concessions for peace, a deal won't be reached if Damascus continues to give support to Hezbollah and Hamas, and to serve as Iran's central ally.

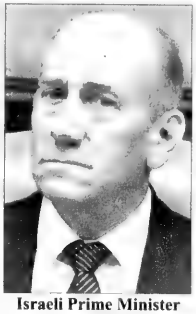
Also on Thursday, *Al-Hayat*, a London-based Arabic newspaper, printed an interview with Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem, who said that an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan is not only a Syrian demand, but a Syrian right.

"Syria won't advance negotiations without a commitment to a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights." He also said that he hopes Israel will display seriousness in the indirect peace talks that have been launched between Jerusalem and Damascus, so that the discussions can develop into direct talks.

At Syria's insistence, the talks will initially be indirect, with a Turkish mediator shuffling between the two sides. However, Ankara is impressed by the present upbeat mood in the talks and hopes that by next month, the time might be ripe for a direct meeting between Israelis and Syrians, a senior Turkish official said.

The official, who is involved in the Turkish mediation, said last week's meetings in Ankara dealt mainly with "selecting issues for debate and refreshing the issues in agreement."

The Turkish mediator in the talks is Ahmet Davutoglu, chief adviser to the Turkish prime minister on foreign policy. Davotoglu scurried from one office to another last week, passing messages between the two sides.



Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

Davotoglu has recently visited Damascus several times, meeting senior Syrian officials including, Vice-President Farouk Shara and foreign ministry legal adviser Riad Daoudi.

Daoudi, who probably headed the Syrian delegation for the talks with Israel in Turkey, conducted talks with Turkey on Israel in the past year. He also dealt with the international investigation into the murder in 2005 of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri.

Syria is presenting the talks in Turkey as President Bashar Assad's achievement.

Syrian commentators said on Arab television that the talks were being conducted according to Assad's terms: they were held in public, were based on the Madrid Conference that set the terms of Israeli withdrawal, adopted Israel's willingness expressed in 1995 to withdraw from the Golan in exchange for full peace and were not conditioned, at least at this stage, on a Syrian disengagement from Iran, Hezbollah or the Palestinian organizations in Damascus.

The Turkish mediation efforts have been going on for more than a year. Turkey is trying to prevent Syria's isolation and curb Iran's influence in the Middle East and assumes that it would be easier to achieve peace between Israel and Syria than between Israel and the Palestinians. Turkey went ahead with the talks over U.S. objections.

"We understood the American displeasure, but we are acting in Turkish interests rather than American ones," the Turkish official said.

Asked if Washington had pressured Ankara to block the move with Syria, he said Washington made its position clear "and we made ours clear. I'm sure Washington will be pleased with advancing the process. After all, it is supposed to be the 'honest broker' that Assad is looking for."

A Turkish government source told *Ha'aretz* that Turkey could lead the mediation a certain way but cannot replace the United States. "It's like a relay race. We do our section, and if it succeeds we pass the baton to the Americans," he said.

Another Turkish source said the talks may serve interests other than the peace process itself.

"[Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan] is under threat to have his party outlawed over his remarks on women's headcoverings, Olmert is tied up in investigations, and Assad needs to break out of his international isolation and the Hariri murder entanglement. A bit of commotion over the peace process will do none of them any harm," a government official said.

The dividing issues

By AKIVA ELDAR
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The gap between the Syrian and Israeli positions lies in Damascus' demand for Israel's withdrawal to the July 4, 1967, lines and Jerusalem's stance that any withdrawal must be to the international border set by Britain and France in the early 1920s.

On the ground, this gap is just several hundred metres, but the sticking point is Syria's demand for land reaching all the way to the northeastern shore of the Kinneret, which it seized in 1948. By contrast, Israel wants to retain a narrow strip of land there, as per the agreement between Britain and France, and the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan.

Unofficial contacts between the two sides via a Swiss intermediary, which lasted until the summer of 2006 and were driven by former Israeli Foreign Ministry director general Alon Liel, resulted in an agreement that the disputed area between the 1967 lines and the international border would be part of a "peace park" that would cover the entire Golan Heights. The Syrians agreed that Israelis would be able to visit the park during the day without any entry requirements.

Meanwhile, Syrian President Bashar Assad demanded that Israel honour a pledge by former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin to the United States that if all of Israel's demands were met, it would withdraw to the 1967 lines.

The talks between the two sides include a range of issues, all of which will play a key role in the success of negotiations, to varying degrees.

Water resources

Syria, which suffers from water shortages, recently told former U.S. president Jimmy Carter that it is willing to commit that it will not draw water from the Kinneret, but it expects financial assistance for desalination plants and a commitment from Turkey that it will supply Syria with water.

Evacuation of settlements

In previous contacts between Israel and Syria, a rift emerged between the sides over a timetable for the removal of Israeli communities on the Golan Heights. Israel requested a 15-year period to evacuate settlements, while Syria envisioned a period of 10 years for removal of these communities.

Syria's ties to Iran, Hezbollah and radical Palestinian groups, including Hamas

Israel insisted that Syria commits in advance to sever ties with these parties, while Damascus maintained that this issue should be on the negotiating table with all other issues. In effect, Syria has rejected any preconditions in the talks.

American involvement

Syria is standing by its request for U.S. involvement in the negotiations, and wants the United States to change its attitude to Damascus, and for U.S. President George W. Bush's to remove Syria from inclusion in his so-called "axis of evil" (along with Iran and North Korea).

Demilitarization of Syrian territory east of the agreed border

Syria previously demanded that Israel also create a demilitarized zone on Israeli territory. An agreement on the extent of the two zones has not been reached.

Normalization of ties

Syria backed an Arab League resolution decision first adopted in 2002 at the Beirut conference to normalize ties with Israel in return for a complete withdrawal from all Arab lands captured in 1967. It's unclear if Syria would agree to the normalization requested by Israel before it cedes the West Bank and east Jerusalem as part of a peace deal with the Palestinians.

Golan Heights

The Golan Heights Law, which passed in 1981, confirmed Israel's annexation of the Golan. This law could make it difficult for the government to get Knesset approval for settlement evacuation or withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Back in their days as Israeli prime minister, both Rabin and Ehud Barak promised to bring any agreement with Syria to a referendum.

Opinions

Harmful decisions

Rabbi Irving (Yitz) Greenberg, the distinguished exponent of contemporary Judaism, is quoted to have said that it doesn't matter which denomination you belong to – as long as you are ashamed of it.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

Many Conservative rabbis in Canada have been ashamed of their movement for some time now. They cite among their reasons the ordination of women by the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) and the admission of gay and lesbian students into its rabbinic program.

JTS professor Jack Wertheimer probably had this in mind when, speaking at a conference in Jerusalem last December, he expressed his disappointment that the Conservative movement has been so keen to compete with Reform for members that it has failed to provide a relevant, halachic alternative.

To express their dissent, several Conservative rabbis in Toronto have been active members of the Union for Traditional Judaism, where many disaffected Conservative Jews have sought refuge.

Now, some of the congregations they serve have done what Shaar Hashomayim Congregation in Montreal did years ago. They have seceded from the parent body of Conservative Judaism in North America.

Rabbi Steven Saltzman, of Adath Israel Congregation, explained the secession of his congregation ideologically. He spoke of the growing chasm between Conservative Judaism in America and its Canadian branch, with special reference to the ordination of women and homosexuals, and the tendency to emulate American Reform in accepting as Jews the offspring of a Jewish father and a non-Jewish mother.

Lay leaders of the congregations that have left tend to give more mundane reasons. They cite the cost of affiliation and say they don't get as much back from the movement as they put into it. A spokesperson for Beth Tzedec Congregation, Canada's largest Conservative shul, said openly that "the Conservative movement's ideology did not enter into the synagogue's decision."

To wish to leave for ideological reasons may be misguided, because it would serve the cause better if they all stayed within the proverbial tent, but it is honorable. To leave in order not to pay affiliation fees reflects a deplorable, crass parochialism that eschews responsibility for the collective.

It's bound to bring great harm to Canadian Jewry. For it can only be a matter of time before the JTS will make it very difficult, if not impossible, for congregations outside the Conservative movement to employ its graduates. The successors to those who currently serve the seceding congregations are, therefore, likely to be Orthodox. Liberal Jews seeking a traditional environment may be rendered religiously homeless.

As a liberal traditionalist Reform rabbi, I should be happy, because of the potential influx of new members to our congregations. But as a Jew in Canada, I am saddened by yet another unwarranted step to move the community to the right.

Young leaders are embracing the right

Inside the Jewish student community, a debate is raging over which political party is the best for our community.

I came face-to-face with this debate in November when I attended a conference hosted by the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee (CJPAC), a multi-partisan group with the mandate of engaging the Jewish community in Canadian politics.

Mark Masters in Ottawa

The scene startled me because there used to be no debate over who the Jewish community should vote for. The answer was the Liberal Party of Canada. That support for the Grits still exists in our community today, but if the new wave of young leaders is any indication, there will be much more debate about it in the years ahead.

Young people historically have tilted toward apathy rather than political involvement. With the barrage of issues facing high school and university students, that's no surprise. For the most part, outside perhaps the context of an election campaign, young people just don't care that much. Those who do care tend to be on the left side of political spectrum.

The CJPAC conference featured several days of meetings with guest speakers and workshops meant to make Jewish students better political advocates for Israel and the other issues important to our community.

What stood out was the breakdown in party affiliation. The division was basically 50-50 between Liberal supporters and Tory backers. In years past, this was unheard of among a young crowd. Historically, Conservatives were in the minority and not exactly outspoken about their leanings.

But at this conference, the Conservative supporters were more vocal and aggressive in their arguments. Perhaps this was a byproduct of the party being in power for the first time in a long while. More likely, however, this new-found vigour was a response to the pride felt by the party's unfailing support for the Jewish state.

For years under Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, we saw Canada support one-sided anti-Israel resolutions at the United Nations. Then Liberal Prime Minister Paul Martin came in, and Canada started to abstain on the resolutions.

When Stephen Harper and the Tories won a minority government in 2006, many in the Jewish community were unsure of what to expect. What they got was the strongest advocate for Israel to ever live at 24 Sussex Dr.

Time and time again, Harper has come to Israel's defence, and the position he takes on this issue seems truly rooted in principle.

Our current political climate of minority government makes it very attractive for leaders to take on populist themes that win votes.

Standing up for Israel is not necessarily a vote getter. The Jewish population is only a significant factor in a handful of Canada's 308 ridings. On top of this, in seat-rich Quebec being pro-Israel is far from a popular position.

That said, groups like CJPAC are doing a solid job of ensuring our issues are on the agenda.

What was striking about the conference in November was despite the varying political beliefs there was a common goal shared by all involved to ensure our community and Israel has its voice heard by Canadian leaders and the general population.

There was a passion for politics, and Jewish political issues, that I had never seen before.

What is clear is that the bar for support from our community has been raised.

The current wave of young Jews are making the issue of Israel central to them because for the first time since the Yom Kippur War the country's future seems truly uncertain. Due to this we are demanding more from our leaders, and we are doing it in more practical ways.

Programs such as the Hasbara Fellowships and CJPAC student conferences are helping connect Jewish youths with the political process.

There are still some Jewish students who are uninterested in politics and maybe they will never find it a worthwhile pursuit. However, I challenge them to get involved because those who fail to get engaged will miss out on a crucial time in our community's political development.

Politics is no longer a nuisance for Jewish students – it is now a necessity.

Peace will be Israel's best achievement

It took 2,000 years to dream of it, 60 years to plan it and 60 more to bring it to life. The modern state of Israel is celebrating its 60th anniversary with great pride in its achievements and with the knowledge that its story, like that of any other democratic society, remains unfinished. We Israelis live in a region filled with great instability and anxiety, but we will never give up our hope for peace.

Reda Mansour in Atlanta

Israel is a small place, no bigger than any state in the American South. Yet its people represent a brave and ancient nation with a dynamic soul. Today, Israel ranks among the world's 25 most advanced nations. In 1995, it was the first country to sign a free trade agreement with both the United States and Europe. Israel is the only non-European Union state to be included in the EU science program, and was recently announced as a candidate for the prestigious Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Israelis believe that anything can be possible. This was our belief from the moment our first immigrants entered the Promised Land in the late 19th century, and it continues to drive us today.

The strongest internal calling of contemporary Israelis echoes the desire of early Zionist thinker Achad Ha'am (1856-1927): to fulfil Israel's destiny as "a light unto the nations." Achad Ha'am's essential idea to create an intellectual hub in the Promised Land still motivates the Israeli spirit of innovation and generosity.

This is the attitude behind the Israel of scientific achievement, the powerhouse of innovation that created the smallest satellites in the sky, the smallest pill cameras, and technologies that are incorporated into every cellphone and personal computer. Israel leads the world in the number of patents registered and high-tech firms per capita.

Israelis do not dwell on their security problems. Since the early 1950s, they have journeyed throughout the developing world to share their technological expertise. When aid recipients from the Amazon to Southeast Asia refer to Israel as a superpower, it has nothing to do with its military power. To them, Israel is a superpower because it sends them engineers to help them acquire drinking water or doctors to help them treat diseases.

In spite of these achievements, the Israelis have yet to attain what will be their greatest accomplishment. They long for the day when they will live peacefully and securely alongside a stable, prosperous Palestinian state. Peace is the desire of the Israelis, and it is what we wish for all our children over the next 60 years – Palestinians and Israelis, Arabs and Jews alike.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is one of many conflicts in the area stretching from the Persian Gulf to northern Africa. There are those who are determined to turn the Middle East into the centre of a global clash of civilizations. Israel, however, will use its next 60 years as it used its first 60 – working to achieve the dream of peace and stability.

Our history gives us hope as it teaches us that people of good faith do have the power to implement their dreams. Our peaceful wishes and positive thinking might make us seem weak to tyrants, but Israel will prove that the victory of peace over hate is inevitable.

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Reda Mansour is the Israeli consul general for the U.S. Southeast. He was born in the Druze village of Isfiya in northern Israel.

The Kirshner File

Jerusalem — a city of two solitudes

Jerusalem, the capital of Israel and the spiritual centre of the Jewish people, is a world unto itself. Officially unified and indivisible, Jerusalem is actually two separate cities, composed of Jewish and Palestinian Arab neighbourhoods whose residents hardly mingle, let alone socialize. Flushed with victory in the Six Day War, Israel annexed east Jerusalem – inhabited by Arab Muslims and Arab and Armenian Christians – in 1967. Israel also greatly expanded Jerusalem's boundaries, grafting territory from the West Bank, and built entirely new neighbourhoods such as Ramot Eshkol and French Hill. In a further fait accompli, Israel fused these diverse districts with western Jerusalem, which has been in Jewish hands since statehood in 1948.

Sheldon Kirshner in Israel

Almost 41 years have elapsed since its amalgamation, yet Jerusalem remains two solitudes, near and yet so far from each other. Neither the Arabs nor the international community have recognized the dramatic changes on the ground, claiming that Jerusalem's status should be resolved through negotiations rather than unilateral measures.

A city of striking contrasts cutting across ethnic, religious, geographic and cultural lines, Jerusalem expresses itself through jolting differences.

From the terrace of the venerable King David Hotel – an oasis of calm and elegance whose guest list is the acme of celebrity – the view of the walled Old City is one to be savoured. Kings, presidents, diplomats and movie stars have glided through its marbled halls, touched by the gravity of history.

The first British high commissioner in Mandate Palestine, Herbert Samuel, was here, as were Jimmy Carter, the president of the United States; Moshe Dayan, Israel's defence minister before and after the Six Day War; the Hollywood actors Kirk Douglas and Elizabeth Taylor; and King Hussein of Jordan. Their autographed names, and that of other luminaries, line the floor of a hall adjacent to the terrace.

Several blocks away, in the David Citadel Hotel, a much newer hostelry minutes by foot from the American consulate, spiffily dressed modern Orthodox Jews from the United States congregate in the lobby, watching a photographer and his assistant snap pictures of a newly minted bar mitzvah boy.

Across the road and up a flight of steps, the brand-name shops and cafés of the Mamilla promenade beckon. Once a mixed Jewish Arab commercial district, Mamilla fell into steep decline following the War of Independence, being on the edge of Israel's armistice line with Jordan. After decades of heated debate, Mamilla was finally rehabilitated. The project, designed in part by the Israeli Canadian architect Moshe Safdie, was expected to be completed before Israel's 60th anniversary celebrations.

When the founder of political Zionism, Theodor Herzl, visited Palestine in 1898, for the first and only time, he stayed in a modest inn. Having been renovated, it is an integral component of the Mamilla project, which is literally steps away from the Jaffa Gate. The venerable gate leads to the labyrinthine, cobblestone alleys of the Old City, a mix of various quarters.

The compact Armenian quarter melts into the larger and vastly refurbished Jewish quarter, which was virtually destroyed by the Arab Legion in the 1948 war. A warren of residential and institutional buildings, yeshivas, schools and synagogues, it has returned to life with a bounce since the Six Day War.

The Jewish quarter looks down at the Second Temple era Western Wall, where haredi Jews, mainstream Orthodox Jews and secular Jews converge as probably nowhere else. Beyond the wall is the golden dome of the Temple Mount, the hotly contested historical compound in the Muslim quarter.

The Muslim quarter is next door to the Western Wall, but it may as well be light years away, particularly on the Jewish Sabbath. As Jews pray and meditate, some stuffing personal notes into the crevices of the wall, Muslims go about their business. The merchants of the Muslim quarter dispense kitschy souvenirs, T-shirts, bangles and beads, spices, fruits and vegetables, Arabic pastry slathered in honey, and meat and fish.

The strong aroma of frying oil emanates from the stalls of falafel makers, permeating the air. Arab vendors sell bagels sprinkled with sesame seeds and dipped in zaatar.

The Israeli police presence is light.

Christian pilgrims, many of whom are Russians, follow monks as they walk past the stations of the cross along the Via Dolorosa, the path that led Jesus to his crucifixion.

The interior of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which has been a pilgrimage destination since the crucifixion of Jesus, is murky and redolent of burning candles and incense. Pilgrims kneel or prostrate themselves at an altar, mouthing incantations.

The fairy-tale gold onion domes of the Church of Mary Magdalene, dedicated in 1888, glitter in the bright sunshine. Its cool, shaded garden is filled with Russian Orthodox visitors. Prior to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, few Russian pilgrims ever set foot in Israel. For the past few years, however, Israel has been deluged by them.

[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

Jerusalem as seen from Mount Scopus

Mount Scopus, an Israeli enclave in Jordanian territory before 1967, houses a satellite campus of the Hebrew University. From a bluff, the parched Judean Desert is clearly visible. The haze obscures the Dead Sea, the lowest body of water on earth.

On the other side of town, near the Damascus Gate, lies the American Colony Hotel, one of the first hotels during the Ottoman epoch to cater to European travellers and now a haunt of western journalists. Its courtyard is bedecked with flowers and shrubs. Its patio café is a peaceful redoubt from the clamour and tumult of the Old City.

The Ottoman walls around the Old City, softly golden in the late afternoon, are crowned by a catwalk that offers a bird's eye perspective of both sides of Jerusalem. Most visitors remain blissfully unaware of the rampart, but for a nominal admission fee of $4, you can stroll along its serpentine length, catching sight of various attractions.

Sultan's Pool, an ancient reservoir, is now a venue of outdoor concerts. The Church of Dormition, the supposed site of the Virgin Mary's death, is where the mythical Last Supper is said to have unfolded. Montefiore's windmill, a charming artifact, was built in the mid-19th century by Moses Montefiore – a British Jewish philanthropist – to serve the milling needs of the residents of Yemin Moshe, a community designed to relieve overcrowding in the Old City. A replica of the coach he used while in Palestine is inside a glass case.

A replica of Philadelphia's storied Liberty Bell is found at Liberty Bell Park, one of Jerusalem's finest green spaces and a stone's throw from Montefiore's windmill. Opened in 1976 to mark the bicentennial of the United States, the park is studded with gnarled olive trees, which are exquisite down to the last details.

The German Colony, settled in the 1870s by German evangelical Christians known as Templers, is one of the most affluent neighbourhoods in Jerusalem. Ehud Olmert, Israel's prime minister, bought a villa here.

The last Templers left Jerusalem long ago, but their simple yet beautiful homes, typified by white stone facades, red tiled roofs, green wooden shutters and nameplates, have been renovated in a frenzy of gentrification.

Several of these quaint buildings are on Emek Refaim, a hip thoroughfare filled with cozy cafés, restaurants and boutiques. The contrast between the German Colony and, say, Mea Shearim – a bastion of haredi Jews that reminds one of an eastern European shtetl – could not be wider, to say the very least.

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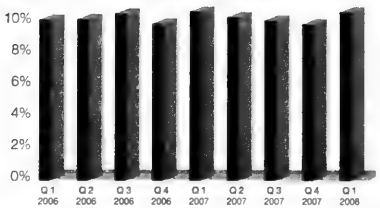

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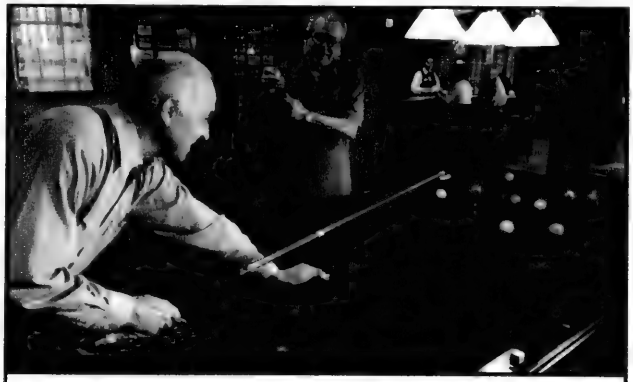

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Greater Toronto Area

CHAT students name south campus

Dedicated in memory of Raoul Wallenberg

Grade 11 student Ariel Muskat-Brown casts her ballot during the vote to rename Tanenbaum-CHAT's south campus.

Students at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's south campus voted last week to name the branch TanenbaumCHAT – Wallenberg Campus in memory of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who is credited with saving thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Holocaust.

The name was chosen after a committee of administrators, board members, teachers and students selected five finalists from some 200 nominations received, representing about 100 names.

The four other finalists were Hebrew-language novelist and Nobel Laureate S.Y. Agnon, Spanish Jewish poet and philosopher Yehuda HaLevi, former Israeli ambassador to Canada Yaakov Herzog, and World War II Jewish resistance leader Hannah Senesh.

Criteria for the name included the necessity of it reflecting school and community values; being a dignified name for the school, and user friendliness.

The naming came about after the school received a $4-million donation, through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, from a private donor family that has children attending the school.

Although the gift would have enabled the donors to name the campus, located on Wilmington Avenue in Bathurst Manor, they asked that the school choose a distinguished name from Jewish history.

Paul Shaviv, Tanenbaum CHAT's director of education, said that choosing a name "energized the school community. It has been an educational experience, and a lot of fun."

The donor family said the naming process was an educational opportunity, in which students learned in detail about the lives of the five finalists and decided which person best reflected the characteristics of their own school.

"We are delighted that so many students, parents and staff participated, and we heard with fascination about the many discussions and debates that occurred around family tables," the family said in a statement.

"We hope that the name process demonstrates how tzedakah can be in itself an educational opportunity for individuals, families and the whole community."

ZAREINU VISIT: Members of the Student Activity Leadership Opportunity group at Netivot HaTorah Day School – from left, Robyn, Dahlia, Ariel, Rebecca and Noa – took part in a special assembly in which they shared their experiences about their visit to Zareinu Educational Centre and encouraged fellow students to attend the Zareinu Moveathon on June 22. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

Chabad launches new Hebrew schools

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Two Toronto Chabad locations – Chabad on the Avenue and Chabad of York Mills – are launching Hebrew schools this fall that will use a Chabad system based on martial arts belt levels to teach Hebrew reading.

Chabad on the Avenue's school, Aleph Champ Hebrew School, which will be housed at Ledbury Park Elementary School, is named for the system. "Aleph Champ" was inspired by an American Chabad Hebrew school director's experience as a karate student.

Chabad of York Mills' school will have an added focus, reflected in its name, the Bayview Hebrew School of the Arts.

Chana Gansburg, director of Aleph Champ Hebrew School, shows some of the materials to be used in the Aleph Champ program for teaching Hebrew reading.
[Frances Kraft photo]

Under the Aleph Champ system, children are divided into 10 different levels according to their ability to read Hebrew. Each level has a colour, and children receive a medal when they complete each level, in the same way that martial arts students receive a different colour belt to mark each level of achievement.

Chana Gansburg, director of Aleph Champ Hebrew School, said the system, which takes students through the aleph-bet one letter at a time, is "extremely motivating." Students proceed at their own pace and start at their own level, although they are in classes with children their own age who may be at different levels of Hebrew reading.

They are issued an "Aleph Champ" timer, and their reading ability is tested after each letter.

The first lesson couldn't be more basic, featuring the letter "aleph" but no vowels. With time, students learn to read familiar English words transliterated into Hebrew, and then Hebrew words that they will use in prayer services and that relate to Jewish life.

The program is not meant to teach conversational Hebrew, said Gansburg. She added, however, that if there is a core group of at least four or five students who achieve "black belt" (or black medal) status, a Hebrew-language program could be created for them.

Rather, said her husband, Rabbi Menachem Gansburg, the emphasis will be on words associated with Jewish holidays and "anything they're going to come across when practising as a Jew." The Gansburgs, like all Chabad couples, work as a team.

"Once they really master the reading, we go up to prayers," Chana Gansburg said. The highest levels focus on prayer and the significance of the prayers, she added.

The school, which has an annual tuition of $525, will run two hours at a time, of which 45 minutes to an hour will be devoted to the Aleph Champ method. Students will attend either on Wednesdays or Sundays. "There will also be Bible stories, holidays, songs, drama and all the stuff other Hebrew schools have," she said.

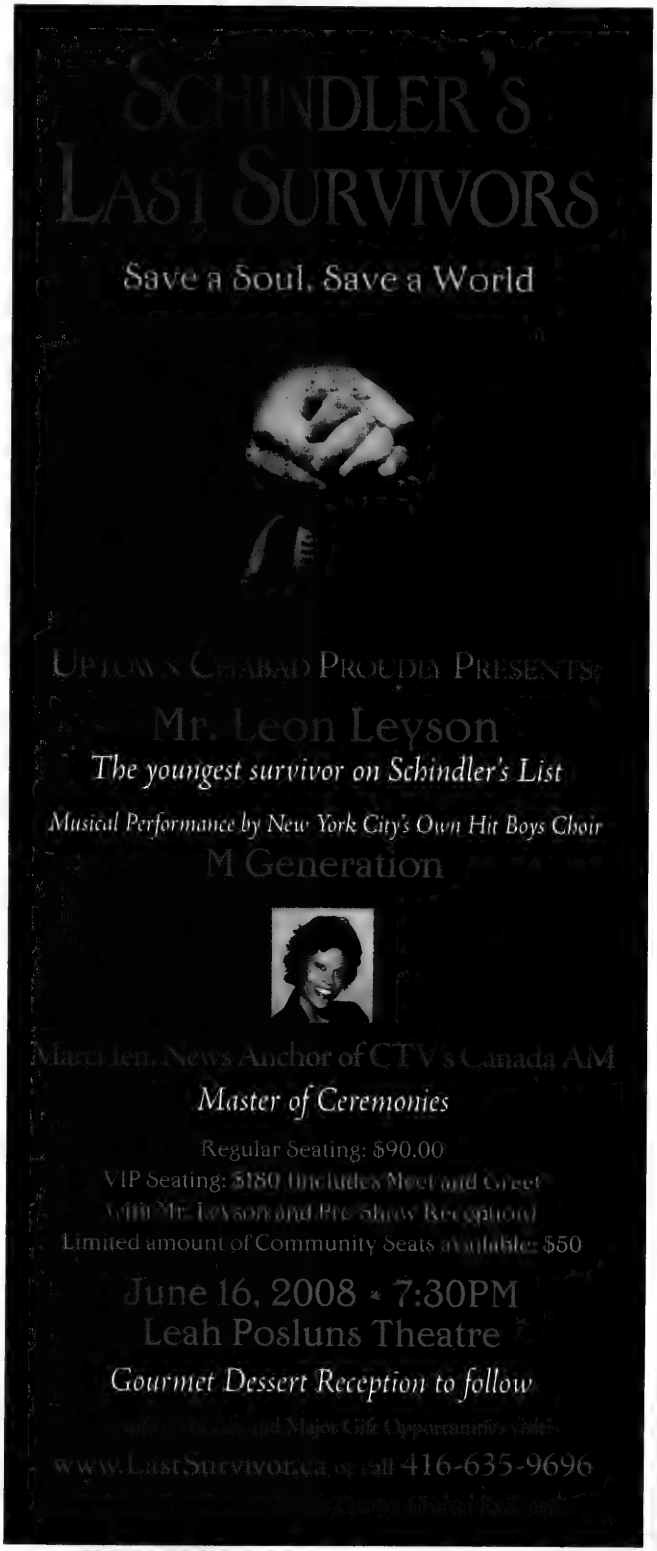
Above all, the Gansburgs want to create a positive experience for the students. "Bad Jewish experiences make you want to disassociate yourself from those Jewish experiences," said the rabbi, who hopes to see the same type of enthusiasm students display at hockey award nights when the school year culminates in an Aleph Champ award night.

Rabbi Levi Gansburg of Chabad of York Mills (Rabbi Menachem's brother), whose wife Rivky is director of the Bayview Hebrew School for the Arts, said the curriculum at the school will be taught using song, art and drama.

Classes, which will serve students from ages four to 13, will be held at Crescent School on Sundays only. Annual tuition is $600.

"If [students] enjoy what they're doing, they'll come back for more," he said. "I think Aleph Champ is unique and innovative, and the arts [component] is unique and innovative."

For further information about Aleph Champ Hebrew School, go to hebrewschool.ca, and for the Hebrew School of the Arts, to bayviewhebrewschool.com.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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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Jewish Life

Choosing schools with few Jews

By DANIEL HELD

As the school year slowly comes to a close, students and teachers alike are making plans for the summer and next year. Among the most excited – and the most scared – are the Grade 12 students who will shortly be leaving high school and heading to university. It is during this time of year that they are accepted to universities and they, in turn, accept their spot at college.

Class Act
By Daniel Held

When I graduated high school, the majority of my peers stayed in Toronto – studying mainly at the University of Toronto or York University – and a minority went to "traditional" out-of-town schools – most notably McGill University and the University of Western Ontario. Today, however, a significant change has taken place as students are increasingly leaving town for university.

Significant growth in Jewish population has taken place not only in the traditional out-of-town schools, which have expanded to include Queen's and Dalhousie universities and others, but recently I have noticed a growing number of students accepting places at a new set of schools such as Guelph, Wilfred Laurier and Waterloo universities.

As a greater number of students attend universities with smaller Jewish populations, our community will be forced to reinvent our system of Hillels in order to provide services to these students. Inculcating Jewish life on emerging campuses must become a priority to meet the change in our universities' demographics.

The most significant impact of this new trend, however, will come upon the students' graduation from university and return home. On several occasions, I have been quoted expressing frustration that many young Jews simply follow in the Jewish footprints of their parents.

Staying at home for university, students go to the same shul their parents go to (or don't go to) they have the same Shabbat dinner and celebrate the holidays in the same way. Doing so, these students never take ownership of Judaism – they never make it their own. In contrast to American Jewish life in which prayer, spirituality and Shabbat are constantly being reinvented on college campuses, the Canadian experience has been one of relative conservatism.

As Jewish students leave home for university, they are forced to, for the first time, make Jewish decisions for themselves: Will I go to, or host, a Shabbat dinner? Will I go to synagogue – what kind, with whom? Will I keep kosher, be vegetarian, refrain from certain foods? What will I do for the holidays – go home, find a local synagogue, celebrate with friends?

The process of making these decisions and the journey of Jewish self-discovery that the students experience along the way will inform our Jewish community upon their return from campus. Similar to the American experience, innovations incubated on college campuses will slowly weave themselves into the fabric of our own community, enriching our existing organizations and forming new ones.

A few months ago, I wrote an article about the lack of appeal many of our synagogues have to youth. At the time I was, justifiably, criticized for offering objections without suggestions. Here is one.

Leave the synagogue building behind and go out into the field. Our synagogues need to reach out to students on university campuses across the country. We must spend Shabbatot on campuses in Guelph, Halifax and Kingston, and work with the students, campus professionals and local communities in shaping meaningful Jewish experiences. We need to learn from the success of the Chabad model and offer comfortable, warm and welcoming Jewish homes on campus, which will extend back home when the students graduate. We need to help our campuses become settings for Jewish creativity, engagement and experimentation.

If our synagogues partner with student leaders and Hillel professionals to transform the campus into incubators of a creative and dynamic Jewish life, they will guarantee their position as the cornerstone of the continued Jewish commitment of returning students.

Don't call them Arab Jews

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

In Israel, Jews of Iraqi descent have distinguished themselves among Sephardim. They can rightfully take pride in their accomplishments, for they as a community have firmly entrenched themselves in the middle and upper middle classes of Israeli society.

This is in no way a recent development, but something they attained just a decade after their arrival.

As members of one of the oldest, and arguably the most stable, of all the Jewish Diasporas, the Jews of Iraq found themselves, after close to 2,000 years, unwelcome in their own land. After Israel's declaration of statehood in 1948, the Jews of Iraq felt that they were collectively castigated for this rebirth of Israel.

Most of Iraqi Jewry made aliyah during the early 1950s. This was the culmination of a community numbering well over 100,000 people. Within a relatively short period of time, they managed to solidly establish themselves, successfully integrating into their new nation.

This happened during a particularly difficult time – a nascent state, one at war, was flooded with immigrants with precious few resources to go around.

While the rest of the Sephardi immigration of the 1950s, comprising mostly North Africans and Yemenites, went on to produce an underclass that still struggles to this day to pull itself together and to break a cycle of poverty, the Iraqi community, by and large, did not fall into the cracks of second-class citizenry.

This is not to say that they weren't met with the same sort of discrimination or racial prejudice that other Sephardim experienced – they certainly were. Iraqi Jews, like their Sephardi brethren who also made aliyah in the 1950s, were initially pushed to the periphery of the country, to places that today might be called development towns. At that time, however, one could not accurately describe these places as towns, or even as villages. They were bare settlements in the middle of nowhere.

While others complacently followed orders and did as they were told, Iraqi Jews did not. They instead settled in the centre of the country, particularly in the greater Tel Aviv area. The benefits of this fateful decision were quickly evident. In a cosmopolitan city, they became a unified bloc, one that made demands that their scattered brethren in the *maabarot*/tent cities could not even imagine, as the bare basics of life were to them a daily challenge.

It's no coincidence, then, that this past month's conference on Iraqi Jews took place at Tel Aviv University. All sorts of scholars – ranging from historians and literary specialists to sociologists – were invited.

Interestingly, the hot topic at the conference, the one that generated the most debate, was about self identification.

Not that Iraqi Jews are debating who they are, nor are they un-proud of their glorious heritage. Rather, the question centred on what Iraqi Jews wish to be called.

It was evident that the Iraqis are vehemently opposed to being referred to as Arab Jews. But even the Iraqi Jewish appellation is not fully embraced.

It seems that one of their naming preferences is *Mizrachim* – eastern Jews – as opposed to other Sephardim, who are sometimes called *Ma'aravim* – western Jews.

Another preference is *Bavlim* – Babylonians – as, in fact, their habitation of their land predated that of the Arabs.

But please, don't call me an Arab Jew.

Jewish Life

America's mental decay

***The Age of American Unreason* by Susan Jacoby, Pantheon Books.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

This book is about the dumbing down of America. The indictment isn't new. As far back as 1963, Richard Hofstadter was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for his challenging book *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life*. He decried the breakdown of reason and knowledge in the fields of politics, education and religion, and the general vulgarization of culture.

His troubling work was viewed as a cogent and powerful critique of American democracy.

Now, Susan Jacoby, a well-known author and journalist, picks up where Hofstadter left off. She reports on the widespread nature of junk thought, junk science, youth culture, celebrity culture, degradation of the language, television-screen technologies for infants, women's and African-American studies departments and innumeracy, as well as other forms of illiteracy. She is also concerned with the rise and multiple dangers of religious fundamentalism.

Quick to flaunt their patriotism, a surprising number of Americans know little about the constitution they venerate.

Asked whether they could recall any of the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment, a majority could name only freedom of speech. After that, only four in 10 could name freedom of religion and one in three, freedom of the press. Forty-two per cent think that the constitution explicitly states that the first language of the United States is English, and 25 per cent believe that Christianity was established by the constitution as the official government religion.

The young are even more ignorant than their parents and grandparents. About half of adults – but just 41 per cent of teenagers – can name the three branches of government. Only four in 10 adults – but just two in 10 teenagers – know that there are 100 U.S. senators.

How do Europeans differ from Americans in their attitude toward religion? Europeans have responded to modernity by becoming more rather than less skeptical about traditional religious dogma. Homosexuality, abortion, embryonic stem cell research and the teaching of evolution are simply not divisive political issues in most of Europe today.

They find it extraordinary that three times as many Americans believe in the virgin birth as in evolution. They fear that America "will go on a crusade" in the Muslim world or cut aid to poor countries lest it be used for birth control.

The author writes that to add to the muddle, it seems that Americans are as ignorant and poorly educated about the particulars of religion as they are about science. A majority of adults in what is supposedly the most religious nation in the developed world cannot name the four Gospels or identify Genesis as the first book of the Bible.

She writes, "How many citizens understand what creationism means, or make an informed decision about whether it belongs in classrooms, if they cannot even locate the source of the creation story?"

As might be expected, Jacoby considers the triumph of video-based culture as the primary source of America's mental decay. Yes, she admits that "screen media" has "many intellectually useful components," but also believes that "it is on balance an unfriendly habitat not only for serious high-level intellectual endeavour but also for the more ordinary exchanges of ideas that enliven and elevate culture at every level." The more people watch – or IM (instant message), or e-mail, or play video games – the less they read and converse.

Here, of course, the author is fighting a losing battle. But it is shocking that more than two-thirds of Americans, according to recent surveys, are unable to identify DNA as the key to heredity, or understand radiation and what it can do to the body. Most shocking of all is that one in five adults is convinced that the sun revolves around the earth.

There is no mention of Canada in the book, but there is no reason to believe that most of the findings for Americans would differ for Canadians.

The author who calls herself a "cultural conservationist" is understandably gloomy about the future. But take heart! I am sure that there is more than just a saving remnant that will preserve and further cultural values into tomorrow.

Israel's birth, Part 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Poking through old documents isn't what most people generally imagine as an exciting hour or two on the Internet. But when those documents illustrate first-hand the arguments and events surrounding the establishment of the State of Israel, they take on a certain importance and currency.

The United Nations was barely a year old when the question of Palestine made its way onto its agenda. In May 1947, two hearings were granted, one for the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the other for the Arab Higher Committee. Because David Ben-Gurion, who led the struggle to establish the State of Israel, was not available to address the United Nations on the first day, Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver found himself on the world stage. Rabbi Silver was a well-known Zionist leader and rabbi of Cleveland's Temple Tifereth-Israel. You can read his speech online, as well as Ben-Gurion's and Moshe (Shertok) Sharrett's. Sharrett was to become the second prime minister of Israel. **[tinyurl.com/5a3lb6]** (Transcripts of the Arab presentations to the United Nations are not available online.)

Things, of course, heated up in the United Nations later that year with the passing of Resolution 181, calling for the partition of Palestine. **[tinyurl.com/5bgs93]** As well as reading the resolution, you can watch a short documentary that includes historic footage from the UN vote that began: "We will proceed the role call. Afghanistan? No. Argentina? Argentina? Abstention. Australia? Yes. Belgium? Yes…" **[tinyurl.com/4j7alr]** The final vote: 33 in favour, 13 against and 10 abstained.

Even if your eyes tend to glaze over when you look at historic documents, don't miss the two maps that form annexes to Resolution 181. The first illustrates proposed borders of Palestine. The Jewish state would include the northeast Galilee, the Mediterranean coast from Haifa to about Ashdod and much of the Negev. The Arab state area's include Acre and the northwest Galilee, a section extending from Jenin to Be'er Sheva and the Jordan River to Ramle, Gaza and a section of the Negev, as well as the enclave of Jaffa. **[tinyurl.com/3o7jlu]** At the heart of the region is Greater Jerusalem, which, including Bethlehem, would come under international control. **[tinyurl.com/4a7uj2]**

Of course that was not to be. On May 14, 1948, one day after the British Mandate for Palestine expired, Israel declared independence. You can read the declaration in the original Hebrew **[tinyurl.com/5oz8xy]** and in English. **[tinyurl.com/6xka8s]** As well, you can listen to Ben-Gurion as he addresses the Jewish People's Council in Tel Aviv. **[tinyurl.com/474ozv]**

The following day, the Arab League declared war. Their document sums up the history of the region, explains the illegitimacy of the Jewish state and proclaims that "the Governments of the Arab States have found themselves compelled to intervene in Palestine solely in order to help its inhabitants restore peace and security and the rule of justice and law to their country, and in order to prevent bloodshed." **[tinyurl.com/6d8 dqm]**

As the fighting continued – and after it stopped – the conflict in Israel continued to preoccupy the United Nations. In 1948, the UN Security Council passed 28 resolutions on everything from the admission of Burma to the world body to the control of atomic energy. But you can get a pretty good indication of where their energies were focused when you consider that 16 of those 28 resolutions dealt with "The Palestine Question." **[tinyurl.com/3q27zg]**

There is an extensive online collection of documents at the Harry S. Truman Library & Museum dealing with the recognition of the State of Israel by the United States. **[tinyurl.com/3mcdc2]** Perhaps the most important artifact is the shortest one, too. It reads simply, "This Government has been informed that a Jewish state has been proclaimed in Palestine, and recognition has been requested by the provisional Government thereof. The United States recognizes the provisional government as the de facto authority of the new Jewish state. [signed] Harry Truman. Approved, May 14, 1948." **[tinyurl.com/6hs9dv]**

I found it particularly interesting when you can see how typed phrases like "Jewish state" had been stroked out on Truman's note and replaced by the hand-written words "State of Israel."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Imam speaks at interfaith dinner

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Imam Hamid Slimi made history on May 14 as the first imam to speak at a Neighbourhood Interfaith Group dinner.

The 22nd annual dinner, which was hosted by Yorkminster Park Baptist Church, brought together members of the Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities for a night of food, drinks and conversation.

"It's good that [we] gathered together to break bread and listen to one another in the spirit of grace," said Rev. Peter Holmes of the Yorkminster Church. "Gatherings like this are a sign of hope and a beacon of light to this world."

Imam Slimi, who has been an imam for 11 years, is the founder of the Faith of Life Network; the imam of the International Muslims Organization of Toronto; and the chairman of the Canadian Council of Imams.

"We did extensive research," said Bryan Beauchamp, one of the organizers of the event and the chairman of the Interfaith Group. "We wanted a moderate, progressive, well-educated and well- spoken person. [Imam Slimi] is the ideal guy."

In his speech titled "The Golden Rule," Imam Slimi spoke about Islam and its beliefs.

"Islam is very simple. There's one God in heaven and God is merciful," he said. "There is this unfavourable thinking of Islam and Muslims. I can't deny that there are extreme thoughts – it happens in every religion."

During his speech, Imam Slimi, who was born in Morocco, addressed the misconception that all Muslims are taught to hate the Jewish community.

"Everyone is loved by God," he said. "I grew up in a district where we had Jews and Christians. We were never taught to hate [them.] The prophet said that [Muslims] can marry Jews and Christians, who are the people of the Book."

The imam was invited to speak at the dinner because of a comment made by Rabbi Erwin Schild four years ago. While addressing the gathering at the 18th annual interfaith group dinner, the rabbi said that the group's next challenge was to engage their Muslim neighbours.

During this year's dinner, Rabbi Schild spoke about the first murder documented in the Torah.

"It was one brother killing another," he said. "The murderer [thought], 'I can't be responsible for my brother.' In the course of time, we've learned that we are our brother's keeper – what we haven't learned yet is who is my brother. We are responsible for all religions."

This sense of responsibility led Beauchamp to become involved in the interfaith group, which was founded in 1986.

'This is my calling," he said, motioning around the room. "Our mission is to achieve respect and appreciation for the religious beliefs of others."

The group includes 14 churches and synagogues, and one private school in midtown Toronto. There are no mosques in the community that the group serves, but Beauchamp plans to continue inviting Muslim speakers.

"We'll have a three-year cycle," he said. "Next year, we'll have a Roman Catholic archbishop, and in 2010 we'll start the cycle again."

Beauchamp, who is an Anglican, tries to seat people of different religions at the same table to encourage a dialogue.

"We spread Muslim guests among the room. We try to put four Christians and four Jews at each table," he said.

Beauchamp says the key to uniting different religions is to concentrate on similarities rather than differences.

"Rather than sitting together and discussing whether Jesus will return to Earth we focus on 'love thy neighbour as yourself.'"

Through interfaith group events, Beauchamp hopes to remind the community of these similarities.

"Judeo-Christian traditions line up almost side by side. We respect Jewish belief – the more we can encourage this approach, the more we can stand up and speak about issues of peace."

In his closing speech, Rabbi Schild reminded guests that they had something in common.

"We're all citizens of Canada," he said. "In Canada, people with different ethnicities and religions can live together in harmony."

Imam Hamid Slimi
[Rita Poliakov photo]

Baycrest
Enriching Care
Enhancing Knowledge
Enlightening Minds

Notice of Annual Meeting

Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care
The Baycrest Day Care Centre
Baycrest Hospital
The Jewish Home for the Aged
and
The Baycrest Centre Foundation

Winter Garden, Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged
3560 Bathurst Street, Toronto

June 18, 2008
3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

RSVP:
416 785 2500 x6218

The following By-laws will be presented for approval:
Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care By-law No. 2 - 2008
The Baycrest Day Care Centre By-law No. 2 - 2008
Baycrest Hospital - By-law No. 2 - 2008
- Medical Staff By-law No. 4
The Jewish Home for the Aged - By-law No. 2 - 2008
- repeal of Medical Staff By-laws

By-law No. 2 - 2008 for each of the above corporations adds the Government Relations Committee to the by-laws as a board standing committee, empowers the board of directors to extend the maximum number of one-year terms served by an individual standing committee chair, and makes minor consequential amendments related to Medical Staff By-law No. 4.

Medical Staff By-law No. 4 replaces all medical staff by-laws of Baycrest Hospital. Medical staff of The Jewish Home for the Aged will now be considered medical staff of Baycrest Hospital. Medical staff by-laws of The Jewish Home for the Aged are therefore repealed. Medical Staff By-law No.4 differs from the preceding medical staff by-laws as follows. It:

- Amends appointment process and duties of the Vice President, Medical Services
- Eliminates departments in clinical epidemiology, anaesthesiology and rehabilitation medicine
- Describes the three divisions of the Department of Medicine
- Revises list of medical programs
- Subsumes prior associate consultant staff category under associate medical staff category
- Establishes positions of Medical Division Head and Department Deputy Chief
- Eliminates medical services and medical sub-program categories
- Replaces temporary medical staff category with courtesy medical staff category
- Amends credentialing process for temporary appointments
- Adds physician reporting and other safeguards to check for convictions, malpractice and professional misconduct
- For client safety, expedites process for mid-term revocation or suspension of privileges

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Sonny Langer's Caterers

Former accountant moves to classroom

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Sam Lipper's patient, low-key manner is evident within a few minutes when you visit his classroom at Beth Sholom Hebrew School.

Students in his twice-weekly special education class pepper him with questions and comments. One question – "How did the Jews get from Egypt to Europe?" – leads to an impromptu Jewish history lesson in the middle of a story on the wise men of Chelm.

"They are our teachers..."

Lipper's class is informal, with a handful of students seated around a rectangular table with him while Hebrew music plays in the background. His students call him by his first name, and he noted in an interview that he doesn't sit at the head of the table.

A native of Capetown, South Africa, who immigrated to Toronto 27 years ago with his then-wife and young son, Lipper, 69, worked as a chartered accountant for most of his adult life.

A lesson from the teacher: *"Nothing is impossible. Everything is a matter of time. You have to be patient."*

A chance sighting of a newspaper ad about 10 years ago, seeking volunteers to work with children with special needs, was his entrée into the education field.

Lipper accepted a volunteer position at Eglinton Public School, where he now works as a special needs assistant.

About four years ago, someone suggested his name when Beth Sholom was looking for a special education teacher.

Although he has taken courses through the Toronto District School Board, Lipper is not a teacher by training.

But Karen Goodis, principal of the Hebrew school, says the work his students do and the success they achieve in a part-time setting is "outstanding." She credits his calmness, and the fact that he's "consistent and persistent."

Accountants have to be precise and methodical, Lipper admits, but he also likes to bring his love for art, music and literature into the classroom. An amateur artist who used to do a lot of sketching, he is also a fan of Japanese animé (animation for films).

Lipper's knowledge of Hebrew was honed at five-day-a-week cheder when he was a child, then later at university and during a year in Israel in his 20s.

Sometimes he uses games to teach the language – for example throwing a ball while counting in Hebrew.

"We have fun together."

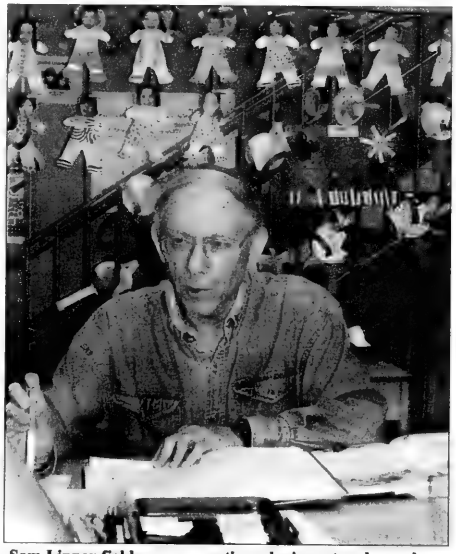
For students who have difficulty reading or writing, he believes that repetition is important, "but in an interesting way.

"It's incremental. You'll get them to write the aleph bet over and over again, [then] suddenly something will happen.

Funnily enough, Lipper said, he never thought of becoming a teacher when he was younger, although he tutored other students at university.

"When I grew up," he said, "you [became] a doctor, a lawyer or an accountant."

Now, he says, in a way, he regrets not having made a change sooner.



Sam Lipper fields many questions during a two-hour class. *[Frances Kraft photo]*

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Sample Dairy Lunch Menu

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Orange Cranberry Cous Cous Salad

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Smoked salmon and avocado with light cream cheese, capers, and red onions

White tuna salad with dill and minced black olives

Chopped egg salad with pimento and chives

Vine ripened tomato, havarti, cucumber and avocado

Grilled Salmon wrap with red pepper, tomato relish and avocado

An Assortment of Brownies, Cookies, Tarts and Squares

Seasonal Fresh Fruit and Berry Platter

$17.95 per guest

Sample Dairy Dinner Menu

Raisin or Plain Challah

Butternut Squash Soup

Baby Spinach Salad with Candied Pecans and Pear

Edamame Salad with Charred Corn & Water Chestnuts in a Cilantro Sesame Dressing

Baked Salmon with a Sundried Tomato and Olive Tapanade

Roasted Red Skinned Potatoes with Rosemary and Kosher Salt

An Assortment of Brownies, Cookies, Tarts and Squares

Seasonal Fresh Fruit and Berry Platter

$21.95 per guest

Sample Meat Dinner Menu

Raisin or Plain Challah

Wild Mushroom and Barley Soup

Mixed California Greens with a Balsamic Vinaigrette

Supreme of Chicken Stuffed with Grilled Asparagus and Red Pepper

Three Mushroom Asian Stirfry

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Seudah (By reservation only) 9:00 – 10:00 p.m.

TIKKUN LEIL SHAVU'OT
Keynote lecture
10:15 – 11:30 p.m.

Rabbi Robert I. Rhodes
"Living the Torah"

Rabbi Rhodes received his rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University in New York and has over 20 years experience as a pulpit Rabbi at synagogues in Canada and the United States Rabbi Rhodes is a member of Morashah, the Rabbinic Fellowship of the Union for Traditional Judaism, and will be leading Shavu'ot Services at Beth Tikvah

Refreshments 11:30 – 12 Midnight

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Greater Toronto Area

Feminists hope for more gains

'Female rabbis and cantors are old news'

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

When Letty Cottin Pogrebin's mother died, of cancer in 1955, Pogrebin, who was 15 at the time, felt shut out of the mourners service.

"I was excluded from saying *Kaddish* for a parent. As a daughter, I was excluded by my own faith… As a woman, I was not counted in the minyan," she told some 120 people, most of them women, at a recent luncheon at Congregation Darchei Noam organized by Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning at the Bathurst JCC.

Keynote speaker Pogrebin, an accomplished journalist, a social activist and an internationally known feminist, said that while Jewish feminists have made many gains, there is still significant gender inequity among the Orthodox.

She shared the dais with Sarah Fulford, the new editor of *Toronto Life* magazine. The women spoke about the challenges and changes in the women's movement, viewed from their respective generational vantage points.

Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, rabbinic director of Kolel, moderated the discussion. She noted that both guest speakers had achieved important feminist milestones. Fulford is both the first Jewish and the first female editor of *Toronto Life*, while Pogrebin, is the founding editor of *Ms. Magazine*.

There was also a surprise celebration to mark Rabbi Goldstein's having received an honorary doctorate in divinity from Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion and her 25th anniversary in the rabbinate. It was noted that like the guest speakers, she, too, had set a feminist milestone as one of the first female rabbis in Canada.

The discussion contrasted generational differences in feminism. The thirtysomething Fulford said women her age don't focus on gender equality issues because social changes such as extended maternity leave and the greater involvement of men in the care of children have given them "incredible freedom" to be mothers and realize their career aspirations.

Letty Cottin Pogrebin

She said her own mother, a radio producer for 20 years, and other women of that generation were torn between their careers and domestic responsibilities. Many of them led double lives, hiding the fact that they were mothers from their colleagues. "They didn't keep pictures of their children on their desks."

Pogrebin, who represents that older generation, lamented the fact that today there are too many individuals and a lack of "collective solidarity" among women on feminist issues.

She said she has seen many advances in Judaic practice, noting that women have made great strides in Jewish scholarship – in Talmud and Torah study – and she doesn't foresee women losing the right to have aliyot.

She also pointed to other gains: "Female rabbis and cantors are old news. Women are becoming scribes, and we even have female mohels."

She contrasted these gains with the traditional role of women when she was a child. "My father reclined on Passover. The women cooked and served. They stood there silently. They couldn't say *Kiddush*. They couldn't ask the Four Questions or say the Ten Plagues."

Turning to another issue, Pogrebin said there is more readiness on the part of rabbis to speak out against domestic violence, although she noted that they are slower to acknowledge the problem within the Orthodox community.

She stressed that Jews are no different from other groups. "People say, 'Jews don't do that.' [But] we have these problems like every community group."

She called on the community to punish men who refuse to grant their wives a *get*, a Jewish religious divorce. "These women are chained to their husbands. We have to care for these chained women. They're being blackmailed by their husbands… We have to find out who these women are and help them."

She said recalcitrant husbands should be ostracized by their own communities.

Pogrebin also urged women to give more to charity. "We need to "de-genderize" philanthropy. Be more generous. You don't need your husband's permission to give."

The Roots and Wings of Reconstructionism in Canada

SATURDAY MAY 31TH Shabbat Service

Join us for a morning of prayer, music and discussion, and learn about the beginnings of the Reconstructionist movement in Canada. This movement, founded by Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, integrates a deep respect for traditional Judaism with the insights and ideas of contemporary social, intellectual and spiritual life.

Our speaker **Dr. Sharon Gubbay-Helfer** will share her insights about the movement, introduce us to the first Reconstructionist congregation in Montreal, and provide a unique Canadian perspective for us.

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Rabbi Tina Grimberg
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Congregation Darchei Noam
A Progressive, Egalitarian and Inclusive Community

Greater Toronto Area

March of the Living staff and kids from this year's trip.

UJA Walk draws over 15,000

By DAVE GORDON
Special to the CJN

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Walk With Israel raised more than $500,000 and included more than 15,000 participants, organizers said.

The 7½-kilometre walk led from Coronation Park on the waterfront north through downtown and back to the Direct Energy Centre at Exhibition Place. The RioCan Carnival, with amusement park rides, a petting zoo and crafts, capped off the Sunday event.

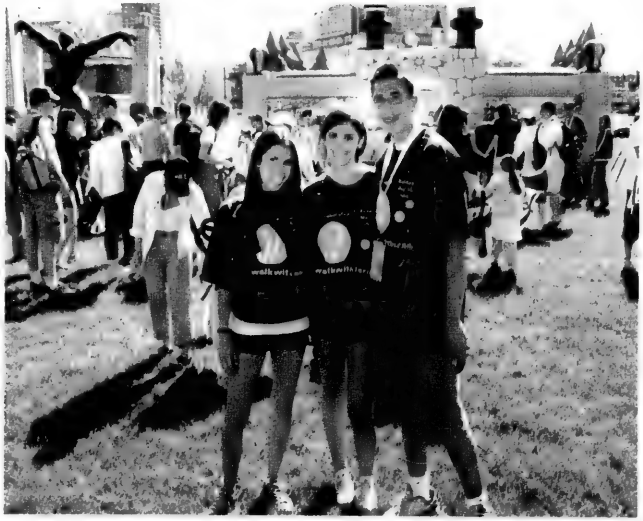
Proceeds from the 2008 walk will go to programs for children and youth in Israel, with a specific focus on those in Sderot and the western Negev. They include trauma services, a program to reinforce roofs on some public buildings, and educational or social welfare services for youth at risk.

Joe Shedlitsky, 88, who has seen Israel go from humble beginnings to modern successes, said he was proud to have played a part. He fought alongside Ariel Sharon as infantry in Falluja, near Gaza, in 1948 during Israel's War of Independence. He has been living in Canada since 1952.

"My emotions could not be higher today. Every day we should be happy to have come this far with the Jewish people in Canada and in Israel," he said, adding that he has participated in every local walk since the first one 38 years ago.

Walker Carl Thorpe, a Christian man originally from Jamaica, said his support for Israel has strong roots in his family of nine siblings.

"Much of the component of my support is through my faith," Thorpe said. "It's impossible to be Christian and not support the Jewish state."



Jaimie Schnier, Tessa Etlain-Silver, Michael Zagdanski take a break during the Walk for Israel. [Dave Gordon photos]

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

As featured on onlysimchas! Celebrating Jewish Life www.onlysimchas.com

Mazel tov on the bris milah of Eitan Adi Roberson

Mazel tov on the birth of Miriam Sarah to Batsheva & Yitzchok Moully.

Mazel tov on the birth of Shifra to Elchanan & Sara Shoff.

Mazel tov to Yaakov Yossie & Chaya Esther (Steger) Schachner on the birth of a baby girl.

Mazel tov on the birth of Chaya Mushka Brown to Yeshaya & Aliza Brown (née Rothschild).

Mazel tov to Moe & Shoshana Slepoy (née Marmer) on the birth of Michael Zevi.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES. What's New deadlines: Thursday, May 29, is the deadline for the June 12 issue and Thursday, June 4, is the deadline for the June 19 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, May 29

LITERARY LEVEE

Hadassah Miriam Chapter hold a Literary Levee featuring **Sidura Ludwig** reading from her novel *Holding My Breath*, a book swap and light kosher buffet. 6-9 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre. $36. Tickets, **Erin**, 416-996-1029.

CANADA AND ISRAEL

Beth David Congregation presents "Canada's Position on Israel: An Analysis" by **Frank Dimant**, of B'nai Brith Canada. 7:30 p.m. 416-633-5500

Friday,May 30

TOT SHABBAT

Temple Har Zion invites parents, and grandparents to bring children ages 2-4 and siblings for a Shabbat celebration. 6 p.m.

MUSICAL LEGACY SERIES

Temple Sinai Congregation continues its Musical Legacy Series celebrating Israel@60 during Shabbat services with the Lachan Chamber Choir conducted by **Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner**, the Ensemble Choir and **Cantor Gershon Silins**. 8 p.m. 416-487-3281

Saturday, May 31

JUDITH BASKIN

Holy Blossom Sisterhood hosts **Dr. Judith Baskin**, of the University of Oregon and consulting editor of *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*, as a scholar-in-residence. Baskin will speak three times, Shabbat Torah study 9 a.m., during morning services and at a lunch and study session following services. Lunch and study $20. Reserve in advance, **Elana** 416-789-3291, ext. 221.

RECONSTRUCTIONISM

Join Darchei Noam Congregation for a morning of prayer, music and discussion, and learn about the beginnings of the Reconstructionist movement in Canada. **Dr. Sharon Gubbay-Helfer** provides a Canadian perspective. 416-638-4783

Sunday, June 1

BOOKS & BAGELS

Join Beth Emeth Sisterhood for bagels and coffee, and a review of *The World to Come* by **Dara Horn**. 10:30 a.m. Non-members $5. 416-633-3838

FAMILY FUN DAY

Join the Dr. Jay Charitable Foundation first annual Interchange Family Fun Day, including a movie at the AMC theatre, mini-golf at Putting Edge, games at Dave and Busters, food, kiddie rides, loot bags, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., rain or shine, at Hwy. 400 and Hwy. 7. Proceeds help children and their families face death, dying and the grieving process. $15. Tickets, www.drjayfoundation.com or 416-586-4800, ext. 7406.

ISRAEL DAY FESTIVAL

Celebrate Israel at an all-day family event with entertainment in the amphitheatre, gift and craft show, children's village, clowns and face painting, Walk Through Israel and kosher food sponsored by Canadian Zionist Federation and Na'amat Canada. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Mel Lastman Square. Opening ceremony at noon. 416-636-5425

JEWISH MOSAIC FESTIVAL

Tour the Jewish world with representatives from over 20 countries, visit the Discovery Museum Kids Zone, an international marketplace, food demos, Jewish Antique Road Show and Genealogy and bring your Jewish treasures, music and dance, youth basketball tournament, workshops. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at the Bathurst

Continued on page 21

THE TORONTO JEWISH HEALING PROJECT

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Who is speaking? Who is listening?"

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Tuesday June 17th, 2008
8:30 am - 4:30 pm

For information and registration call:
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BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATION,
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Ontario, M5P 3K3

Jewish Mosaic Festival

Celebrating the Faces & Stories of Jewish Diversity

Sunday, June 1, 2008
Bathurst Jewish Community Centre
4588 Bathurst Street
11:00 am - 5:00 pm free admission & parking

Tour the Jewish world with representatives from over 20 countries

- Discovery Museum Kid's Zone
- International Market Place
- Central Epicure Culinary Demos
- Music and Dance
- Youth Basketball Tournament
- Exhibits, lectures, workshops
- Jewish Antique Roadshow and Genealogy *(bring your Jewish treasures)*

Free Shuttle Service
• to/from Bernard Betel Centre • to/from Israel Day at Mel Lastman Square

Evening Program - tickets $10
funds raised through ticket sales support the festival
7:00 - Coffee House with musical entertainment
8:00 - *From the Bible to Bibi:*
60 years of Israel in 60 minutes
with Rabbi Elyse Goldstein & Susan Jackson

JCC JIAS jcc koffler

For more info: 416-622-8025 www.jewishmosaicfestival.com

What's New

Continued from page 20

Jewish Community Centre. Free shuttle service to/from Bernard Betel Centre and to/from Israel Day at Mel Lastman Square. Evening program, coffee house followed by "From Bible to Bibi: 2,000 Years of History in 90 Minutes" with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Susan Jackson**, 7-9 p.m. $10. 416-636-1880, ext. 372

FOLK CHOIR CONCERT

The Toronto Jewish Folk Choir celebrates Yiddish music and Israel @ 60 at its spring concert, 2 p.m. at the Leah Posluns Theatre. $23, seniors and students, $19, children 12 and under free. Tickets, tjfolkchoir@sympatico.ca or 416-636-0936 (evenings/weekends) or 416-593-0750.

DUO IN CONCERT

The Beach Synagogue present Duo, featuring **Ivan Zilman** on guitar and **Margot Rydall** on flute performing classical music and jazz. 2 p.m. Free, a food or cash donation to the Beach Interfaith Drop-In suggested. 416-694-7942 or www.beachsynagogue.com

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project holds a service with **Rabbi Karen Thomashow** and **Yehudit Shier Weisberg**. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green. Wheelchair access. 416-944-3359

SALUTE NEW *OLIM*

The Toronto Israel Aliyah Centre salutes the olim who are moving to Israel this year. Dessert reception, live band and singing. 4-6 p.m. at the Wagman Centre. 416-633-4766

BROADWAY BOUND

Medina Theatre presents a staged reading of *Broadway Bound* by **Neil Simon**, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Sinai Congregation. $5. 416-785-0344 or 416-633-2057

MUSICAL CELEBRATION

Beth Radom Congregation hosts "Israel @ 60: A Musical Celebration," an evening of song with **Mickey Lewin**, Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir conducted by **Benjamin Maissner**, with soloist **Cantor David Rosen** and accompanist **Nadia Adler**. 7:30 p.m. $18. 416-636-3451, ext. 24

Monday, June 2

WIESEL AT HESCHEL GALA

The Toronto Heschel School annual gala at the Direct Energy Centre honours **Elie Wiesel**. $180. Tickets, 416-635-1876, ext. 332.

Tuesday, June 3

LUNCH & LEARN

Beth Tikvah screens the Israeli movie *Close to Home* (Hebrew with subtitles), about two young female soldiers who come of age on the streets of Jerusalem, followed by a discussion led by **Heather Kassel**. May 30, 12:15 p.m. $20. Reserve by 10 a.m. 416-221-3433, ext. 352

CHUG HATANACH

Rabbi Pinchas Brumer leads a study group in a discussion of Haggai, Chapter 2. 8 p.m. at Beth David Congregation. All welcome.

Wednesday, June 4

EMUNAH LUNCH & LEARN

Emunah Women hold a lunch and learn with a Yom Yerushalayim program. 12 p.m. at 4300 Bathurst St. Reserve by June 2. $10, non-members $18, sponsorships available for $36. 416-636-0036

WALKING WITH GOD

Shaar Shalom Sisterhood celebrate the new month of Sivan with an all-women's program of learning, poetry and prayer. 7:45 p.m. 905-889-4975

SPIRIT OF COMMUNITY

Beth Chabad Israeli Community Centre's Spirit of Community Dinner takes place at the Riviera Parque Centre with speaker **Rabbi Yossi Jacobson**. 905-709-7770

Other News

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Ron Arons speaks on "The Internet Beyond JewishGen and Steve Morse's Website" at the Jewish Genealogical Society meeting. Thursday, June 5, 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Non-members $5. www.jgstoronto.ca

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Beit Rayim's Golf Tournament takes place on Sunday, June 8, at the Richmond Hill Golf Club. $175 includes lunch and many other special features. Shotgun tee off at 8 a.m. Register, 905-889-0276, ext. 31.

UPTOWN CHABAD BENEFIT

Uptown Chabad presents "Save a Soul, Save a World," with **Leon Leyson**, the youngest Holocaust survivor from *Schindler's List*, sharing his Holocaust experiences, and M Generation, a boys choir from New York City. Sunday, June 16, at the Leah Posluns Theatre, followed by a dessert reception. Tickets $90 and $180. Info and reservations, 416-635-9696 or www.uptownchabad.com.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 32

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information on these programs, call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Both Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group. Info, **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for info and registration.

• High Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents who wish to lessen the impact of divorce on their children. This workshop requires active participation and is not for individuals in abusive situations. Tuesday, June 17, 6:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

• Adolescents and Divorce: A workshop for parents who have adolescents and are going through a separation or divorce – to help them understand their children and help them cope. Tuesday, June 17, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Seniors Mixed Bowling every Tuesday, 1 p.m. at Playtime Bowl, 33 Samor Ave. **Milty**, 416-633-2206.

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts **Nicole Anderson**, of Baycrest Centre, on "Memory & Aging: What's Normal, What's Not, and What You Can Do About It." Thursday, June 5, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, Wednesday, June 18; Sunday dance, June 8. Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

The Association of Jewish Seniors hosts a To Our Good Health seminar with **Jan MacQuarrie** on "Laughter Is the Best Medicine." Monday, June 23, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Lunch and entertainment included. Free for members who pay next year's dues, guests $10. Reserve by June 16. **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Growing up Jewish in South Africa," a lecture by **Colleen Klein**, Tuesday, June 3, 10 a.m. $3, non-members $6.

Computer Rama Fair, Wednesday, June 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Therapeutic Gardening, a wellness lecture with **Dale Morrison Guerrra**. Thursday, June 5, 1:30 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

BJCC sixth annual golf tournament, Thursday, June 26, at Glen Eagle Golf Club. Call **Jim**, ext. 371, for information.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Classes begin the week of June 2. Each course is four weeks, two classes/week for a total of 16 hours. Register, ext. 0

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Cooking With Itka: Classes on preparing healthy, meatless lunches for kids. Sunday, June 1, 1-3 p.m. $18/ $36 per family. Ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two musicals, *West Bank Story*, a musical comedy take-off of *West Side Story* set in the world of competing falafel stands in the West Bank, and *The Cantor's Son*, the Yiddish answer to Al Jolson's *The Jazz Singer*, and guest speaker **Shirley Kumove**. Sunday, June 1, 4 and 7:30 p.m. $15 at the door. $10, ages 18-29 for 7:30 p.m. screening only. Ext. 606

MNjcc Community Choir Concert, Wednesday, June 4, 8 p.m. at Al Green Theatre. $10, $20/family.

The Annex Shul and MNJCC host Shabbat services and dinner Friday, June 6, 6:30 p.m. $18. Register by June 2, www.annexshul.com or ext. 154, randis@mnjcc.org.

"Hebrew from Scratch," an ulpan for beginners, level aleph. Learn how to read with and without vowels. This is the perfect way for beginners and those looking for review to jump-start their fun with Hebrew. June 16-19, 7-9 p.m. $90, non-members $110. Ext. 154

Jazz @ the J: Ron Davis Sextet, Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. $24, students $15, day of show, $28. Ext. 0

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Lawrie Merkur	May 9/08	640 Roselawn Ave
Mary Yuchtman	May 12/08	105 Redondo Dr
Lillian Glick	May 11/08	102 Winston Park Bl
Allan Konikoff (Kahn)	May 11/08	65 Skymark Dr
Alex Rotman	May 12/08	3636 Bathurst St
Dora Greenberg	May 12/08	347 Hillhurst Bl
Stephanie Wagman	May 13/08	8 Ravenscroft Cir
Bess Godfrey	May 13/08	3560 Bathurst St
Mary Goldstein	May 14/08	55 Fallingdale Cr
Estelle Willcocks	May 14/08	321 Wilmington Ave
Edith Dunn	May 13/08	128 Anthony Rd
Dr. Jack Cooper	May 14/08	342 Spadina Rd
Artur Prokopenko	May 16/08	8 Colleen St
Bill Simon	May 15/08	111 Avenue Rd
Evelyn Hutner	May 15/08	279 Chaplin Cr
Edith Zadnoff	May 15/08	412 Richview Ave
Richard Rodney	May 16/08	855 Roselawn Ave
Sam Isacovics	May 15/08	100 Neal Ave
Bella Sanders	May 18/08	3 Bachelor Place

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Markus, Pearl	May 8/08	123 Sultana Ave
Usher, Annette	May 8/08	
Garfinkel, Dorothy	May 8/08	Private
Gigan, Hugh John	May 9/08	240 Scarlett Rd
Bremner, Sara	May 10/08	Private
Arnold, Anne	May 10/08	645 Castlefield Ave
Lederman, Henry	May 10/08	131 Torresdale Ave
Sharf, Sevulon	May 11/08	1121 Steeles Ave. W.
Kohane Benno	May 11/08	Private
Walden, Haya	May 13/08	
Simkover, Leo	May 11/08	550 Cummer Ave
Brochach, Alexander	May 13/08	193 Wilson Ave
Krakauer, Helen	May 14/08	333 Clark Ave. W.
Gilis, Sofya	May 14/08	5935 Bathurst St
Zaitseva, Raissa	May 14/08	Private
Ungar, Ilona	May 14/08	10 Sunnycrest Rd
Rosen, Helen	May 14/08	

We are saddened to announce the passing of

FRED THOMS ז"ל

who passed away on May 15th at the Princess Margaret Hospital after a long battle with cancer. He was the best husband, father and grandfather as well as dog lover and Airport Construction Manager. He is survived by his wife Inna, children Vladik, Alisa and Warren, and grandchildren Renee, Joseph and Connor.

He will be loved and missed forever

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of

SHIRLEY DIAMOND ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, June 1st, 10:30 a.m.

Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park

Section 55

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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Watch this space each week for obituaries and related notices. When placing unveiling notices, please ensure the ad is booked at least 15 days prior to the date of the unveiling. To place any family related notice, please call: 416-391-1836

- NOTICE -

Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park

The Blue Star Lodge has submitted by-laws to the Registrar of the *Cemeteries Act (Revised).*

Any interested parties may contact **Norem Litvak (#416-633-9163)** for information, or to make copies.

These by-laws are subject to the approval of the Registrar, *Cemeteries Act (Revised).*

On Campus

Hillel to build new $7-million home at UBC

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — When demolition crews start tearing down Hillel House at the University of British Columbia next month, an institution that has been central to Jewish life on campus since 1947 will begin a new chapter.

The razing of the 61-year-old building will pave the way for the construction of a new, $7-million Hillel House on the old structure's current site in the heart of UBC's campus. It's scheduled to open in August 2009.

"We're going from 2,500 square feet to 12,000 square feet in a space that will offer student offices, a games room, a large student lounge, a dining hall, a kosher kitchen, a boardroom and a library," said Eyal Lichtmann, executive director of Vancouver Hillel.

Proposed new Hillel House at UBC

The new building is being designed by Acton Ostry Architects, an award-winning firm whose portfolio includes Vancouver's new King David Jewish High School and West Vancouver's Har-El Synagogue.

The project has been made possible in part by UBC's agreement to extend Hillel's lease in its current location until 2084.

"We consider it a multi-million dollar investment by the university in providing us with the opportunity to be here for the next 76 years," Lichtmann said.

"It's quite historic, and it's a big deal, because this is a gift to the Jewish community: to be able to be on the centre of campus with the best location of a Hillel on any campus in North America. All they're asking our community to do is put up the money for the building."

Vancouver Hillel wasn't always in the campus centre. When the current building first opened its doors in 1947, it was located on the outskirts of the university. But a new academic corridor was built around Hillel House in the 1960s, giving it an enviable location.

When Lichtmann and his team became aware of UBC's plans to redevelop the campus back in 2004, they opted to work with the administration to find a way to stay on campus.

"We made the argument that we've been here since 1947, and just because we're in the centre of student life now, we shouldn't be moved," he said. "The university agreed."

Vancouverite Isaac Thau is heading the capital fundraising campaign for Vancouver Hillel and has helped raise $6.5 million over the past 18 months. "Our funding so far has come from almost exclusively within Vancouver," Thau said. "We're hoping to raise $8 million to have a larger endowment for Hillel."

Thau, a Winnipeg native who moved to British Columbia 25 years ago, became involved with Hillel in 1998.

"I was sitting around many communal board tables at the time and found that so much of the dialogue was on how to stem the tide of assimilation and keep people Jewish," he recalls. "Then Birthright [Israel] started and we saw a phenomenal success, kids returning from Israel inspired, with an amber light burning inside them. Hillel figured out how to take these kids, with their Jewish pride and love for Israel, and offer them a place to grow those emerging feelings and awareness."

The Hillel House on UBC's campus also serves as a nerve centre for Hillel at the University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University across town, and future plans see it serving B.C.'s community college system as well.

The new building will enrich both Jewish life and Jewish student life on campus, Lichtmann said.

"We're building something that's going to create an enormous amount of Jewish student engagement and integrate Jewish students into Jewish life for the next 80 years," he explains. "This will help build our community."

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From Hollywood to the Holy Land–
Jihadists reveal their global plans to a Jew.
Aaron Klein

Aaron Klein is Jerusalem Bureau Chief for WorldNetDaily.com. He has regular segments and commentary on America's top radio programs and serves routinely as a co-host of ABC Radio's national "The John Batchelor Show."
Mr. Klein's book was released in 2007 and was based on his interviews with terrorists.
Mr. Klein has interviewed many influential Middle East newsmakers, including government officials and terrorist leaders. Mr. Klein made headlines in 1999 when he spent time with and interviewed a group connected to Al - Qaeda. Some of the people he has interviewed include Yasser Arafat, Hamas Chief Mahmooud Al - Zahar and leaders of the Taliban to name just a few.

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8:00 pm
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René Balcer, executive producer/head writer "Law & Order"

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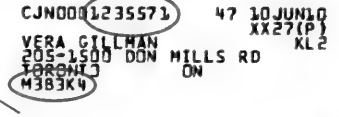

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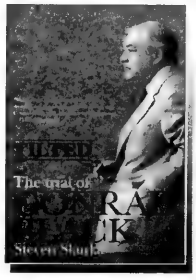

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— *James Kirby, juror*

"This book is an original blending of legal analysis, humour, and a daily chronicle of a fascinating trial and all its characters. A fun and informative read that I really enjoyed."
— *Marie Henein, noted attorney, Henein & Associates*

Coast to Coast

Quebec should fight anti-Semitism: report

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Quebec government should take "exceptional measures" to combat anti-Semitism, say the authors of the final report of the commission on reasonable accommodation, which acknowledges a disturbing increase in anti-Semitic incidents.

The commission co-chairs, eminent academics Gérard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, also urge all Quebecers to gain a more accurate picture of their fellow Jewish citizens.

"It is in Quebec society's interests to get to know the Jewish community better," the report states, noting that more than 80 per cent of Jews under 35 speak French; that "the vast majority [of Jews] adhere to Quebecers' shared values," and that the community is diverse, with only 12 per cent being Chassidim.

However, the authors reject as "gratuitous" any accusation that the commission, especially during public hearings last fall, contributed to prejudice against Jews. They also provide evidence that the process may actually have calmed down the "turmoil" that occurred between March 2006 and June 2007, when a public debate raged in Quebec over certain practices of religious minorities.

The authors recognize that anti-Semitic remarks were made during the 26 forums held around the province, and that the Jewish community was "unfairly accused" of making the public subsidize the cost of kosher certification, but they said the comments represented only a dozen of the close to 1,000 presentations.

Bouchard and Taylor add that they condemned these comments when they were made. Moreover, they say that most of the objectionable comments about Jews "echoed" high-profile media reports, such as ones about conflicts involving Chassidim in Montreal's Outremont neighbourhood or in the Laurentians, in addition to the kashrut controversy.

The report states that, in fact, Muslims, especially those of Arab origin, face the most discrimination in Quebec, and it also stresses the need to fight "Islamophobia."

While speaking of the urgent need to fight discrimination, the co-chairs said at a press conference that they don't believe Quebecers of French-Canadian descent are any more racist than any other people, despite recent polls indicating otherwise.

The commission was established by Quebec Premier Jean Charest in February 2007, and in addition to public consultations, involved 13 academic research projects and 31 focus groups.

Its 300-page report, *Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation*, was released last Thursday after 14 months of consultation and research. It cost $3.7 million. To underline state neutrality, the report urges that government employees who "embody the state" – judges, Crown prosecutors, police officers, prison guards and the president and vice-president of the national assembly – be prohibited from wearing religious symbols, such as kippot.

Other employees, such as teachers, public servants, and health-care workers, should be exempt from that directive. Students should also be allowed to wear religious items in school.

Bouchard and Taylor are against a general ban because it would prevent certain religious adherents from working in the public service, and because it would contravene basic rights and "largely complicate the task of building a public service that reflects Quebec's population."

The report also calls for the removal of the crucifix from Quebec's national assembly – which Charest quickly rejected – and the elimination of prayer at municipal council meetings. However, the commission has no problem with cities allowing the installation of an eruv, as long as it does not inconvenience other people.

Generally, the co-chairs conclude there is no crisis in Quebec over accommodating religious and cultural minorities, that public institutions are handling accommodation requests well, and that Quebec's value of secularism is not threatened. But they say misperception is dividing Quebecers.

The commission investigated 21 of the many media stories over the past couple of years that portrayed demands for accommodation as being excessive. It found that 15 contained "striking distortions" or incomplete information that negatively affected public views of the situation.

Among the stories was one that said the management of province's auto insurance body had ordered female driving examiners to let their male colleagues test Orthodox Jewish men, and, most egregiously, one that said kashrut supervision costs Quebec consumers and companies millions.

The report states that, while "no authoritative comprehensive study currently exists on the topic," the evidence is that additional costs are "very minimal" and that rabbis don't profit from kashrut certification. They suggest that an independent study be done to put to rest this stereotype.

The co-chairs also strongly support the compulsory course on comparative religion and ethics to be introduced in all Quebec schools this fall, about which Orthodox officials have serious concerns.

Canadian Jewish Congress said it disagrees with the commission's recommendation that judges, Crown prosecutors and police officers should not be permitted to wear religious symbols. Victor Goldbloom, Congress' Quebec region president, said such attire is a matter of religious freedom and a ban would effectively bar, for example, an Orthodox Jew from being a judge. Overall, however, Goldbloom said he found the report "positive and balanced."

B'nai Brith Canada, which did draw a direct parallel between the commission's activities and a rise in anti-Semitism, said the report offers an "overly simplistic and naïve prescription" for overcoming problems through dialogue and exchange.

But the report was genuinely welcomed by Alex Werzberger, head of the Coalition of Chassidic Organizations of Outremont.

"It's definitely going to improve the atmosphere, especially because it is coming from two really respected people," he said.

'Grow Winnipeg' launches teen program

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Brian Scharfstein remembers what it was like growing up in Winnipeg's Jewish community in the 1950s and '60s.

"Back then, there were always activities for kids and teens at the Jewish centre [the old YMHA]," he recalled. "There was floor hockey. There were clubs. There was always something going on."

Scharfstein, chairman of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's "Grow Winnipeg" initiative – which aims to stabilize and increase the city's Jewish population – hopes that a new community program to train teen leaders that's just getting underway will give the current younger generation similar memories of growing up in Manitoba's capital.

"Our new Machon Madrichim program may well be the most important initiative we have seen in our community in many years," Scharfstein said. "One of our mandates at Grow Winnipeg is recruitment and retention. Machon Madrichim may be the bridge that connects all of our other retention programs."

Added Machon Madrichim steering committee member Sergio Vulej: "One of the things we were hearing in the community was of the need for more activities that would appeal to teens, activities that would be fun."

Machon Madrichim is modelled on the federation's successful four-year-old Club Fed, which takes younger adults through a year-long course intended to familiarize them with all aspects of the community.

Interim Machon Madrichim director Hart Jacob said the program is a two-year Jewish leadership development course for grade 10 and 11 students aimed at training them to develop and lead youth activities and connect more strongly with the community.

The program will focus on Jewish traditions and holidays, group dynamics, leadership and planning techniques, community and social involvement, and also involve hands-on activities. As well, there will be workshops on Israeli dancing and songs, wilderness activities, arts and crafts, drama, camping and first aid.

The program will rotate among different Jewish institutions in the city, and will involve one three-hour class a week and a monthly weekend activity.

At the end of the two-year program, the participants will be qualified to be camp counsellors and youth group leaders.

"The [Jewish] camps have done a good job of fostering youth leadership," said Jacob, who was the program director at Camp Massad for the past three years. "But they only operate in the summers. A year-round program such as Machon Madrichim will turn out leaders who are more well-rounded."

Scharfstein said that what he really likes about the new program is that it's aimed at young people who don't spend a lot of time at the Asper Jewish Community Campus, Winnipeg's main Jewish centre.

"The majority of Jewish high school students aren't at the campus," he said.

Jacob said he has just started marketing the program to Jewish high school students in the city. "We expect to be starting the classes in September," he added.

JEWISH LAWYERS RECALLED: **The Okanagan Jewish community hosted an opening reception for the Lawyers Without Rights exhibit on May 14, in Kelowna, B.C., with approximately 60 people in attendance. Kelowna was the 51st city in the world to receive the exhibit, which was developed by the German Federal Bar Association to chronicle the lives of some of the 5,000 German Jewish lawyers and judges who were removed by the Nazis in 1933. Sid Segal, past president of the Okanagan Jewish Community Centre, addressed the audience, welcoming Leo Adler, right, of the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies; Barbara Buchanan, centre, of the Law Society of B.C., and Stephan Gocken, left, general director of the German Federal Bar Association, who came from Germany for the event. The exhibit ran until May 24.**

[Hans de Leeuw photo]

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Canadian Jewish studies group meets in B.C.

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The program for this year's Association for Canadian Jewish Studies conference, being held June 1 to 3 in Vancouver, reflects a shift – or perhaps more accurately, an expansion – in the association's focus in recent years.

Randal Schnoor, ACJS president since 2005 and a member since 1996, said in a telephone interview that he's noticed a large focus this year on literature, visual arts and music, which together constitute about half the program.

"I think that's demonstrating a healthy broadening of the Jewish studies field," he said.

The conference begins with a day-long Sunday session, which is open to the public, at Vancouver's Jewish Community Centre.

Schnoor said that it's the most "elaborate" local program in years. It will culminate in an evening reception with Jewish authors who have written about Western Canada.

The evening will include the association's annual award ceremony honoring this year's recipient, Vancouver resident Seymour Levitan, an editor and translator, for his contributions to the teaching of Yiddish and Yiddish culture in Vancouver.

Arts-related sessions on the Sunday include "Canadian Jewish Music" with Messod Salama of Memorial University of Newfoundland and Moshe Denburg of the Vancouver Inter-Cultural Orchestra, and, in the evening, "Jewish Authors of Western Canada" with Nancy Richler, Norman Ravvin and Joe Rosenblatt.

At the rest of the conference, being held at the University of British Columbia, arts-related sessions include "Canadian Klezmer: A Representation of a Double Diaspora" with Mike Anklewicz of York University; and "The Narrative of Visual Arts," which will feature speaker Barbara Weiser of Concordia University on "Synagogue Art in British Columbia" and Toronto librarian Phil Gold on "The Life of Joe Shuster and the Canadian Connection to Superman."

Also, on June 2, Toronto filmmakers Leonard Pearl and Richard Gagné will discuss the progress of a film they are making on Jewish Canadians.

Reflecting a newer subject of academic interest, at a session titled "Notions of Identity," Donna Goodman of Concordia University will discuss "Reflections of the Canadian Diaspora Through the Window of Cookbooks."

Schnoor says the association, which has about 150 members, is now "much more open" to looking at popular culture. "I think the more ways we can explore Jewish life in Canada, the more interesting it is."

The conference is held annually in conjunction with other conferences as part of the nine-day Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, "a Canadian body of learned societies," said Schnoor.

Sometimes there are joint sessions with other societies – such as one with the Canadian Society of Medievalists – "which enriches the quality of what we're doing," he said.

Also, Schnoor added, it provides an opportunity for scholars to attend sessions at the other conferences.

Although the locale of the ACJS conference is dictated by the larger group, "part of our tradition is to combine with the local community, with one day out of three where we hold our events at the community centre or the local synagogue," said Schnoor.

Regarding his own involvement with the association, Schnoor said he thinks that it's "important to promote research on Canadian Jewish life… and I enjoy doing it."

A sociologist specializing in contemporary Jewish life in Canada and the United States, Schnoor said his field, which dates back to an increased interest in ethnic groups in the 1960s, is a less-traditional area of Jewish studies than Bible, Jewish history and Hebrew language research. "In the last few decades, the field has broadened out."

For information or to register for the Sunday program at the JCC, visit www.jewishmuseum.ca/info/current_events/acjs-event, or call 604.638.7287.

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Coast to Coast

Bill protecting community institutions passes second reading

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

A federal bill that would make it a specific criminal offence to commit hate-motivated mischief against an educational or other institution used by an identifiable group passed second reading in Parliament with support from all parties. It has been referred to the standing committee on justice and human rights for further study.

Bloc Québécois MP Carole Freeman tabled Bill C-384, which amends Section 430 of the Criminal Code by adding a clause related to damage to a building or property, such as schools, community centres and recreational facilities used exclusively or principally by a particular religious, ethnic or racial group, or group defined by its sexual orientation.

The amendment would also allow for tougher penalties.

Currently, only religious institutions and cemeteries are specifically cited in the code for special protection. Hate motivation can be considered an aggravating factor in sentencing in such crimes.

Alberta Conservative MP Blaine Calkins, a justice committee member, said in the House of Commons that two purposes would be served by enacting the bill.

"First, the creation of a specific offence will draw attention to the actions that the offence prohibits. It will state clearly that the violent expression of hatred against a minority group is a criminal offence, with all of the consequences for those who are found guilty.

"Second, the bill will increase the penalty for the offence. We know that in most cases, mischief is prosecuted by way of summary conviction. Under the current law, a person convicted of mischief against one of the buildings listed in Bill C-384, for example, when prosecuted by summary conviction is currently only subject to a maximum penalty of six months. Bill C-384 would increase this penalty up to 18 months."

Under the current law, if the Crown wants to request a penalty of more than six months, it must proceed by way of indictment. The bill would allow the Crown to request a penalty of up to 18 months without having to resort to the more complex procedure of indictment, he said.

The bill would also have a practical effect when the offence is prosecuted by indictment.

The current law provides for a higher maximum sentence when the value of the property against which the mischief is committed is more than $5,000. Currently, when the value of the property is $5,000 or less, the maximum penalty is only two years. It is 10 years when the value of the property is more than $5,000.

The bill would eliminate the distinction based on the value of the property.

"Hate crimes know no value of property. The higher maximum of 10 years would apply regardless of the value of the property against which the mischief is committed. As a result, the maximum penalty would be increased from two years to 10 years for mischief against property of $5,000 or less," Calkins said.

He believes, however, that the bill would benefit from some technical improvements.

"I think it would be beneficial to clarify the language of the bill and ensure that it is consistent with the provisions currently set out in the Criminal Code."

Toronto area Liberal MP Borys Wrzesnewskyj also spoke in support of the bill, but he suggested that the list of identifiable groups be broadened to include gender. Montreal Liberal MP Marlene Jennings wants the list also to include official-language minorities.

JEWISH FAMILY &CHILD

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Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Jewish Family and Child Service of Greater Toronto will be held on Wednesday, June 18, 8:00 p.m. Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst Street

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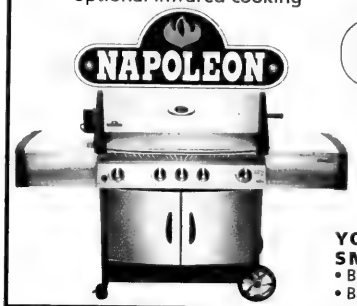

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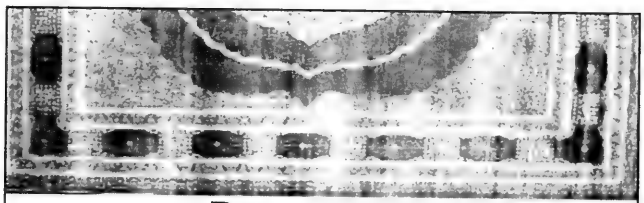

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Coast to Coast

Baker urges support for students on campus

Continued from page 3

Baker was hopeful the recently reconstituted Canada Israel Chamber of Commerce would boost trade between the countries.

If so, it will have to overcome some negative reporting by Canada's media, he said.

Correspondents in Israel inject negative elements into positive stories, and "I spend a lot of time trying to correct reports from Canadian correspondents in Israel to put things in a more proportional way," he added.

Baker issued a warning to the Jewish community to focus its resources on supporting students on campus, who he said are "on the front lines" of anti-Israel agitation. "There's a well-oiled, well-financed campaign" to vilify Israel, he added.

'There's a well-oiled, well-financed campaign' to vilify Israel

Another source of concern was hostility by organized labour toward the Jewish state, as demonstrated by anti-Israel resolutions adopted by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and CUPE Ontario.

Ironically, at the same time, Baker said his relationship with Arab and Muslim ambassadors posted in Ottawa seems to have improved.

Envoys from Jordan, Egypt and Albania attended the embassy's Independence Day party, and he has developed good relationships with ambassadors representing countries that don't even have diplomatic relationships with Israel.

Of course, the Syrian, Lebanese and Iranian ambassadors will have nothing to do with him, but Baker said he's on good terms with colleagues from Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Yemen.

As Baker winds up his four-year tour of duty in Ottawa, he's happy he's been able to tour Canada and meet people from some of its smaller communities.

"It's been a huge privilege and honour to represent Israel in a country like Canada," he said.

CIC condemns book burning in Israel

OTTAWA — The Canada-Israel Committee says it deplores last week's burning of hundreds of copies of the New Testament in Or Yehuda, Israel, as a violation of fundamental Jewish principles and values.

"As the victims of book-burnings over so many centuries, the Jewish people – more than any group in the world – must reject the intolerance implicit in such a repulsive act," said CIC National chairman Moshe Ronen.

"It is essential that we ensure respect for the sacred texts of other faith communities and protect the principle of religious freedom in Israel.

"It is incumbent on Israeli and Jewish leadership to denounce this act, for dishonouring one set of religious beliefs dishonours all, and it is a very slippery slope from book burning to more violent forms of intolerance and extremism," Ronen added.

Moshe Ronen

Last week, a group of yeshiva students in Or Yehuda burned copies of the New Testament and pamphlets urging Jews to convert to Christianity that had been distributed surreptitiously by missionaries in the predominantly observant town of 34,000 near Tel Aviv.

Or Yehuda Deputy Mayor Uzi Aharon condemned the burning of the books, but not of the conversion pamphlets.

Some 10,000 members of Jews for Jesus are estimated to be in Israel.

Israeli authorities and most Jews frown on missionary activity, although in most cases, it's not illegal.

Fraternity seeks volunteer dentists

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The Alpha Omega Fraternity's Toronto alumni chapter is seeking dentists who will go the extra mile.

The dental fraternity is looking for volunteers for its program that provides pro bono services such as fillings, cleaning, some surgical procedures and dentures for clients of Jewish Family & Child who are on social assistance, such as Ontario Works or long-term disability.

Daniel Pollit, an orthodontist who runs the volunteer program, said that up until 15 years ago, volunteers used to work out of Baycrest, but now dentists work out of their own offices, using their own tools and materials.

Eric Kirsh, supervisor of financial assistance and rehabilitation at JF & C, said social assistance offers some basic dental care, but not all dentists will accept referrals.

"Our goal is to connect our clients with dentists in the Alpha Omega program who will perform services that go beyond those covered by Ontario Works.

Kids under 18 and the elderly have access to dentists through public health, he said, but the fraternity serves those in between.

"These are people who have no funds," Kirsh said.

He said that he sees clients who haven't received dental care for a good part of their lives. "Most of us take dental care for granted, but these clients don't see dentists at all. It is the last thing they think about, until they are in pain."

When the mouth isn't healthy, he said, it can affect a person's overall health.

Pollit said his group tries to connect JF&C clients to dentists in a convenient location for them, and if money is tight, it offers gas or taxi money. "We want to make it as easy as possible for them to get to the dentist."

He said the fraternity gets donations, but the bulk of the money goes toward service that require a laboratory fee, such as dentures. "The dentists volunteer their time, and any costs are covered by the fraternity."

Ian Braverman, fraternity president, said that with about 700 members, they are one of the largest chapters in the world.

"We solicit volunteers once a year, and the number of volunteers varies from 60 to 90. The program is easier to run if we have more dentists available. We like to have a few dentists in reserve in case of emergency."

Kirsh said he gets a lot of positive feedback from his clients. "The dentists don't stigmatize them, and the patient's confidentiality is protected. The volunteers need to be commended."

Dentists who want to volunteer can call Pollit at 416-491-1337.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

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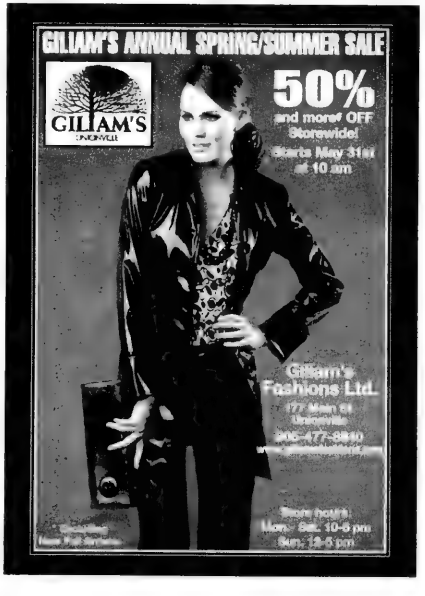

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Reena honours Compers at annual dinner

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Reena Foundation's 2008 tribute dinner honouring Tony and Elizabeth Comper is set for June 2 at the Sheraton Centre.

Gary Sim, foundation president, said they are honouring the Compers because of their immense contribution to both the Jewish and the general community.

"Their work has [helped] make the world a more accepting, tolerant [place.]"

In 2005, the Compers founded FAST (Fighting Anti-Semitism Together), a coalition of non-Jewish Canadian business and community leaders who have vowed to speak out against anti-Semitism, after the number of anti-Semitic incidents reached a record high in Canada.

FAST's two objectives are to encourage prominent non-Jews to publicly denounce anti-Semitism – both headline-making incidents and remarks that may come up in everyday conversation – and to encourage schools to use its educational package, intended for grades 6 to 9.

Tony and Elizabeth Comper

In other community involvements, Elizabeth worked on the board of the Tarragon Theatre, helped raise money to fund the first Yee Hong Centre for Geriatric Care, a non-profit centre with special sensitivity to Chinese and South Asian cultures, and is active with the Canadian Council for Diversity.

While Tony was a chief executive at the BMO Financial Group, he set up a task force to discover why so few women were bank executives, resulting in an increase to 34 per cent from nine per cent in these positions.

He also launched initiatives to support the hiring of visible minorities, aboriginals and people with disabilities.

Sim said the annual dinner honours people who have made an impact on the community. "They were very open to the idea of being honoured by us, and told us that they are struck by the profound work we do. They told us we 'do God's work.'"

For tickets or information, call Dayna Bleeman, 905-764-1081, ext. 30.

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Beginners Ulpan - B: *August 18-21 evenings*

For more Jewish Life information contact Randi, (416) 924-6211x 154 or randis@mnjcc.org

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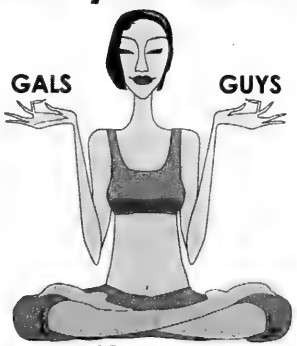

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שני סרטים שכדאי

שני סרטים חדשים שכל יהודי ולבטח ישראלי-מן הראוי שיראה.

Fugitive Pieces מבוסס על ספרה רב המכר של אן מייקלס הטורונטאית. זהו ספורו של איש צעיר שניצל מן השואה בזמן שמשפחתו נשלחה למחנות ביזכות ארכיאולוג יווני שחפר באזור מגוריו והבריח אותו ליוון. מקץ שנים של מגורים באי יווני מהגר הארכיאולוג לקנדה ופה מתבגר ומבשיל הנער, שזוכר רק רסיסים ממה שאירע לו בילדותו, אך הרסיסים חוזרים בהבזקים וצובעים את חייו. זהו סרט מרגש ביותר, ואת מקומה של אהובת הנגור ממלאת בצורה נהדרת השחקנית הישראלית אילת זוהר שמביאה אישיות חמה וחזקה למסך. למרות שהסרט יכול להיות מקוטלג כעוד סרט שואה-יש בו אנרגיות שהפעימו אותי-איך להצמיח אנרגיה חיובית בְּמקומות הכי אימים בחיים.

הסרט זכה לקיתונות של ביקורת על כך שהמפיק והבמאי שינו את הסוף הטראגי המקורי של הספר לסוף אופטימי ומרגש שמתאים יותר להוליבוד. בתור מי שלא קרא את הספר-סיומו של הסרט ריגש ורומם את רוחי, אבל אוכל בהחלט להבין מדוע זה עלול לעצבן את קוראי הספר. אני צריך להניח שהסופרת הסכימה לשנוי. תשע בסולם קורן.

את הסרט **עץ הלימון** ראינו בישראל בימים העצמאות ומאוד התרגשנו. אלמנה פלסתינאית מתחזקה ומעבדת את פרדס הלימונים של משפחתה שנמצא ממש על הקו הירוק. אלא שאתרע מזלה ושר הבטחון בממשלת ישראל עובר לגור בוילה מפוארת מול ביתה, והשב"כ דורש את עקירת הפרדס מחשש לפיגוע תבלני בָּשֵׂ"ד ובמשפחתו. זוהי דרמה שלא עושה חשבון ומציגה צדדים לא נעימים ושחצניים בְּהתנהלות הישראלית, כמו גם את השמרנות של החברה הערבית.

את תפקיד האשה עושה השחקנית הערבייה המדהימה היאם עבאס, ששיחקה הסרט The Visitor האמריקאי שהמלצתי לכם עליו בכל לב לפני שבועיים, כמו גם בדרמה הישראלית "הכלה הסורית". הסרט ריגש אותי על רמות שונות, אבל בעיקר על כך שישראל היא ארץ דמוקרטית ופתוחה, שבה תסריט כזה זוכה בתמיכה ממשלתית. זו היתה בשבילי המתנה הכי יפה ליום הולדת השישים-להיות עם חפש בארצנו, כולל לאפשר הצגת דברים קשים וגורמי מחלוקת עשר בסולם קורן.

"ארץ גדולה מנהיגים קטנים"

תגדה לאחרי ההבי ששלח לי את הקטע שכתבה יעל דיין לכבוד שישים שנה למדינה. מפאת קוצר היריעה אביא רק קטעים נבחרים:

"אני לפחות לא מצליחה להבין איך באותה מדינה-
הנשיא חשוד באונס, שר אוצר חשוד בגניבה,
שר משפטים מרצה עונש על לשון שברחה ממקומה,
וראש ממשלה מדלג מחקירה לחקירה-
...איך במדינה שלרגעים נדמה כאילו כולה ותת אוהדה,
המשקיעים ממשיכים לשים כסף, והברדסה יוצאת מגדרה...
ותנחלת החיים הממוצעת נשקת לשמנים,
כן או טו טו כולנו שמעון פרס, חברות וחבריס!
או משהו לא מסתדר משני צידי המשוואה,
איך הפקרות חולקת חדר עם ההצלחה?
איך זה שהשחיתות לא מגרשת מכאן את הפריחה?
יכול להיות ששיגינו את כללי המשחק ותוקי המשיכה?
...כי זה ההסבר היחיד, חבריס, זה הפתרון שלי לכתב החידה:
זאת כבראה דוגמה נדירה בהסטוריה, ואולי אחת ויחידה
של אומה שבניה ובנותיה-טובים יותר מן העומדים בראשה..."
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Israel can't keep all of '67 lands, Olmert says

Netanyahu opposed to ceding Golan Heights

By SHAHAR ILAN
© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said Monday that only people suffering from hallucinations believe it's possible to hold all the territory that Israel captured in the 1967 Six Day War.

Olmert's comments came amid negotiations with the Palestinian Authority and indirect peace talks with Syria that resumed last week after an eight-year hiatus. They are being conducted indirectly, through Turkish mediation.

Palestinian officials said the negotiations over reaching a final status deal involved an Israeli offer of 91.5 per cent of the West Bank. Olmert made his remarks at a Knesset foreign affairs committee meeting.

In response, Likud MK Limor Livnat charged that what's hallucinatory is that a prime minister at the end of his political career can receive envelopes of cash and hold talks on the return of the Golan Heights to Syria.

The former cabinet minister was referring to the ongoing corruption investigation against Olmert, who is suspected of receiving illicit funds from a U.S. businessman over a number of years.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

Later on in the committee session, Olmert denied holding talks with Hamas, despite Deputy Prime Minister Haim Ramon's claim of the opposite last week.

Olmert also said that the notion of Israel becoming a state "of all its citizens" is gaining credence within elites in the United States. He was speaking of what would be, in effect, a one-state solution whereby Palestinians would receive Israeli citizenship.

"This is a very dangerous process that endangers the continuation of our existence as a Jewish state," Olmert told the committee. He warned that if Israel doesn't reach an agreement with the Palestinian Authority, it will eventually face a Hamas leadership in the West Bank, as opposed to the current, more moderate Fatah faction.

In reference to talks with Damascus, Olmert said he has made no promises or commitments to Syria about a future peace deal. But he said it's clear what Syria wants as part of any deal.

On Sunday, Opposition leader and Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu issued another condemnation of the renewed peace talks between Israel and Syria, blasting the notion of a withdrawal from the Golan Heights, Israel Radio reported.

"We must not leave the Golan Heights because of its strategic height. We must not make peace with a dictatorial regime, because this will be a peace that we will not be able to protect," Netanyahu said at a meeting held by the Middle East Media Research Institute.

Last Thursday, Netanyahu warned that a withdrawal from the Golan would put Israel on Iran's front lines.

Opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu

Earlier Sunday, Olmert told his cabinet that the talks with Syria would be conducted with "the due responsibility and care," adding that "we must be careful not to let the fervour [over talks] affect our ability to reach significant results."

Also at Sunday's cabinet meaning, Olmert touted the method of covert talks, saying it allows for more successful negotiations. He cited past periods of talks with Syria as an example, pointing out that then, too, details were kept mostly under wraps.

"We will form a steering committee comprising all the relevant officials, and the government will be updated accordingly," he said.

Meanwhile, a Turkish official close to the talks said Sunday that Israel has expressed interest in holding direct negotiation with Syria, while Damascus prefers to maintain contact through Ankara, Army Radio reported.

CANADIAN JEWISH CONGRESS • CONGRÈSS JUIF CANADIEN

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TAKE NOTICE that the Annual General Meeting of the Members* of Canadian Jewish Congress will be held on **June 22, 2008** at **2:00 p.m.**

The Minto Suite Hotel,
185 Lyon Street North, Ottawa, Ontario K1R 7Y4

The Annual General Meeting shall be held for the following purposes:
- To receive the annual reports of the Co-Chairs and Co-Presidents;
- To receive the annual report of the CEO;
- To receive the audited financial statement of the corporation;
- To discuss policy issues raised in these Reports and Statements with the Board of Directors; and
- To approve and transact other business as may come before the members.

Dated at Toronto the 20th of May, 2008 by order of the co-Chairs of the Board

Registration deadline June 13, 2008. For information on registration, please contact Canadian Jewish Congress www.cjc.ca 1-888-407-5548

*Membership in Canadian Jewish Congress is defined in Article VII, S.51 of By-Law No. 67 as follows: "general members" shall be comprised of every Jew, eighteen years of age or over, residing in Canada who supports the aims and objectives of the Corporation and is in good standing with his or her local UJA or equivalent Jewish Federation or United Israel Appeal campaign.

njcl

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Israel Briefs

Conversion head fired

The head of the State Conversion Authority, Rabbi Haim Druckman, was fired by the Prime Minister's Office last week. The refusal to renew Rabbi Druckman's contract which expires at the end of June, took people by surprise and sparked a flurry of speculation regarding the motive. The Prime Minister's Office said the rabbi's age, 75, was the reason for his dismissal. Rabbi Druckman was hired in 2004. He criticized the Prime Minister's Office. "Doing this now is foolish and malicious," he told Army Radio. "And the way it was done was disrespectful as well. No one talked to me. I just got a letter delivered to me by a messenger." Many observers believe the Prime Minister's Office was bowing to haredi political pressure to oust him from his position. A controversy developed recently when the rabbinate annulled all the divorce decrees issued by the Conversion Institute, only to have the annulment set aside by the chief Sephardi rabbi. The Conversion Institute remains the subject of attack by the haredi establishment.

Terror attack foiled

Israeli soldiers foiled a major Palestinian bomb attack on a key Gaza Strip border crossing. A Palestinian recruited by Islamic Jihad and Fatah terrorists drove an explosives-laden truck toward the Erez border crossing last Thursday, but was shot at by troops before he could enter the compound. The resulting explosion was heard for miles around, but killed only the driver. An Israeli helicopter attacked a vehicle carrying two of the terrorist's comrades away from the scene, but they escaped. The attack came as Egypt tries to broker a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. Ismail Haniyeh, the head of the Hamas administration in Gaza, said he was still studying the proposal.

Israel gives to China relief

The Israeli government is donating $1.5 million worth of equipment for earthquake relief in China. The first three tons of supplies arrived last week on a commercial El Al flight to Beijing. The supplies included sleeping bags, blankets and personal water purification units. A cargo plane carrying the remaining equipment, estimated between 70 and 90 tons, was to go directly to Chengdu. The Israeli government is making purchases based on a list of needed supplies from the Chinese government. "As longstanding friends of the Chinese people, we are committed to doing everything we can to help at this critical time," Israel's ambassador to China, Amos Nadai, said Thursday.

Ethiopians not well handled

A state audit faulted Israel's handling of recent Ethiopian immigrants. The annual state controller's report said 65 per cent of Ethiopian Jews who recently moved to Israel require the assistance of welfare agencies, but the state has not provided the personnel and facilities to cope properly with the demand. Some 25 per cent of Ethiopian immigrant youths use drugs and 75 per cent consume alcohol, the report said. Difficulties in assimilating recent Ethiopian arrivals have been highlighted in recent reports on schools that set up separate classes for the immigrants, citing "cultural differences." —*JTA*

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Radical prof denied entry, sent back to Amsterdam

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JERUSALEM — The Shin Bet security service detained and deported an American Jewish professor who is a prominent critic of the Israeli occupation when he landed at Ben-Gurion International Airport on Friday.

Norman Finkelstein was interrogated for several hours and held in an airport cell before being put on a plane back to Amsterdam, his point of departure. Finkelstein said he was told he could not return to Israel for 10 years.

The Shin Bet said Finkelstein "is not permitted to enter Israel because of suspicions involving hostile elements in Lebanon," and because he "did not give a full accounting to interrogators with regard to these suspicions."

In e-mail and phone interviews with *Ha'aretz* after leaving Israel for Amsterdam, Finkelstein said, "I did my best to provide absolutely candid and comprehensive answers to all the questions put to me. I am confident that I have nothing to hide. Apart from my political views, and the supporting scholarship, there isn't much more to say for myself: alas, no suicide missions or secret rendezvous with terrorist organizations. I've always supported a two-state solution based on the 1967 borders. I'm not an enemy of Israel."

He said in the interview that he was "en route to Palestine to see one of my oldest and dearest friends, Musa Abu-Hashhash."

Finkelstein visited Lebanon a few months ago and met with Hezbollah operatives there, and subsequently published articles. He has accused Israel of exploiting the Holocaust for political ends.

Finkelstein said he was asked whether he had met with Al Qaeda operatives, whether he had been sent to Israel by Hezbollah and how he intended to finance his stay in Israel.

"I was kept in a holding cell at the airport for approximately 24 hours. It wasn't a Belgian bed-and-breakfast, but it wasn't Auschwitz either. I had several unpleasant moments with the guards at the airport and in the holding cell, but since martyrdom is not my cup of tea, I'll spare you the details," Finkelstein said.

Brussels' shul 'Great Synagogue of Europe'

JTA

BRUSSELS — Europe is about to get its own main synagogue without a single stone being lifted.

The Brussels main synagogue, La Regence, is to be rededicated as the Great Synagogue of Europe in a traditional ceremony led by Brussels Chief Rabbi Albert Guigui on June 4. Hosting the event will be the Conference of European Rabbis, which represents Orthodox rabbis in more than 40 countries.

Jose Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission, and Sir Jonathan Sacks, chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth of United Kingdom, will address guests from the international rabbinic community, the Brussels diplomatic corps and the local community.

The president of the Brussels Jewish Community, Raymond Cahen, will join Barroso in signing the inaugural document.

La Grande Synagogue, at 32 rue de la Regence in Brussels, was designed by non-Jewish architect Desire DeKeyser and completed in 1878.

The "stately Romanesque" building also functions today as the home to several Jewish organizations, including the Jewish Consistoire and the Communaute Israelite de Bruxelles.

More than 20,000 Jews live in Brussels and about 42,000 live in all of Belgium.

The Conference of European Rabbis was established in 1956 as a federation of chief rabbis and senior rabbinical judges. Its current president is the chief rabbi of France, Joseph Sitruk, with Rabbi Sacks serving as associate president.

Video a staple of Palestinian propaganda

Continued from page 1

only that Karsenty had the right to criticize the report and in doing so was sincere. Enderlin said he and the network planned to appeal.

The video at the heart of the case was shot at the Netzarim junction in Gaza on Sept. 30, 2000, by Palestinian cameraman Talal Abu Rahman, who worked for France 2. Enderlin was in Ramallah at the time. However, he narrated the report that aired, which was picked up around the world.

It showed al-Dura and his father crouching behind a barrel-shaped pipe in front of a wall, with the elder al-Dura apparently attempting to shield his son from Israeli fire. The video then shows the son lying prostrate, apparently shot. (Critics of France 2 noted al-Dura moved slightly even after Enderlin proclaimed him dead.)

Karsenty said the video became a staple of Palestinian propaganda to frame the intifadah as one of brutal Israelis shooting defenceless Palestinian children. He said his cause was not helped by Israel's apology before all the facts were in. He noted that the al-Dura image was on the wall behind U.S. reporter Daniel Pearl when he was killed by Al Qaeda.

After referring to the video as a hoax, he was sued for libel by France 2 and Enderlin. They won at trial, but last week the Paris Court of Appeal overturned that decision, leading Karsenty to claim victory.

Karsenty believes the appeal court decision leaves Enderlin "with no credibility."

He added: "I have the right to say that the report was faked, that we've been duped by them."

Despite the decision in what has been a high-profile case, there has been little media attention in France to his victory. It's been a virtual "blackout," he said.

"Nobody talks about the verdict in France. Try to find any written material in France. There is a strict law that France 2 has to be right and Karsenty has to be like a Holocaust denier," he quipped, referring to court manoeuvres by Enderlin's lawyer that tried to paint him as a crank.

"If I had lost, they would have covered it. But I won, so they're not paying attention to it. They don't want to inform the people. The situation in France in terms of the media is horrible.

"We live in a little USSR in France… The media outlets are lying. When it comes to certain subjects like the Middle East, they're openly lying. They're all telling the same lie."

Critics of the mainstream media's coverage of the intifadah argue it had been taken in by "Pallywood," an effort by Palestinians to fabricate phony incidents as part of a propaganda war against Israel. Richard Landes, an American professor with a blog at www.augeanstables.com, analyzed video shot by several news camera people on that day at Netzarim that show Palestinian youths repeatedly faking injuries. They are herded to waiting ambulances by frantic accomplices and the phony injuries are reported as real, he said in his blog.

The positive reality of Israel at 60

By HERSHELL EZRIN

Guest Voice

The last few weeks have seen the emergence of a host of media lemmings around the world competing to write the most catastrophic headlines about Israel's future. Samples range from "Is Israel finished?" to "Why Israel failed."

To bolster these prophesies, the media gurus turned to demographic factors; proposed advanced realpolitik arguments about the overwhelming threats of Iran, non-state terrorists and Islamist fundamentalism, and even pointed to the alleged fragility and lack of sense of purpose within the Israeli political and social systems.

Ignoring the historical reality that Israel at age one was no certainty, and that Israel's nation-building achievement remains unparalleled in the 20th century, these "post-modern nation state" pessimists have concluded that Israel's demise is only a matter of time.

The trouble is that no one bothered to let the Israelis know they should turn out the lights as they leave.

The Israel I visited last week was enjoying a damn good national celebration. And nowhere was the strength and vitality of Israel more clearly expressed than at President Shimon Peres' Facing Tomorrow conference.

World leaders, led by U.S. President George W. Bush, attended and spoke in unabashedly positive terms about Israel's success, vitality and creativity, not only compared to its neighbours but to the world at large.

Public Security Minister Stockwell Day led the Canadian contingent to the conference. And while a brilliant but disparate group of people such as Henry Kissinger, Bernard-Henri Levy, Abby Joseph Cohen and Amos Oz opined about Israel's achievements and challenges for the future, they all remained optimistic and committed to the Jewish state.

Hershell Ezrin

The next day, we discussed the future, and Israeli technology and inventiveness was central to it. In a panel on the "Future of the Internet" sat the founder of Google, the president of Yahoo, the former chair of Warner Brothers, the chair of Publicis (the world's third-largest advertising company) and a brazen Israelophile, Rupert Murdoch, all paying homage to the unique contributions of the Israeli scientific and technological community. No wonder they have all expanded, or are expanding, their operations in Israel.

As former U.S. ambassador Dennis Ross, chair of the Jewish People Public Policy Institute, said to me, "Look at the world coming to Israel – that's the surest and most credible rejection of the doom-and-gloom messages."

There were literally hundreds of new Israeli inventions on display around the conference hall, from water purification systems to significant advances in medical treatment, and even one that gives security services the ability to see through walls.

The icing on the cake was when the vice-president of research at British Telecom came out of the audience to tell one working session why his company is spending so much time learning and working with Israelis. At that point, even we non-techies got the message: Israel remains important to the world, and for reasons well beyond the conflict.

The numbers also speak for themselves. Israel's GDP per capita is more than 25 per cent higher than the OPEC state average. It also has an astonishing foreign direct-investment ratio, and Israel spends more on research and development as a percentage of GDP than any OECD state.

Globalization, it was argued, will benefit Israel more than other countries because of its economic structure and ethnic appreciation. Its entrepreneurs are plugged into global markets from day one. And more than one speaker reminded us that Israel is a country devoted to innovation. In the fast-paced, changing world of today, that is a remarkably competitive asset.

In focusing on the Jewish disposition to self-criticize and challenge authority, the pessimists misread the essential strength of Israeli and Jewish society. The critics ignore Israelis' overwhelming commitment to their country and to the world community, reinforced by the remarkable support of our Diaspora Jewish communities.

I walked away with my Canadian colleagues refreshed and re-energized.

It has problems, for sure, but this is one young 60-year-old.

Am Yisrael chai.

Hershell Ezrin is CEO of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy. His blog can be found at hershellezrin.com.

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1948...They Were There

Canadian took part in the capture of the Galilee

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Sam Wasser and his friends were going to a bar mitzvah in Buffalo, N.Y.

Some bar mitzvah.

In the spring of 1948, when he was only 19, Wasser volunteered to fight for Israel's independence as a sovereign state.

Having passed a medical and dental test, Wasser and nine other Canadian volunteers left Toronto, bound for the U.S. border and the battle zone in Palestine. Since the American government was not positively disposed to foreign citizens who volunteered their services to the Jewish or the Arab side, Wasser and his companions knew they could not very well tell customs officials at the border the unvarnished truth. Hence their tall tale about the bar mitzvah.

Wasser, born in Poland and raised in Toronto, went on to become an armoured car driver in the first Arab-Israeli war. As a member of the 79th division of the 7th Brigade, commanded by fellow Canadian Ben Dunkelman, he took part in Operation Hiram, the campaign to seize control of the entire Galilee.

Sam Wasser today
[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

"The year I spent in Israel was one of the best years of my life," he said in an interview a few weeks before going to Israel for a reunion of his fellow fighters. "It made me an adult and sealed my connection with Israel. I'm not 100 per cent pro-Israel. I'm 1,000 per cent pro-Israel. The bond between me and Israel will never be broken."

Now a retired insurance broker with four children and nine grandchildren, Wasser was recruited in the winter of 1947, nearly a year before the United Nations voted to partition Palestine – then a British League of Nations mandate – into a Jewish and an Arab state.

An alumnus of Hashomer Hatzair, the left-wing Zionist youth movement, he joined the struggle for Israeli statehood at a recruitment meeting at the Young Men's Hebrew Association in what is now mid-town Toronto.

At the end of it, Dunkelman, one of the speakers who had talked in urgent tones about the coming war in Palestine, asked all those aged 18 to 30 to stand up if they wished to join the Haganah, the chief fighting force of the Yishuv, the Jewish community in Palestine.

Wassser and seven others rose. All the rest sat in their seats.

"My four brothers had been in the Canadian forces during World War II, and now it was my turn," he explained. "It was my time to make a contribution to freedom."

After getting a clean bill of health, Wasser applied for a passport. Before getting it, he was asked whether he intended to travel to the Middle East. Wasser lied, saying he wanted to visit Britain and France, where his older brothers had been stationed and had fought during the war.

Upon reaching Buffalo, Wasser and his acquaintances took a train to New York City, where they met 21 other volunteers from Montreal, Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver.

Four days later, having been outfitted with U.S. army surplus uniforms, they boarded a ship, the Marine Shark, heading to Le Havre, France. Prior to leaving New York, Wasser phoned his parents to break the news. "It wasn't a long conversation. My mother cried."

In Le Havre, they were met by a young woman who accompanied them to Paris. That night, they travelled by train to the southern French port of Marseilles. Taken to a nearby displaced persons camp, they relinquished their Canadian passports and were handed cards identifying them as Polish DPs. Wasser's new name was Sam Goldstein.

Shortly afterward, Wasser and 149 other volunteers boarded a fishing boat, the Marie Annik, in La Ciolat. The crew was French and the captain was an Israeli. They were at sea for 12 days. The voyage was eventful, he recalled. The crew was mostly drunk, there were engine and radio breakdowns, and the police chased the Marie Annik out of the harbour in Messina, Sicily.

When they landed, near Hadera, the state of Israel had already been proclaimed, prompting an invasion by five Arab armies and the bombardment of Tel Aviv. After a brief interlude in a refugee camp, the volunteers were transported by military truck to Camp Nesher, situated between Haifa and Acre. "All of us, in our hearts, felt we belonged here," he said.

Wasser on his armoured vehicle and with another soldier in the Israeli army in 1948.

Wasser was posted to the 72nd infantry battalion of the 7th Brigade, composed of some 50 Canadians and about 50 others from Britain, South Africa, Australia and the United States. "We were known as the Anglo-Saxim."

Apart from a little rifle training, he was kept busy digging trenches. to his disappointment. But one day, a Canadian volunteer from Montreal, Joe Weiner, announced that he was starting a new battalion, the 79th, and needed fresh recruits.

Wasser, having driven his family's grocery truck since he was 15, volunteered to drive an armoured vehicle. Aside from himself, the vehicle – a modified armour-plated White truck affixed with a turret – was manned by two gunners and a radio operator.

Wasser participated in the capture of three Arab villages, Sasa, Jish and Tarshiha, which commanded roads and junctions in the Galilee. His battalion battled Palestinian Arab irregulars, as well as Syrian and Iraqi soldiers. The 79th, which played a major role in the capture of Nazareth, also helped relieve Safad and Rosh Pina.

"You didn't see much. The battles always happened at night."

At Tarshiha, during an intense mortar and artillery barrage, he was slightly knicked in the foot by shrapnel.

With these victories, the fighters from the 7th Brigade were greeted rapturously by Israeli Jews. "They were shouting and singing, '*Kol haGalil shelanu*, All the Galilee is ours.'"

Flushed with confidence, Wasser's unit drove deep into Lebanon, up to the Litani River, and remained in enemy territory for several hours.

"We were supposed to stop at the border, but since it was undefended, we kept on going. Lebanese civilians waved at us, thinking we were friendlies. When we reached a signpost saying that Beirut was 50 kilometres away, we turned around. We had gone far enough."

Some of the incidents he witnessed during the war were gory: revenge attacks by Irgun fighters and the shooting of a German war veteran who had fought with the Arabs.

Once hostilities ended, Wasser's job was to patrol the Lebanese and Syrian borders and to escort Arabs, who had returned to their homes without proper documentation, back into Lebanon.

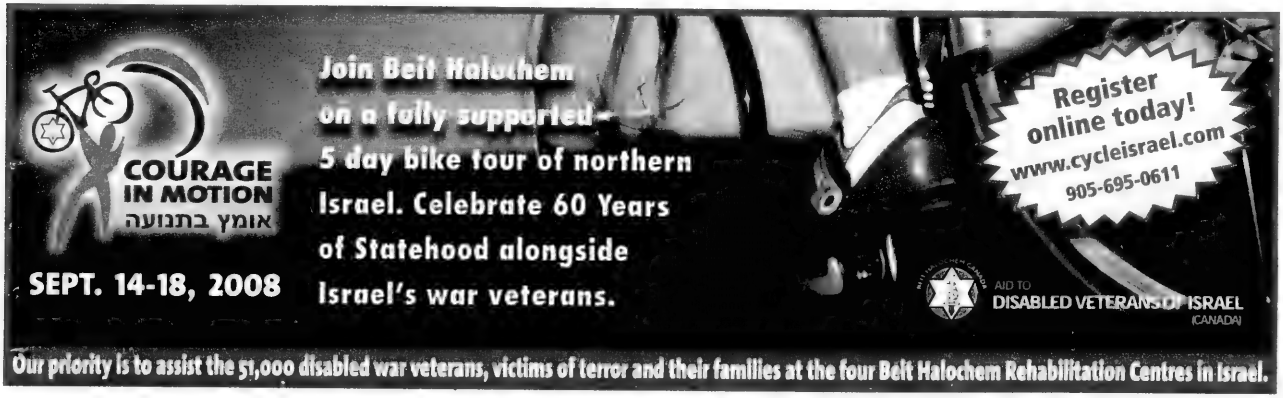
"This was not to our liking, and after two such incidents, we said, 'This is not for us.'"

Wasser was offered a chance to become an officer in the Israeli army, but in the summer of 1949, he returned to Toronto to attend his sister's wedding after having missed a brother's wedding.

Like the vast majority of volunteers, he did not seriously consider the possibility of settling in Israel. "I had done my duty, and once I was at home, surrounded by family and friends, I decided to stay in Toronto."

A few years later, he married his fiance, Rosyln (Roz) Shore.

In retrospect, Wasser has no regrets. "I made a very small contribution, but to me it was the right thing to do."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Modi left investment banking for standup

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

While working in investment banking, Modi Rosenthal would imitate secretaries in his office to amuse friends and colleagues. One night in 1994, a friend suggested he step up on stage to do his shtick at a well-known New York City comedy club.

"The whole thing happened at the Comedy Cellar and then venues started getting bigger and better," says the Israeli American comedian over the phone from his home in Los Angeles.

"As time went on, my act changed – rather than doing imitations I had more of a voice."

Once Rosenthal, who's known professionally as Modi, left the world of finance in 1999, he focused on his standup routine, entertaining audiences in the United States and Canada. "I've done the Montreal Comedy Festival a few times and have been to Toronto – I love Canada," he says.

Modi is making a Toronto appearance at the Eglinton Grand for Chabad on the Avenue's annual benefit dinner. The June 12 event includes a silent auction.

The benefit will help support the Chabad's community-based Avenue Road Synagogue, the Jewish Women's Circle and the Jewish Learning Centre.

Modi, who moved from Israel to Long Island, N.Y., with his family when he was seven, became interested in performing comedy as an adult.

"The first time I went into a comedy club was when I first went up on stage, but growing up I loved the old comedians like Alan King – even when I was doing comedy on my own, I always looked up to that genre of comedians," Modi says.

Modi Rosenthal

One night the young comic met King at the Friars Club and he got some advice from the legendary comic. "He was very helpful. We met a few times and he saw my act. His wife's a big fan of mine," said Modi, who's been compared to Sid Caesar for the characters he creates.

One of the hottest comedians on the circuit, Modi writes his own material, drawing on everyday life. "I find my material is funnier when I bring the audience to whatever I'm going through," he says.

In addition to standup, Modi has appeared on NBC's *Last Comic Standing* and HBO's *The Sopranos*, and has had lead roles in films *Waiting for Woody Allen* and the award-winning *Stand Up*. He's been developing television pilots and independent films since he moved to Los Angeles six months ago.

In comedy, timing is everything – on and off stage. "A couple of weeks ago, Jackie Mason was supposed to do a show for Cheder Menachem in Los Angeles and he bailed out the day of the event," Modi says.

"I was called at four in the afternoon when I was literally on the treadmill at the gym and the rabbi said he had 250 people coming and they didn't have any entertainment. I ended up covering it."

The next day, Modi says the rabbis forwarded e-mails to Modi, saying, "Thank goodness Jackie Mason didn't come. We loved Modi!"

Constantly working on his act, Modi regularly tries out new routines at his favourite clubs, Los Angeles' Laugh Factory and New York's Comedy Strip and the Comedy Cellar, where his career began.

"It's [comedy is] definitely a talent. I'm always amazed when people tell me they're taking a comedy course. I don't know what that means," Modi says. "It's a craft you have to hone – to make new bits and make the bits you have, funnier and stronger. You can't go to school for it."

For tickets to the Chabad on the Avenue dinner at the Eglinton Grand, 400 Eglinton Ave. W., visit www.chabadavenue.com.

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

AVIVA WOZNICA PRODUCES 'FIRE UNEXTINGUISHED,' A SCORCHER ABOUT HOLOCAUST

Toronto teacher-educator **Aviva Woznica**, a daughter of survivors and a grandmother with grandchildren both here and in Israel, has spent years doing documentary research and gathering interviews and eyewitness accounts of the Holocaust for her book *Fire Unextinguished*, published recently by Xlibris.

The book uses intimate stories to bring the history of the Holocaust alive and trace its tremendous after-effects on the survivors. Irving Abella called it "a moving and inspiring story." *Fire Unextinguished* is available in several Chapters and Indigo outlets and other book stores. For details, please visit the website www.xlibris.com/fireunextinguished.

* * *

Yiddish Poetry: Tsarbooks has produced *Inheritance (Yerushe)*, a bilingual collection of English and Yiddish poetry by **Peretz Markish** (1895-1952), the gifted Soviet Jewish poet sometimes dubbed the "Jewish Byron." He was awarded the Order of Lenin in 1939 and executed in 1952 on an accusation of Jewish nationalism. The translations are by **Mary Schulman**, with a foreword by **Elie Wiesel**. www.tsarbooks.com

* * *

Two Film Musicals: The Toronto Jewish Film Society presents two musicals – *West Bank Story*, a short, Academy-Award-winning musical comedy about competing falafel stands in the West Bank; and *The Cantor's Son* (90 minutes, United States, 1937), the Yiddish answer to **Al Jolson**'s *The Jazz Singer*, with **Moyshe Oysher** in a role that mirrored his own life. Guest speaker is **Shirley Kumove**. $15 at the door. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC. Sunday, June 1, at 4 and 7:30 p.m. Rush seats available 15 minutes before screenings. $10 ages 18 to 29 for 7:30 screening. 416-924-6211, ext. 606, esthera@mnjcc.org

* * *

Not Suitable For Children: *Yichud/Seclusion*, a 15-minute play by **Julie Tepperman** that she performs with **Aaron Willis**, focuses on the so-called yichud room where a newly married Jewish bride and groom – in this case Rachel and Chaim – are alone together for the first time. Factory Theatre, 125 Bathurst St. Several free performances daily, May 31 and June 1. www.labcab.ca

* * *

Celebrating Israel's 60th in Hamilton: A Dream Is Born – Israel At 60 is a Hamilton concert featuring the **National Academy Orchestra** conducted by **Boris Brott**, with guest conductor **Stephen Glass** and **Cantor Gideon Zelermyer**. The concert is a co-production between Brott Music and Adath Israel Synagogue, Hamilton. Besides celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary, the concert is a tribute to **Rabbi Morton** and **Sylvia Green**. (This year marks Rabbi Green's 50th anniversary with Adath Israel Synagogue in Hamilton; his son, **Daniel Green**, has now taken over as rabbi.)

Tickets are $36; a pre-concert gala is $180. Hamilton Place, Great Hall, 1 Summer's Lane, off Main St., Hamilton. Monday, June 2, 7:30 p.m. 1-888-475-9377 or 905-525-SONG. For gala tickets, please phone 905-528-0039. www.jewishfuture.ca

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **Michael Wex**, humorist, writer, performer, scholar and itinerant teacher of Yiddish, talks about his latest book, *Just Say Nu: Yiddish for Every Occasion (When English Just Won't Do)*. Question and answer period to follow. Free. North York Central Library auditorium, 5120 Yonge St. Wednesday, June 4, 7 p.m. Please phone 416-395-5639 to register. www. torontopubliclibrary.ca

• **Bill Gladstone** presents an illustrated talk on "How to Grow A Family Tree," using slides from his recent book on the Rubinoff-Naftolin family tree. Mosaic Festival, Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, Sunday, June 1, 11 a.m. Free admission.

• Eleventh annual Miles Nadal JCC Community Choir Concert at Al Green Theatre, Wednesday, June 4, 8 p.m. Tickets $10 ($20 for a family of five). 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

• Next Step Theatre Festival presents *The Guilty Party*, a "darkly comedic" play by recent theatre school graduate **Sarah Iliatovitch-Goldman**. Abrams Studio Theatre, 46 Gerrard St. E. June 4 to 8.

• Tickets for **Leonard Cohen**'s upcoming three shows at the Sony Centre on June 6, 7 and 8 have been sold out, so a fourth show on June 9 at 8 p.m. has been added. Tickets are going fast. 416-872-2262

• The Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company presents *The Sisters Rosensweig*, **Wendy Wasserstein**'s captivating look at three uncommon women and their quest for love, self-definition and fulfilment. $41.50-$69.50 St. Lawrence Centre, Jane Mallett Theatre, 27 Front St. E. Previews from June 7, opens Thursday, June 12, runs until June 21. www.hgjewishtheatre.com

• July 18 is the deadline for nominations for the 2008 Toronto Arts Council Foundation Awards, which celebrate artists, cultural professionals and arts supporters who have made significant contributions to Toronto's artistic and cultural life. For details, please visit the website www.torontoarts.org/awards.html

* * *

At the Galleries

• An installation of new paintings by Toronto artist **Julie Himel** is on view at the Fly Gallery, 1172 Queen St. W. The gallery's window space "will be set to imitate an eastern European Jewish immigrant's living room, much like my own grandmother's," Himel said. The show runs until May 31. www. juliehimel.com

• Photographs by Montreal artist **Sonia Falkovitch**, including a series on Israel, are featured at Artistika.ca, a website and portal for professional visual artists.

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Bezmozgis, Horn pay tribute to Isaac Bashevis Singer

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Jewish writers David Bezmozgis of Toronto and Dara Horn of New York pay tribute to a Jewish-American literary legend on June 8 at Toronto's Luminato Festival, a vibrant 10-day arts celebration (June 6 to 15) with a rich program of literary, musical, dance, film, visual arts and other offerings.

Bezmozgis and Horn will celebrate the works of the late Nobel Prize-winning author Isaac Bashevis Singer in an afternoon program in which each will read a favourite passage from Singer's work, along with a selection from their own writing.

Bezmozgis, author of the acclaimed short story collection *Natasha and Other Stories*, is currently working on a novel and will probably read a section of his own work that has not yet been published, he told *The CJN*.

Singer has had a substantial influence on his writing, said Bezmozgis, whose own stories spotlight the community of Russian-Jewish émigrés that settled in north Toronto in the 1970s, '80s and '90s. "Singer really straddled two worlds, the old world and the new, and I think in a similar way I feel myself doing that as well," he said.

Many readers have "a very folksy perception" of Singer, Bezmozgis said, but often forget that a significant part of his work, "particularly his writing about people who survived the Holocaust and ended up in America, was often very cynical and certainly very skeptical."

David Bezmozgis

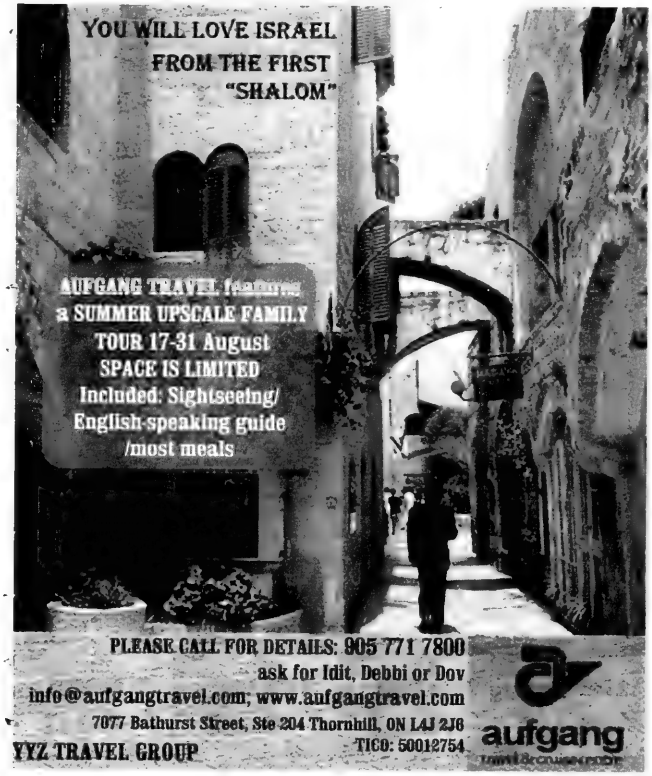
Nikki Yanofsky

He cited the novel *Enemies: A Love Story*, which he has read several times, as perhaps the Singer work that has influenced him the most.

Dara Horn, author of *The World to Come*, is a winner of the U.S. National Jewish Book Award and other literary prizes. Besides Bezmozgis and Horn, Humber College arts dean, Joe Kertesz, will moderate Luminato's Celebration of Isaac Bashevis Singer. It takes place at the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor, June 8, 3 p.m. Tickets are $10.

A program on the political graphic novel takes place in the same location a few hours later (7 p.m.) and features Bernice Eisenstein (*I Was a Child of Holocaust Survivors*), Spain Rodriguez (*Che: A Graphic Biography*) and Anthony Lappe and Dan Goldman (*Shooting War*). Tickets are $10.

Teresa Tova and Nikki Yanofsky are among the dozen or so singers and musical artists paying tribute to Canadian songwriters in a Luminato program called The Canadian Songbook. It's at Massey Hall on June 9, 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $40, $50 and $60. Visit the website luminato.com for further information on these and other fine Luminato programs.



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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

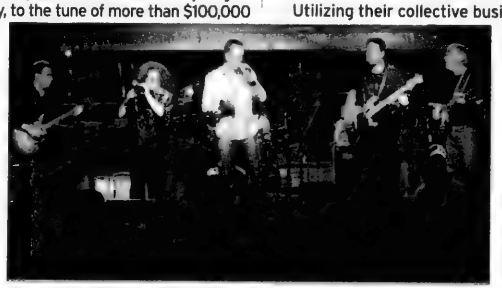
Bay Street rocks for battle of the bands fundraiser

By DAVID BALE
Special to The CJN

The Bay Street Rollers take the stage as the audience hoots and howls. One of five amateur bands to perform this night, they belt out *Love the One You're With*, finishing off with a four-part harmony that even Crosby, Stills, Nash & Young would be proud of.

Their repertoire of rock classics from the 1970s, and '80s reveals their ages. They are younger than the Rolling Stones (but then, who isn't?) and older than your average MuchMusic video stars.

This is Baystock, the battle of the bands fundraiser that comes around every spring and has become a much-anticipated mainstay on the social calendar of Canada's chief financial district. Bay Street has found a way to give back to the community, to the tune of more than $100,000 raised annually for children's charities.



Norman Shiner and The Bay Street Rollers rock the crowd at Baystock in 2006.

[Photos courtesy Baystock]

The rowdy bunch up front seems to be the Bay Street Rollers' own groupies, screaming like mini-skirted Beatle fans. In fact, some of them may have actually been original mini-skirted Beatle fans. They start chanting in unison, "Nor-man, Nor-man, Nor-man..."

Norman Shiner, that is – 42-year-old bass guitarist for the Rollers and Baystock's co-founder and moving force.

"You get a rock-star feeling when you get up on that stage," says Shiner, describing the rush shared by all the amateur musicians. "You feel like [Jon] Bon Jovi, but then you see the picture later, and you don't look like Bon Jovi."

What they do look like is more often a vision of graying temples, receding hairlines and a bit of paunch, which look perfectly acceptable in the starched collars and pin-striped suits of their day jobs.

These same baby boomers who let down their well-groomed, and often thinning, hair at Baystock are bankers, traders and CEOs.

"By day, stocks and bonds. By night, riffs and songs" is how Shiner, director of institutional equity sales at RBC Capital, describes the average Baystock musician's alter egos.

Baystock – which holds its 10th anniversary benefit at the Steam Whistle Brewery on May 29 – is Shiner's baby, and he talks about it with the same twinkle that he must have had in his eye when he and his colleagues conceived of it.

"In every setting, musicians tend to find each other," says Shiner.

Since his bar mitzvah, when his cantor told him he had a good voice and should use it, he has formed a rock band at every stage of life, from junior high to university.

And so it went in his professional career when he joined forces with Gordon Capital colleagues in 1998 to form a band called the G-Notes, to perform at company parties.

"People were quite shocked to see that these guys who they saw behind desks every day could get up on stage and play music," he says. "It was a huge hit."

It was around the water cooler one day that they dreamed up a way to take their music to another, more philanthropic, level.

"We thought, why not take this positive energy and raise some money to give back to society?" Shiner recalls. "We wanted to create a charitable foundation and involve our peers. And besides, we weren't good enough to get hired anywhere so we knew if we want to play anywhere we'd have to invent it ourselves."

Utilizing their collective business acumen, the committee established a foundation and planned their first event, which was a huge success. They sold 700 tickets for the 600-capacity Design Exchange, chosen for its symbolism as the original Toronto Stock Exchange trading floor.

"There was nothing like it on Bay Street. It was standing room only," he recalls.

"That first year, we raised $150,000 and distributed $100,000, and that has been our benchmark ever since."

Like the growth chart of a hot mutual fund, Baystock's success can be tracked in an upward climb. "Since its inception, Baystock has drummed up in excess of $1 million from ticket sales, auctions and donations," Shiner boasts. "Given it's an entirely volunteer organization, expenses are kept low relative to other charities."

Baystock's list of supporters reads like the ticker tape at the Toronto Stock Exchange – BMO Financial Group, Harris Steel, RBC Foundation, CI Investments, Telus Communication, Barrick Gold, CIBC World Markets and Scotia Capital, to drop just a few names. They have put up money – or bands – for the event. Royal Bank of Canada has put up all that and more. RBC Capital allows Shiner time at work to promote the event, while RBC Foundation has been a lead corporate donor.

Baystock has benefited more than 25 different youth charities, each year targeting three. On May 29, Bay Street executives will once again trade in their Blackberries for guitars for the benefit of SickKids Foundation, Starlight Canada and Shiner's "pet project," the Royal Conservatory of Music (RCM).

"It has a terrific outreach program which goes out into the communities and provides lessons for kids who can't afford them," he says.

It was at RCM that Shiner started his own musical training at the age of eight, learning to play classics on the violin. As a current RCM board member, Shiner feels he is giving back to the institution that introduced him to Bach, Beethoven, and Chopin and tolerated his roll over to rock in his teens.

Norman Shiner

Jeff Melanson can appreciate this. He is former dean of RCM's community school. "The man's a dynamo," he says referring to Shiner. "Norm is the driving force behind Baystock. I do not believe the event would exist without his talent, energy and commitment."

For Shiner, a former board member at Holy Blossom Temple, volunteerism is a lifestyle.

From 7 a.m. at his RBC desk to 7 p.m. at his family dinner table, the hours in between comprise only part of Shiner's typical day. Planning, soliciting and rehearsing for Baystock is a year-round volunteer venture that keeps him busy well after he and his guitar have serenaded his four daughters to sleep. So, on the balance sheet of family time, does his wife, Janet, rate Baystock a credit or a debit?

"A definite credit," she concedes. "Because it's wonderful that he has created this venue to channel his musical passion, it raises money for worthwhile causes, and he's a great role model for our kids regarding the importance of tzedakah."

Fans get into the groove during The Bay Street Rollers' set.

Baystock disbanded five years ago, only to be revived single-handedly by Shiner. Since then, the event has struck a chord heard around this country, as well as south of the border, where the Baystock format has been admired and copied numerously. Dean Connor – a senior executive at Sun Life Financial and guitarist for three-time Baystock winning band the Binder Brothers – calls Shiner the foundation's "cornerstone."

"The event continues to change, much of it due to Norm's influence, which helps with its longevity," Connor says.

The Binder Brothers return this year to battle the bands Black Monday, Hedge Fun, the Biznoids, Second Pass, and Incident 11 – all composed of execs from major Canadian banks and insurance and telecommunications companies.

Singer-songwriter Marc Jordan, renowned for such hits as *Marina Del Ray* and *Rhythm of My Heart*, is this year's MC.

Shiner and his Bay Street Rollers won't perform any numbers this time. They will be keeping the beat from the sidelines and watching the other numbers, most notably the bottom line.

For more information about Baystock, call 416-599-2550 or visit www.baystock.ca.

CHECK OUT OUR BLOG @ HEEBONICS.CA

Folk choir performs operetta based on Aleichem story

By LAURE BAUDOT
Special to The CJN

Despite some recent challenges, the members of the Toronto Jewish Folk Choir sing on.

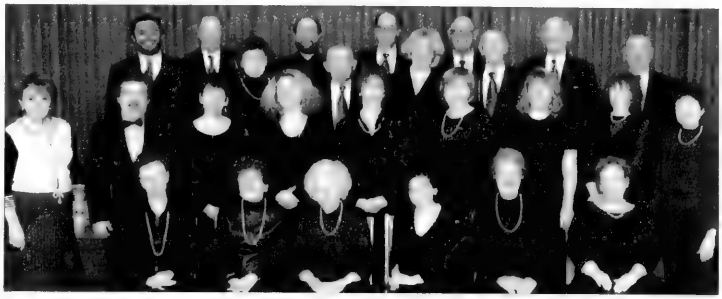
The Toronto Jewish Folk Choir will perform its 82nd annual spring concert at Leah Posluns Theatre on June 1, at 2 p.m.

The program includes *Oyfn Fidl*, an operetta by Russian-born American-Jewish composer Vladimir Heifetz, and Hebrew songs in honour of Israel's 60th anniversary.

Factory workers founded the choir in 1925 to perpetuate the Yiddish and working-class musical tradition. Most of the founders didn't read music.

Despite its humble origins, the choir has been immensely successful. During the 1950s, it had more than 100 members and collaborated with renown orchestras, including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The choir "packed Massey Hall two nights in a row," notes Peter Kastner, the choir's librarian.

Today, members come from all over the world. Many are middle class, and most can read music. The choir eschews politics, mostly through its repertoire, which reflects Diaspora Judaism and is non-nationalistic.



This year's Toronto Jewish Folk Choir [David Smiley photo]

Alexander Veprinsky, a Ukrainian Canadian who has been conducting the choir since 2002, was referring to his experience living in the Soviet Union when he said: "I've [become] a little bit tired of politics. I would like to do music."

Yet the choir faces difficulties. Choir numbers are down to 30, which Ben Shek, chair of the program committee, blames on a diminishing Yiddish-speaking community. And the choir is suffering financially.

The choir's challenges, as well as its strengths, were evident at a recent rehearsal at the Winchevsky Centre in Toronto. During rehearsal, the choristers were restless, and Veprinsky rang a little bronze bell to get the singers' attention. Once he asked, half-jokingly, "Why are you talking when you should be singing?"

And yet the choir's commitment shone through, and pieces were reworked phrase by phrase, to Veprinsky's satisfaction.

The choir's greatest strength is its members' passion. Most of its singers are personally linked with Yiddishkeit. Choir president Enid Moscovitch says singing is an "emotional experience" for her.

The choir's vibrant repertoire deserves enthusiasm. The mood of *Oyfn Fidl* is at times yearning, mournful and funny – those watching the rehearsal sometimes laughed out loud. The Hebrew marching songs are equally entertaining, compelling the audience to tap their feet to the music.

These days, the choir is adapting to a changing Jewish demographic. Although the choir's repertoire continues to include many songs with Yiddish lyrics, participants have translated some parts into English. In this way, the choir's Yiddish flavour has been retained, while it broadens their audience by allowing non-Yiddish-speaking members to understand the pieces' narratives.

Choral members are also considering new fundraising practices, which Moscovitch thinks may increase interest in fundraising among the choir's younger singers.

In the Sholem Aleichem story on which *Oyfn Fidl* is based, the young protagonist gives up the violin. But in the musical version of the story, the choir has the last word, praising the violin and chanting: "Fingers dance over the strings… rai, rai, rai… dance!" When they sang the final notes of the piece at the recent rehearsal, the singers' triumphant mood was in keeping with Heifetz's score.

Tickets are $23; $19 for seniors and students; free for children 12 and under. Call 416-636-0936 or 416-593-0750. www.winchevskycentre.org/institutions/choir.html

Musicians perform Jacques Brel in English and French

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

A performance by singer Judith Lander touched one music lover so much that he remembered it 10 years later.

As a result, Pablo Keselman arranged to introduce Lander to French-born pianist, singer, composer Philippe Noireaut, who now lives in Montreal.

The musical pairing of the anglophone singer from Winnipeg with Noireaut was so magical that Toronto jazz aficionado Sybil Walker has booked them into this year's cabaret series, as part of the TD Canada Trust Toronto Jazz Festival's Cabaret at The Old Mill.

Oakville, Ont.-based Lander and Noireaut will perform the music of French composer Jacques Brel on June 25 and 26 at 8 p.m., he in French, and she primarily in English.

The audience can expect to hear some of the richest lyrics ever written for music, Lander says.

Although Brel died in 1978, his music lives on. "He was a genius," she says. "He wrote songs that dealt with humanity, war, love, children, life experiences and the little idiosyncrasies in human beings.

"Brel is one of the greatest songwriters one can sing. It's very rare these days, in the culture that we live in, to have music and lyrics that touch the human heart and really mean something. There is so much superficiality in what one sees – it is a real thrill to be able to do music like this."

Both cabaret performers have had extensive experience performing Brel's work.

A veteran vocalist, actress, teacher and composer, Lander has sung on stages across the continent including on Broadway. Her compositions for ballet include *Diary* and have been performed by prestigious companies including the National Ballet of Canada, the Hubbard Street Company of Chicago and the American Ballet Theater.

Known as a singer's singer, she is considered by many in the field as an expert in cabaret genres, especially the work of Brel and of composer Kurt Weill. Lander performed the English musical *Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris* across North America for more than 10 years, a highlight being a evening with Brel himself at Carnegie Hall.

As for her concert partner, she says "Philippe has a vast repertoire of Brel music. He has played for some of the greatest singers in France.

"I will be doing a number of songs from *Jacques Brel is Alive*, and Philippe will be doing many of the songs that Brel is famous for in French. We will also be singing some songs together. He will be playing piano and I will be accompanying myself for a song or two"

There will also be "an integration of the English journey and the French journey of the music," she adds. "Brel is not considered jazz, but the night will have many styles of music, including little touches of jazz. Philippe is a great jazz musician."

Lander's musical offerings will include *Sons Of*, a well-known anti-war song from the English Brel show, as well as *Carousel* and *Marieke*.

The two are hoping that their Toronto Jazz Festival cabaret performance is the first of many and wish to collaborate again in the near future and possibly record a CD. Lander feels it would make for an amazing recording.

For information on Judith Lander and Philippe Noireaut's upcoming performances at The Old Mill, 21 Old Mill Rd., go online to www.torontojazz.com. For tickets, call 416-870-8000; for dinner reservations, phone 416-236-2641.

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Books & Authors

A rediscovery of Jewish Ukraine

By NORMAN RAVVIN

Throughout the Cold War era, only the most intrepid traveller went to eastern Europe. With police surveillance and the worst of Soviet-style tourist amenities on offer, events in Poland and points east were largely the domain of diplomats and the most adventurous journalists and scholars.

Norman Ravvin

The transformation of this scenario is brought home in a recent travelogue by Omer Bartov, who teaches history at Brown University and has published scholarly works on the Holocaust. *Erased: Vanishing Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton University Press) is not a scholarly study, although it is well researched. Rather, it's based on Bartov's travels in what is now independent Ukraine, along with his extensive reading of postwar *yizkor bicher*, or memory books associated with prewar Jewish life.

Bartov's family comes from this part of the world, as did such literary luminaries as Bruno Schulz of Drohobych and the Nobel laureate S.Y. Agnon, who spent his youth in Buchach. Known before the war as Galicia and Bukovina, this part of eastern Europe also has a rich chassidic history.

The bulk of *Erased* is a travelogue that takes readers through what were once major Jewish centres, as well as smaller towns. Beginning in the northwest, near to Poland, Bartov treks east, from Sambir and Drohobych, through Kilomyia, Buchach, winding up in Ternopil and Brody.

The history of the latter city conveys the depth of Jewish history in this part of the world. Jewish inhabitants are recorded in Brody from the town's inception in the late 16th century, and throughout its pre-World War II existence, Jews numbered more than half the population.

Bartov doesn't focus on prewar life beyond his effort to account for the size of Jewish communities before the outbreak of World War II, and to convey how each place was affected by earlier disasters associated with pogroms, World War I and the aftermath of the Russian Revolution.

These events make their way into Agnon's fiction, and the novel that matches Bartov's depiction of social and cultural history is *A Guest for the Night*, which first appeared in Hebrew in 1939. There Agnon describes, with great and delicate sympathy, the decay and distress of Jewish settlements in this part of Europe before the catastrophe of German invasion during World War II.

Erased has two goals: to convey the prewar mix of Ukrainian, Polish and Jewish culture in the places Bartov visits, as well as to record the postwar erasure of all markings and remembrances of Jewish habitation. In the places he visits he takes an accounting of what remains of the Jewish presence – often just the shell of a once-grand synagogue and a desecrated or obliterated cemetery ground.

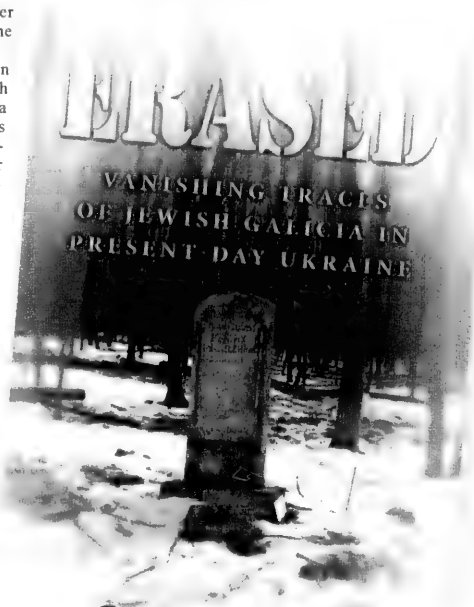
Monuments and commemorative plaques are of particular interest, and Bartov pays special attention to the way Soviet and more recent Ukrainian commemorative language tends, almost universally, to evade the Jewishness of a great number of the territory's victims of war and civilian atrocities. Ukrainian collaboration with the Nazis remains a taboo subject, and in the most egregious cases, the Ukrainian nation is depicted as the prime victim of war and fascist ideology, with Jews blamed for both.

Although aspects of this history have been explored by Holocaust specialists, as well as by writers interested in depicting prewar Jewish life, it's not familiar ground for the average reader. In this way, Bartov returns a territory he refers to as "the Borderland"– neither Poland nor Russia, but a lesser-known zone in between – to common knowledge.

There is a good deal of pathos involved in Bartov's visit to what was once Jewish Galicia, and even though he doesn't make a great deal of use of interviews or interactions with locals, he recounts a number of surprising incidents. His 2004 photo of the corner in Drohobych where Bruno Schulz was murdered reveals that the streetscape has changed little. And upon visiting Chortkiv, he finds the marketplace in the midst of renovations. "It was a matter of sheer luck" he tells us, "to have come that day. The sun was shining, the atmosphere was festive, and the faded Polish and Jewish names painted on the walls could clearly be seen. A few days later, and the words would have been neatly painted over and just as quickly forgotten. But on that day the long dead M. Tauber and Leib Wasserman were still advertising their paint and iron store right next to the 'Catholic Butcher.'"

It's this erasure of Jewish presence in present-day Ukraine that Bartov conveys to his reader, and in the process, he goes some distance toward renewing our awareness of prewar Jewish Galicia.

Norman Ravvin is chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. His books include the edited volumes Not Quite Mainstream: Canadian Jewish Short Stories *and* The Canadian Jewish Studies Reader, *co-edited with Richard Menkis.*



Omer Bartov

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24 HOUSES WANTED TO BUY
25 HOUSES WANTED TO RENT
30 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE
35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
50 ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
65 ACCOMMODATION SWAP/EXCHANGE
67 HOUSE SITTERS
70 UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION
75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
81 APARTMENT TO SUBLET
82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
84 ROOM WANTED FOR RENT
85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM AVAIL
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT-OF-TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT-OF-COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH./SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND/LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND/LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
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280 ANNOUNCEMENTS
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300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY

345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
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372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
379 CLOCKS/WATCHES
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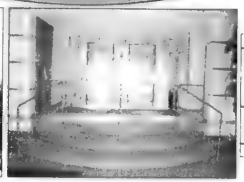

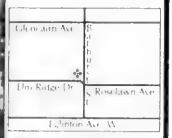

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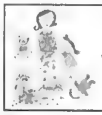

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Wrestling champ comes with athletic pedigree

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — It's only with the swift passing of our years that most of us begin to be even remotely interested in our lineage and feel the need to learn more about our ancestors.

Take, for example, 13-year-old Caleb Rutner, a Grade 7 student at Winnipeg's River Heights Junior High School. Just weeks ago, Rutner won the gold medal in the 52-kilogram bantam division at the Canadian National Wrestling Championships in Saskatoon.

Caleb, it turns out, has a rich history and a gene pool to match that no doubt contributed to his superior performance on the mat.

When asked why he became involved with wrestling as early as age six, he explained: "My dad asked me if I wanted to try it out. He was a wrestler back in his college days in New York and Nebraska. He was born in the Bronx."

Caleb's father, Toby Rutner, a local psychologist, later explained: "I was a high school wrestler in New York and went to Nebraska State in Wayne, Neb., on a scholarship."

"Since you are looking into Caleb's pedigree," he continued, " it might interest you to know that my dad was Mickey Rutner, a major league baseball player who played for the old Philadelphia Athletics [in the American League]. He recently died, and since he at one point in his career played baseball for the Toronto Maple Leafs, there was a very large obit on him in the *Globe and Mail*." (The Maple Leafs were a AAA ball team in the International League which folded in 1967.)

Caleb Rutner

The proud dad added that his widowed mother, Lee, a dancer, was a member of the famous Rockettes, a 75-year-old group that still performs mainly at Radio City Music Hall in New York.

As for Caleb's zaide, Mickey, he died last Oct. 17 at age 88. At the time, he held the distinction of being the oldest living Jewish major leaguer.

The onetime third baseman had the proverbial cup of coffee in the majors. His short stay in the show was not due to lack of talent, but because of the anti-Semitism often faced by Jewish athletes back then.

Mickey was called up to the A's in September 1947 at age 27 and played in 12 games. He managed 12 hits in 48 at bats for a .250 average that included a double and a home run, along with four RBIs.

A book, *Man on Spikes*, was written about a fictional character named "Mike Kutner," who was apparently based on the career of Mickey Rutner. The author was Eliot Asinof, who once played minor league ball with Rutner and who also wrote the well-known book that was made into a movie, *Eight Men Out*, about the 1919 Black Sox gambling scandal.

As for Caleb, asked how he feel about capturing a national wrestling title, he said, "I don't want to seem that I'm gloating, but I am pretty proud.

"My coach, Kris Stasiak, who is a former Polish Olympic wrestling star who wrestled in the Olympics, has contributed a lot to my success. I don't think I could do it without him."

Altogether, 10 wrestlers vied for the national title, and Caleb had to defeat three opponents: one from London, Ont., followed by another from British Columbia and a third from Alberta.

Earlier in the month, Caleb, along with a few other wrestling mates from his Winnipeg Wrestling Club, competed in a tournament in Grand Forks, N.D., where he added to his growing pile of medals and trophies with two golds for Greco-Roman wrestling and another gold for freestyle.

Naturally, Caleb is familiar with the shenanigans that go on in professional wrestling and isn't overly impressed. "TV wrestling, that's just fake stuff. It doesn't come close to any of the wrestling styles in amateur. Ultimate fighting contests are sort of brutal. Sometimes I sort of just turn away," he said.

The best, it appears, is yet to come. Caleb is set to become a travelling man in September when his club heads to Poland for a competition against European wrestlers. While there, he will also expand his knowledge of Jewish history with a trip to Auschwitz.

As for the future, he wants to represent Canada in the Olympics and the Maccabiah Games.

Considering his background, work ethic, and family history, don't bet against it.

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Krayzelburg inspires essay contest

DELRAY BEACH, Fla. — Four-time Olympic gold medalist Lenny Krayzelburg will serve as honorary lead judge of the fourth *Sport and Jewish Life* essay contest. This year's contest coincides with the summer Olympic Games and the quest of athletes across the globe to reach this event.

The topic, "What does it take to succeed in sports?" is one that Krayzelburg is quite familiar with. The Ukrainian-born swimmer took gold in swimming in both the 2000 and 2004 Olympics.

Entrants are invited to share their own stories or discuss the experiences of others in their lives or what they have observed regarding high-profile athletes or sports in general. Essays should incorporate a discussion of Jewish values, teachings from the Torah or other Jewish texts or practices, as well as other literature or films of interest.

Entries will be judged in three age categories: grades 6 to 9, grades 10 to12, post-secondary students and others. Winners will be awarded U.S. Savings Bonds. Deadline to submit essays is June 23.

For contest application forms or more information, visit www.CSJL.org, or contact the centre at JewishSports@gmail.com.

This birthday is no big deal

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

There are two sorts of people in this world: those who make a big deal out of birthdays, and those who don't.

If you're in the former category, you look forward with anticipation each year to your birthday in the hope, or expectation, that friends and family will shower you with praise, parties and gifts. If you're in the latter group, you likely see your birthday as just another day, in real terms no different, and certainly no more special, than any other 24-hour period of the year. Also, if you're in the latter category, you are right: nothing actually changes on a birthday. Birthdays and anniversaries are for show – to realize this is to conclude that there's really nothing special about them and no reason to celebrate.

But based on content in newspapers, magazines and TV, one must assume that the media is big on birthdays. For weeks now, everyone has been opining on Israel's 60th birthday, mostly within the framework of questioning whether Israel can survive in either the short or long term.

All the media attention took me by surprise. It seems odd to me that everyone has suddenly decided to make such a fuss over Israel's future.

In most cases, the commotion surrounds this hypothesis: Israel faces a greater threat to its continued existence now than at any time since 1948. The Iranians are going to get nukes, Hamas is the legitimately elected governing body in Gaza, rockets are tearing up houses and gardens in Sderot and the Israel Defence Forces is still reeling from the smackdown it received in Lebanon two summers ago.

Take a deep breath. If you unpack all that scary stuff, things don't seem so bad, really. The Iranians don't have any nuclear bombs yet, while Israel does. Plus, Israel has proved – twice now, in Iraq and more recently Syria – that it won't tolerate another nuclear arsenal in the neighbourhood. Rest assured, also, that the Israelis will get much encouragement (read: military help from the United States) if Iran actually ever gets close to building the bomb.

As for Hamas, the Israeli government is actually playing this one quite well – slowly starving Gaza into some sort of submission, be it an internal revolt or ceasefire/peace talks.

True, Lebanon was a bust, but Israel didn't lose, even if it didn't win. It looked bad, but you're going to lose every once in a while, and the IDF would appear to be in the process of making sure the mistakes in Lebanon are not repeated. Not winning in Lebanon was embarrassing, but it was also not a catastrophe.

And Sderot is Israel's own fault. It pulled out of Gaza – on the false assumption that doing so would increase security – and it will, eventually, have to take the land back. Like the Lebanon war, Sderot is less an Arab victory than an Israeli blunder.

All told, the threats to Israel's existence – both realized and existential – aren't much different than they were five, 10 or 20 years ago. What's more, the total threat to Israel probably isn't going to change dramatically in the near future, and certainly not for the worse.

My best guess is that Israel will still be around 60 years from now. Follow the historical line from 1948 to 2008 and the trend for Israel is a healthy one. It has expanded, fought off radical, bloodthirsty enemies over and over again, and matured into the sort of state that exudes all the good (and some of the bad) that comes with being a western-style democracy.

Israel's is a good story.

Are there threats to Israel's existence? Sure. But there always have been, and there always will be. Sixty years later, that reality is one we should learn to accept – Israelis certainly have – and move on.

This birthday, when you think about, isn't worth making a big deal over.

RIB EYE STEAKS WITH MELON RELISH

- 1 med. red onion, diced
- 2 tblsp olive oil
- 1/2 c fresh mint, chopped
- 1 lg cantaloupe, peeled, seeded, diced
- 1/2 tsp fresh ground pepper
- 1 c Italian parsley, chopped
- 3 lbs. individual rib eye steaks
- 2 tblsp cider vinegar
- 2 tsp sea salt

Toss cantaloupe, onion, parsley, mint, vinegar & oil in bowl. Set aside. Heat grill or large skillet over high heat. Season steaks on both sides with salt and pepper. Cook 5-8 min. for medium or to desired doneness. Remove from heat; rest on cutting board 5-7 minutes. Cut steak diagonally into 1/8" thick slices; transfer to platter. Spoon half the relish on top. Serve remaining relish on the side.

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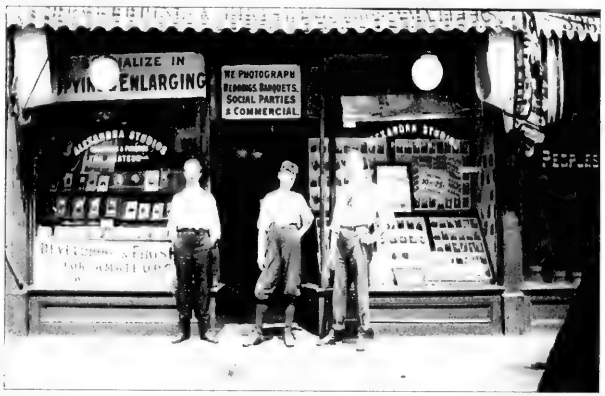

PORTRAIT PHOTOGRAPHERS: Chicago-born Louis Turofsky borrowed $165 to purchase the long-established Alexandra Studios of Toronto around 1908 and went into the photography business with his younger brother Nathan. Over the years they produced a vast number of postcard-sized portraits, including many from the Jewish community. Here, Lou and two others (perhaps Nat and youngest brother Sam) stand outside the shop at 338 Queen Street West in the early 1920s. Lou and Nat became well-known sports photographers who specialized in the six original teams of the NHL. [City of Toronto Archives]

Our community's 'A' and 'B' list

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

We live in a vital community, but we're not flawless. Many of our flaws have gone unspoken and in the process have hurt many people.

Through my years as a Jewish community professional, I have talked with dozens of homegrown Jews and immigrants from places such as Winnipeg; Morocco; Brantford, Ont.; Israel and Halifax, who have expressed a painful truth of feeling disenfranchised living in the Toronto Jewish community because of a system that can be very judgmental with some unreasonable expectations.

Lorne Opler, 48, is one of those people. He was born in Toronto to a family with blue-collar roots, a fate that can be most difficult in our city.

"As a child I was conditioned to undervalue my father's work because he was part of the retail class, not of the professional class," Lorne said. "Because of the Jewish community's culture, which puts value on white collar professionals, only as an adult have I come to appreciate my father's working-class background."

He added that his quiet disappointment came from his years in Jewish day schools, where students were generally not encouraged to become musicians if they were passionate about music or carpenters if they loved creating with wood.

"Every kid is unique and should be seen as such," Lorne said. "How many people are there in our community wishing they were painting a canvas rather than analyzing a year-end statement?"

Lorne makes a sound argument that still applies today. Indeed, how many people reading this article wanted to become an author but felt there was something lacking in them if they pursued their dream? How many of our members chose their profession because of community and/or family pressure and have the same expectations of their children?

This need to see ourselves as high profile in the area of career choice likely started a century ago, when Jews were marginalized by their host countries and we needed to be seen to be safe.

Today, when we meet someone new at shul or an event, the first question we ask is, "So what do you do?" What we want to hear is, "I am a successful and affluent professional or entrepreneur." The auto mechanics just don't cut it in our community, regardless of their contribution, and if they did, you would see more of them being honoured at our galas.

And the truth is, calling a plumber up to the dais for years of precious community work doesn't raise money. And in our community, money is status. I know this stuff; I run an organization and in many ways am part of this system.

Unfortunately, this approach, according to Lorne, has created a community "A" and "B" list. The "A" list is made up of those who have worked hard for personal wealth, or inherited it, volunteer for larger institutions, and fit well into middle-of-the-road Judaism that speaks on behalf of the Jewish people. Those on the "B" list practise their community membership quietly, often on the sidelines, and seldom are asked for their opinion about things integral to the Jewish world and our town. Both are good folk, but only one feels part of the big picture.

As a community, we need to see our flaws and consider how painful it must be to feel marginalized and without a voice. It's important that we are authentically introspective so we can create an even more vibrant environment for every Jew, and a community that celebrates its Torah scholars, doctors, artists, lawyers, teachers and businesspeople.

Avrum@veahavta.org Sderot/Sudan?

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This Week

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National

Toronto Israeli groups join new forum. *Page 3*

Once-Jewish neighbourhood now a historic site. *Page 12*

Party

Everything you want to know about hosting a party. *Section B*

Health & Lifestyles

Kosher restaurant gets a TV makeover *Page 23*

CJN Profile

Ralph Benmergui sought out the real Israel. *Page 38*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions....10
The Kirshner File 11
According to Reports 17
Jewish Life 18
Health & Lifestyles 22
What's New 26
Yiddish Corner 28
Obituaries and Notices 28
On Campus 30
Heebonics....31
Food, Scrumptious Food....32
Israel & the Jewish World 33
Arts & Travel....38

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Israeli soldiers' remains released

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Lebanese security sources are saying that the Lebanon-based guerrilla group Hezbollah, which on Sunday handed over the remains of what it claimed were Israeli soldiers, still has more Israeli bodies, the Lebanese newspaper *A Safir* reported Monday.

The sources added that among the body parts still in Hezbollah's possession is "an almost entire body," the newspaper reported. "It is apparent that this embodies an element of pressure on the Israeli government," the report said.

Hezbollah transferred the remains via the International Committee of the Red Cross, saying they were body parts belonging to Israel Defence Forces soldiers who were killed during the Second Lebanon War in 2006. Israel later announced that the handover was not part of a broader prisoner exchange deal.

Hezbollah 'trading in human parts'

The Prime Minister's Office said it was surprised by the handover, which took place after Israel released convicted Hezbollah spy Nassim Nasser from prison and returned him to Lebanon.

But some Israeli sources said Hezbollah's handover and Israel's release of Nasser were both agreed-on, confidence-building steps that constitute the first phase of a more extensive swap that would include Hezbollah's release of abducted IDF soldiers Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser.

Other Israeli sources, however, said the transfer of the remains was orchestrated to win over public opinion in Lebanon by giving the impression that it was part of a prisoner exchange, even though Nasser's release was a technical matter, since he had completed his term and Israel could no longer legally keep him incarcerated.

"The step is not a goodwill gesture, but Hezbollah spin for public opinion in Lebanon," an Israeli security source said. "This is not part of the prisoner exchange deal, it wasn't co-ordinated with Israel, and from the beginning, our position has been that we will not conduct any negotiations for body parts and we will not agree to trade in body parts, or to pay for them."

A senior military official said that "at the beginning of the year, [Hezbollah leader Hassan] Nasrallah spoke and said he had body parts. Israel reacted angrily because he was trading in human parts… Now that we tossed them Nasser, Nasrallah is trying to create the appearance of an achievement in the Lebanese street

Continued on page 33

Israel Day in Toronto

Thousands of Toronto-area residents and supporters of Israel came to Mel Lastman Square on Sunday to celebrate the city's 13th annual Israel Day Festival . The event – sponsored by Na'amat Canada and the Canadian Zionist Federation – featured a vibrant shuk, live music, Israeli food and an auction. At right, an attendee is instructed on how to put on tfillin by one of the many rabbis who patrolled the festival.

[Andy and Judith Levy-Ajzenkopf photos]

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American businessman testifies about Olmert ties — see page 33

The News in Brief

CANADA

Canadians Ordained

TORONTO — Three Torontonians were ordained as rabbis May 31 by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati. They are: Rena Arshinoff, interim spiritual leader at Solel Congregation in Mississauga, Ont., since January; William Tepper, a former drama and English teacher who joins Mizpah Congregation in Chattanooga, Tenn., as spiritual leader this summer, and Noah Chertkoff, an ex-aide to former federal minister Elinor Caplan, who becomes assistant rabbi at a temple in Plantation, Fla., this summer. A fourth Canadian, Daniel Mikelberg of Vancouver, was ordained by HUC's Los Angeles campus last month.

Rush Donates Cash

WINNIPEG — The members of veteran Canadian rock band Rush said last week they will donate $100,000 from their May 24 concert in Winnipeg to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, a public-private project to be completed by 2011 in the Manitoba capital. The trio will also sell T-shirts at the remaining Canadian dates on their current tour, with proceeds going to the museum. They read: "My pals Rush and I support the Canadian Museum for Human Rights." The parents of Rush's lead singer, Geddy Lee, 54 – born Gary Lee Weinrib – are Holocaust survivors. The $265-million museum is being spearheaded by the Asper family, which has raised about $95 million of $105 million in private money needed to build it.

Vandalism Denounced

MONTREAL — Canadian Jewish Congress strongly condemned a recent act of vandalism at Montreal's Makkah-al-Mukarramah mosque, the third such attack there this year. Worshippers arrived May 24 to find a smashed stained glass window on the mosque's front door. "It is unacceptable to see these types of acts against places of worship," said Victor Goldbloom, CJC's Quebec region president. "As Jews, we know all too well the pain of such desecrations. It is the duty of all Quebecers to… denounce all forms of hatred."

Polish Jewish Partisan Leader Fought Nazis

NEW YORK — Eta Wrobel, a commander of Jewish partisans during the Holocaust, died May 26 in Highland, N.Y., at age 92.

Eta Wrobel's 2006 book

Born Eta Chajt in Lukow, Poland, she was the only one in her large family to survive the Nazis' 1942 liquidation of their ghetto.

When the Nazis arrived, Wrobel fled to the woods outside Lukow and commanded a unit of refugees. They stole supplies from the Germans and set mines to hinder them.

On one mission she was shot in the leg. She walked with a bullet in her leg for months.

Wrobel travelled throughout New Jersey decades after the war telling schoolchildren about her experiences.

In 2006, she wrote her memoir, *My Life My Way*, with Jeanette Friedman.

WORLD

Tootsie Director Dies

LOS ANGELES — Sydney Pollack, the acclaimed director of *Tootsie* and *Out of Africa*, died of cancer May 26 at his home in Los Angeles at age 73. Pollack, who won an Academy Award for *Out of Africa*, was the son of Russian-Jewish immigrants. He also acted in television and movies.

Rabbi In Brazil?

TEL AVIV — A radical Israeli rabbi alleged to have led followers to commit horrific acts of child abuse is believed to be hiding in Brazil. Israeli police said May 29 that Rabbi Elior Chen, who fled the country after reports of serial child by his followers, is in Brazil, where police are searching for him. Previously, he was said to be hiding in Canada. The rabbi allegedly counselled followers to severely beat and burn children in order to rid them of the devil. Some of the abuses have resulted in life-threatening injuries. One child remains in a vegetative state.

Harvey Korman, 81

LOS ANGELES — Harvey Korman, who gained fame on TV's *Carol Burnett Show*, died May 29 in Los Angeles at 81 from complications due to the rupture of an abdominal aortic aneurysm four months ago. The lanky comedian was also known for his role as a devious politician in Mel Brooks 1974 film *Blazing Saddles*.

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Toronto Israelis unite in single organization

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

A dozen independent Israeli groups that met in Toronto recently became part of a single organization by joining the Israeli Forum.

The forum, formed three years ago, is supported by the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and now has 4,000 members. Ehud Telem, a forum board member, said he expects the numbers to double in the next two years.

The Israeli Forum was created to organize the Israeli community in Toronto of about 50,000, Telem said.

The majority of Israelis who now live in Toronto moved to the city in the past decade. "The Jewish community cannot ignore such a huge number of Jews," he said. Israelis make up about one-quarter of the city's Jewish population.

The founding members of the forum believed that many Israelis were falling through the cracks in the Jewish community because they didn't know what services were available to them.

"The nature of Israelis in general is that they are very secular," Telem said. "[But] just because they are secular doesn't mean they don't want their kids to get a good Jewish education. We also realized that if Israelis are not brought into the established community, we would have a big problem of intermarriage."

> ***'Great move in bringing them closer to the Jewish community'***

The Israeli supplementary school Kachol Lavan, established by the forum, now has 180 students. A summer camp by the same name, operating out of the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, was also created for Israeli-Canadian children.

The chairman of the Israeli Forum, Gil Blutrich, who helped bring about the Israeli groups' unification, said the merger is one of the first serious attempts to integrate Israeli immigrants into a Jewish community.

Through the forum, a business group called the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce, whose goal is foster interaction between Canadian and Israeli corporations, was formed.

"*Hamifgash* (Hebrew for "meeting") – the group's cultural wing – has organized several activities, including Yom Ha'aztmaut celebrations and an event honouring the Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon. There have also been film screenings and a Purim carnival, and there is a Hebrew book club. Some events have been presented in conjunction with the Schwartz/Reisman Centre, which will be part of the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan. The forum hopes to build an Israeli heritage centre on the Lebovic Jewish Campus.

In the first week of the Second Lebanon War in 2006, several hundred people affiliated with the Israeli Forum gathered at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto and raised $160,000 in emergency funds for Israel.

Blutrich said that federation president Ted Sokolsky made an important gesture in January 2006 when he met with 30 Israeli businessmen to discuss building the coalition.

Galya Sarner, the UJA's Israeli-community project leader, said: "[The group is a] great move in engaging the Israeli community and bringing them closer to the Jewish community."

David Zaltzman, secretary of the forum, noted that a survey published in 2004, commissioned by federation, outlined how the Israeli community is in conflict with the mainstream Jewish community. The coalition should minimize this conflict, he said.

"We now have a unified group that can help Israelis better understand one another, and have the established Jewish community understand the Israeli community."

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Survivor of Schindler factory to speak

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Leib Lejzon was 13 years old when he began work at Oskar Schindler's factory, Emalia Deutsch Emailwaren Fabrik, where he worked 12-hour shifts. The diminutive boy had to stand on an upturned box to reach the machinery. Schindler, who took a liking to the lad, called him "Little Leyson."

Now referred to as Leon Leyson, he is the youngest survivor on Schindler's List, number 289, out of more than 1,200 people. He endured the Holocaust through the bravery and ingenuity of Schindler. Leyson's miraculous survival has compelled him to tell his story to ensure it is not forgotten.

Leyson will be speaking in Toronto on June 16 at the Leah Posluns Theatre, sponsored by Uptown Chabad, and hosted by Marci Ien, news anchor of CTV's *Canada AM*.

"Everybody knows he was not a perfect man," said Leyson of Schindler. "He liked the good life, he was a partier, a womanizer – all of these things people say about him, which are true. But he had a great heart."

Schindler worked to treat his employees with the compassion they lacked elsewhere and even spoke to his factory workers. "It's as if I were a real human being. Sometimes he'd order extra rations for me. Things like that, personal things, which made him so much more human, so much more of a decent human being," Leyson said.

After Steven Spielberg's film *Schindler's List* was released in 1993, Leyson began speaking about his experiences during the Holocaust.

"The movie *Schindler's List* made such an impact because it emphasized individual human beings rather than a mass of people murdered or corpses being shoved into a ditch," Leyson told *The CJN*.

"Too many people just simply know the numbers. Nazis were not killing numbers. There's no way to understand six million. They were individual people. A brother, sister, somebody's uncle, somebody's aunt. I really want to emphasize that."

Five of Leyson's immediate family were on Schindler's list and survived. Leyson's two eldest brothers and all of his extended family, however, were murdered.

Leon Leyson

Many of the factory workers would be informed by Schindler about the war and what had been happening to Jews in Europe. There was a Nazi death camp, Plasow, two miles from the factory, and yet, Schindler's workers celebrated life the best way they could.

"The Nazis tried to dehumanize us all the time. They tried to break our humanity, but everybody resisted," he said. "We played games, told jokes, and sang songs as a way to keep our humanity."

When Hitler's invasion of Europe began, most Jews were in disbelief or denial about the Nazis' intentions, Leyson said.

"People thought the war would be over soon. Adults thought [laws against Jews] was the worst thing that would happen. It was not obvious for a long time what Nazis had in mind," he said. "As soon as people started to be transferred to the gas chambers, people started to realize what was happening. No one in their right mind could have predicted."

After World War II, Leyson and his parents headed back to their small town in Poland. "We didn't have anything. We were not received too cordially when we came back. It was so terrible that I don't want to elaborate."

As Poland became communist, they eventually fled to Germany, where they spent three years in a displaced-persons camp, near Frankfurt Am Main.

He and his parents immigrated to the United States in 1949, sponsored by an uncle and aunt. He served in the army during the Korean War.

In 1965, 20 years after the last time Leyson, then 36, saw him, Schindler visited Los Angeles to see some of the workers who immigrated to the United States, and to receive some financial support, since his fortune had taken a turn for the worse. He recognized Leyson immediately.

"I thought I had better introduce myself," Leyson said. "But he said, 'you're Little Leyson!'"

For tickets ($50.00), e-mail tickets@uptownchabad.com. Includes a dessert reception. www.uptownchabad.com

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Auschwitz survivor recalls St. Louis passenger. Please see page 45.

From the editor's desk WILL RETURN

SeeJN CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

COMMAND STRATEGY

Israel's prime minister, Levi Eshkol, wearing the beret, listens to the discussion among his generals on the Golan Heights during the Six Day War. In the centre of the circle of officers, crouched on the ground, is the minister of defence, Moshe Dayan. He is speaking to the commander of the northern front forces, Gen. David Elazar, who would become chief of staff after the war, succeeding Yitzhak Rabin.

[Photo courtesy Keren Hayesod]

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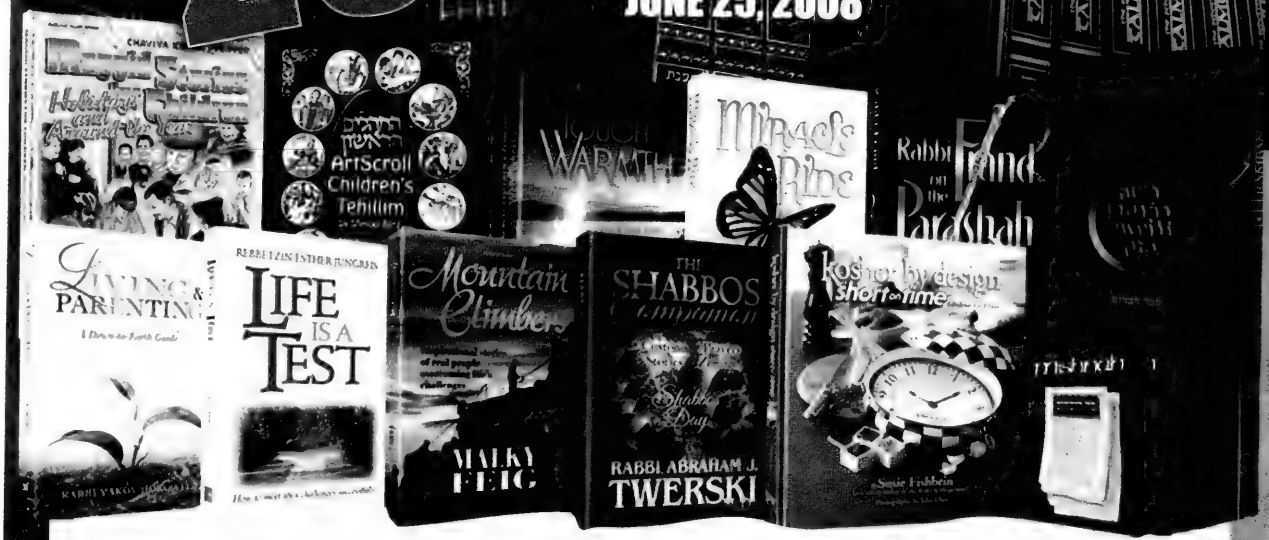

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Cancer unit to test for genetic mutations

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

For the first time, Ashkenazi Jewish women can be tested at no cost for the BRCA1 and BRCA2 genetic mutations, even without a personal or family history of breast or ovarian cancer, thanks to the familial breast cancer research unit at Women's College Research Institute.

The simple blood test is part of a research study that aims to evaluate how common these mutations are in the Jewish population of Ontario and to see whether it is possible to identify women at risk for breast and ovarian cancer.

Cancer researchers say that one in 44 Ashkenazi Jews carry the mutation, while in the general population, an estimated one in 400 people carries a BRCA1 or BRCA2 mutation.

Dr. Steven Narod, the director of the familial breast cancer research unit, leads the research team that will evaluate the study. A professor at the University of Toronto's department of public health sciences, he has conducted many studies on the epidemiology of breast cancer.

Women who have had breast or ovarian cancer, or whose close relatives had, have always been able to get tested for the mutation at several sites in the city, including at the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and Princess Margaret Hospital. The cost is covered by OHIP.

Narod said that if this screening clinic shows that many Jewish women carry BRCA1 or BRCA2, he hopes the government will begin to cover all screening for susceptible Jewish women who have so far no indication of these cancers.

Those determined to be carriers of the mutations will receive all the "appropriate care and counselling that they require," Narod said.

Dr. Steven Narod

Since the cancer risk of those who carry the mutuations is about 80 per cent, this information is significant. Some women may choose to have prophylactic surgery, to remove their breasts and ovaries. Others might take tamoxifen, a drug that Narod has said has shown great promise in preventing the cancers. Others may opt to not do anything, particularly if they are in their childbearing years.

Those who find they are carriers of the mutation will also be able to counsel their daughters, mothers, sisters and aunts to be tested, so that they, too, can take the appropriate options.

Narod said that more than 1,000 women have already called for an appointment, so "if you want the test, you should call soon."

He said that studies dealing with these mutations are taking place all over the world – in Canada, Israel, United States, Brazil and other countries in South America. Scientists are looking to prevent breast and ovarian cancer, and to better treat it.

To be eligible for the study, you must be Jewish (Ashkenazi or Sephardi), between the ages of 25 and 80, a resident of Ontario, and not had previous testing for the BRCA1 or BRCA2 genes.

For more information, or to enrol in the study, call the familial breast cancer research unit at 416-351-3765.

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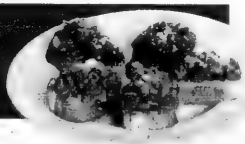

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Hate crime team short of funds

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A joint program of 11 Ontario police forces that collects intelligence on extremist groups is running out of money – again.

The Hate Crime Extremism Investigative Team was forced to scale down operations once its funding from the 2007-08 fiscal year ran out at the end of March, said Sgt. Don McKinnon of London Police Service. The unit has requested approximately $220,000 for the 2008-09 year, which began on April 1, but it has heard nothing from the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services, said McKinnon, the unit's team leader.

In the meantime, the unit is making do. "We've been operating, but we're severely limited. We're holding on. We've been very creative in how we do our spending."

The financial shortfall facing the unit is nothing new. Three years ago, *The CJN* reported on a similar cash crunch when the unit's funding ran out. In 2005, the unit had been operating on a budget of $93,000 per year but its finances fell short pending approval of new funds by the minister.

McKinnon said the team's operating funds are now more or less depleted. It is in danger of shutting its phone lines, mailboxes and still must pay its civilian analyst, Abbee Corb. Corb, who tracks the activities of

Continued on page 12

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Collision course

The status quo along Israel's frontier with the Gaza Strip is intolerable. As Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said last week, "We know that the situation as it is cannot continue. We are in the days of decision on this issue."

Rare is the day when an incident does not occur in which an Israeli or a Palestinian is traumatized, wounded or killed, or a building is damaged or destroyed, by the seemingly endless cycle of violence. Almost since the beginning of the second intifadah, Palestinian extremists have turned the border region into a free-fire zone, launching Qassam rockets, Grad rockets and mortars at Israeli towns – Sderot and Ashkelon – and at neighbouring kibbutzim. Since the Palestinian Authority has done virtually nothing to squelch the terrorism, Israel has hit back in legitimate self-defence. Regrettably, Israel's ground and air attacks have inadvertently claimed the lives of innocent Palestinians. Developments have gone from bad to worse since Israel's unilateral withdrawal in 2005, the seizure of Gaza a year ago this month by the terror group Hamas, and Israel's subsequent imposition of a blockade.

Realizing that the status quo is unsustainable, Israel has encouraged Egypt's envoy, Gen. Omar Suleiman, to broker a lasting ceasefire. Suleiman, the director of Egyptian intelligence and a veteran of the Yom Kippur War, has assiduously worked on the problem for the past few months, conferring with representatives from both Israel and Hamas. Egypt, which shares a border with Gaza, has a vested interest as well in achieving at least a measure of stability. Egypt has not forgotten that Hamas breached the Egyptian border last January in an attempt to end Israel's siege, which will likely be enforced until Hamas recognizes Israel's existence, renounces violence and accepts agreements that the Palestinian Authority and Israel have signed in good faith since the 1993 Oslo peace process.

Suleiman's mediation efforts, however, have so far borne no fruits because of seemingly irreconcilable differences between Israel and Hamas. Hamas wants Israel to open all border crossings immediately once a ceasefire goes into effect, but Israel insists on opening them only gradually and on condition that Gilad Shalit – a soldier kidnapped by Hamas in June 2006 – is released from captivity. Hamas hopes to extend the truce to the West Bank, but this is something that Israel is wary about because Hamas would probably exploit the lull to rebuild its infrastructure there and smuggle in new weapons. And, of course, Israel wants arms-smuggling tunnels to be shut down.

Despite his lack of progress in bridging the gaps, Suleiman continues to work on his plan. If he fails, the consequences could be deadly serious. Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak has warned that Israel is on a collision course with Hamas, and that failure to reach a truce may well force Israel to invade Gaza. According to reports, the Israeli army has preparations well in hand for an invasion. Barring one, Israel is thinking of creating a buffer zone between the Israeli and Palestinian sides of the border crossings. But if the past is any reliable guide, military solutions are not long-term answers. True, previous ceasefires have been broken and are thus hardly perfect instruments for achieving tranquillity. Yet the chance for peace is better than the misery of war. Egypt, therefore, should press on. -S.K.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Massive demonstrations, both for and against him, greeted then-Israeli cabinet minister Ariel Sharon when he came to speak in Montreal. He said Israel had soundly beaten the Palestine Liberation Organization in the Lebanon War and made its leaders realize that negotiations are the only road to peace.

Dry Bones SHAVUOT
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Conversions retroactively annulled

The recent ruling of the haredi conversion appeals court in Israel is a very sad and troubling one indeed ("Conversion controversy rears head in Israel," *CJN*, May 15). In one fell swoop, a widely respected religious Zionist rabbi and his authority have been seriously undermined, and his thousands of conversions retroactively annulled.

While some may argue that the haredim are simply "raising the bar" by asserting the most stringent of halachic standards, it is widely viewed that by so doing, the haredim are imposing their political will upon the non-receptive modern Orthodox and religious Zionist communities, and all other denominations within Israel and beyond. By narrowly interpreting the halachot surrounding conversions and other matters, they are permitting very little room for legitimate differences of opinion and are rejecting more lenient and widely inclusive approaches to Jewish law.

I am afraid that further capitulation to such intolerance in Israel and in the Diaspora will only contribute to the further deterioration and ultimate dismantling of rabbinic power in Israel, a development that may be unfortunately received with all too much joy, in all too many quarters.

Joseph Y. Adler
Toronto

* * *

Withdraw support to universities

I strongly support Sally Zerker's proposal to withdraw financial support from universities and other educational institutions, such as high schools, that support Israeli Apartheid Week under the guise of protecting "free speech" ("Withdraw financial support to universities," *CJN* letters, May 8). But this proposal should apply not just to small donors, but to all donors, Jewish and non-Jewish, private and corporate, as well as to government support.

Given the failure of attempts at a peaceful resolution – for example, by exposing Israeli Apartheid Week's ulterior motives and requesting that the universities not allow their grounds to be used for this hate fest – I call on all peace-loving alumni to publicly withdraw their support from these institutions in favour of institutions that have shown a dedication to truth and integrity above and beyond the socio-political pressures of the day.

And to the culpable presidents of the universities at which Israeli Apartheid Week takes place, a final word: surely we do not need to point to the 1930s and '40s to underscore the profound impact of "mere" words. Surely you do not have to be reminded of the horrendous consequences of such Nazi-style incitements to hatred. And surely you are as fully aware as we are that the big lie of Israeli Apartheid Week propaganda is fuelled and financed by organizations that are driven by this very hatred – namely, anti-Semitism!

Goldi Steiner
Toronto

* * *

Palestinian propaganda in *The CJN*

With so many other media outlets spouting Palestinian propaganda and revisionism, do we really need to see it in the pages of *The CJN* ("Re-branding Israel, *CJN* letters, May 22)?

Like so many other apologists for Palestinian terror, letter writer Bernard Katz ("Re-branding Israel," *CJN* letters, May 22) denies Israel the right to defend itself and its citizens. In calling the security barrier "illegal," he ignores the fact that it has already saved countless lives and prevented an untold number of terror attacks – and it has done so non-violently. By accusing Israel of "[killing] innocent non-combatants", he attempts to create a moral equivalency between the Israel Defence Forces and murderous groups such Hamas, Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, ignoring the fact that when they operate in and from civilian areas, it is they and not the IDF who must bear full responsibility for Palestinian civilian casualties. By telling us that Israel "creates a living hell" for Palestinians, he excuses the corruption of Fatah and the intransigence of Hamas, both of which are the true root causes of the misery that Palestinians are forced to endure.

Katz is certainly entitled to his opinions, no matter how objectionable and despicable they may be. I just wonder why *The CJN* feels the need to provide him with space to air them.

Stephen Tannenbaum
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Editor's note: Last week, an editorial error was made in Leonard Smith's letter ("Disagrees with letter writer," *CJN* letters, May 29). In the letter, a quote, attributed to Bernard Katz ("Re-branding Israel," *CJN* letters, May 22), should have read: "Israel must stop double dealing, stop pretending to seek peace while travelling the same old paths of dishonour, immorality and death."

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Schalit

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Perspectives

Heschel's voice still speaks

By RABBI BARUCH FRYDMAN-KOHL

Spiritual Radical: Abraham Joshua Heschel in America, the second volume of Edward Kaplan's biography of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel is well-written, thoughtful and comprehensive. It reviews the life of this towering figure of 20th century Judaism from his immigration to the United States from Europe in 1940 to his death in 1972.

The first volume, published in 1998 and co-authored with Rabbi Samuel Dresner, details the roots of this theologian who was raised in a traditional chassidic-rabbinic culture, but encouraged by his mother to study in a Polish gymnasium and to explore the secular Yiddish velt of Vilna. From Poland, the young Heschel went on to Berlin to study classical philosophy and art history at the University of Berlin. Heschel also composed Yiddish poetry, composed popular essays, initiated adult education programs, and completed a doctorate on the phenomenology of the Hebrew prophets. After the rise of Hitler, Rabbi Heschel immigrated to England in 1939 and made his way to America in 1940.

Rabbi Heschel was one of a small group of German-educated scholars saved by the heroic efforts of Rabbi Julian Morgenstern, president of Hebrew Union College (HUC) in Cincinnati. Kaplan reveals details of Rabbi Heschel's adjustment to American life, exploring his friendships and loneliness, his intellectual development and academic politics. Rabbi Heschel did not fit into the Reform rabbinical school, with its "customs and ceremonies" approach to Jewish life. With his wry sense of humour, Rabbi Heschel would refer playfully to his years in Ohio as "five years in Cin… cinnati."

While at HUC, Rabbi Heschel wrote critically about the natural theology of Albert Einstein and formally about medieval philosophy. He established contact with the academic leadership of Yeshiva University and the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). The two centres of Jewish study were not so distant from each other at the time: just as Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, a seminal figure in modern Orthodoxy, almost taught at JTS, so, too, was Rabbi Heschel almost hired by YU. Ultimately, Rabbi Heschel came to JTS in 1945 to serve as a counterpoint to the liberal naturalistic theology of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan.

Ironically, despite their theological differences, Rabbi Kaplan was a much warmer colleague to Rabbi Heschel than rabbis Louis Finkelstein and Louis Ginzberg, or Ginzberg's successor, Rabbi Saul Lieberman. Rabbi Heschel's focus on the spiritual, ethical and mystical elements of Judaism was outside the framework of their scholarly work, and his public profile a confirmation that he was a popular, not a serious, scholar.

By the mid-1950s, Rabbi Heschel had articulated his philosophy of religion, constructed a theology of Judaism, expressed his understanding of Jewish prayer, Shabbat and ritual, and formed his critique of American Judaism. We see how Rabbi Heschel erected the scaffolding of his thought by sensitively seeking key words to express his ideas. We can track Rabbi Heschel's effort to re-centre religious thought from the human to the divine, from the symbolic to the sanctified, and from the social to the sacred.

Rabbi Heschel served as a High Holy Day rabbi for Beth Tzedec Congregation in 1954, when the new synagogue had just been opened. Congregants were unhappy with his preaching and asked the young assistant rabbi, J. Benjamin Friedberg, to speak in place of Rabbi Heschel. Rabbi Friedberg refused to replace his teacher, and Rabbi Heschel finished the High Holy Day season.

Kaplan describes the complexity of Rabbi Heschel's personality: "courageous and shy, ambitious and humble, saintly and vain, a captivating mentor and a careless classroom teacher." In contrast to positive teaching experiences with a Shabbat afternoon study group in Cincinnati, small seminars in Chassidism at JTS, and visiting professor positions at universities, Rabbi Heschel was a diffident instructor of rabbinical students. Since Rabbi Heschel cared deeply for young people and made time for us to seek him out for counsel and advice, why was the classroom so different? Kaplan doesn't say.

In his speeches and articles, Rabbi Heschel used polarities to articulate his belief in the breadth of spiritual expression and action. What is the source of this methodology? Does it lie in chassidic and kabbalistic metaphors? Kaplan does not discuss this, either. Rabbi Heschel was a scholar who loved paradox and public confrontation. He tried to press Orthodoxy beyond what he perceived as the narrowness of "halachic man." He rebuked Reform for minimizing mitzvah. He criticized Conservative Judaism for its spiritual sclerosis. He censured secular Jews for their reduction of religion to sociology, psychology and anthropology.

Too modern for his chassidic relatives, too traditional for his Reform students, and unappreciated at JTS, Rabbi Heschel was not at home anywhere. Despite the adulation of non-Jews, Rabbi Heschel knew that Protestant seminaries were not places of Torah. He loved Israel, but did not visit so often. Theologically conservative and socially progressive, Rabbi Heschel became a public figure, despite the fact that he was bookish and a bit shy. Even at home, his pattern of observance was at variance with that of his beloved Sylvia.

Regretfully, Kaplan's book does not really disclose to us much of the private Rabbi Heschel. There were no diaries to reveal the more personal thoughts of this scholar and public intellectual. We learn little about what it was like to sit and sing with Rabbi Heschel at his Shabbat table. The interviews with students, associates and critics that are recorded are only partially revealing of Rabbi Heschel's hopes and anxieties. More importantly, the book is lacking a sense of what made Rabbi Heschel such a charismatic and powerful personality.

Kaplan, a professor of French literature at Brandeis University, has previously written with great sensitivity about Rabbi Heschel's writing style. He used alliteration, antithesis and aphorism to convey his content. Prof. Emil Fackenheim of the University of Toronto once characterized Rabbi Heschel's mode of presentation as aphoristic, descriptive and philosophico-argumentative. This style – which derived from classical midrash and chassidic rhetoric - was not one that suited academic philosophers and contributed to criticism by one well-known American-Jewish leader, who privately described Rabbi Heschel to me as "Yiddish stained glass windows." Yet it was his careful use of language, his poetic prose, that gave Rabbi Heschel's writing the lyricism that contributed to its compelling quality.

We read of the approbation from Will Herberg, Reinhold Niebuhr, Rabbi Marvin Fox, and Maurice Samuel. However, Rabbi Heschel's ideas also ignited criticism from diverse thinkers such as William Kristol, Rabbi Ira Eisenstein, Trude Weiss-Rosmarin and Rabbi Eliezer Berkovits. Was their rejection of Rabbi Heschel's theology based in a similar rejection of chassidic theology? Did anyone provide a critique of Rabbi Heschel from an overtly mitnagdic/rationalist viewpoint other than Rabbi Berkovits?

This volume also discusses the closeness Rabbi Heschel felt to the students who became his colleagues, friends and advocates. Rabbi Fritz Rothschild and Rabbi Seymour Siegel were his supporters within JTS. Rabbis Samuel Dresner and Marshall Meyer were his interpreters to the American rabbinate. Rabbis Wolfe Kelman and Marc Tanenbaum carefully presented Rabbi Heschel to the wider American scene.

We witness a transformation from the clean shaven Heszel (spelled this way on his passport to America) to a black goateed professor for his first trip to Israel in 1957. By the 1960s, Rabbi Heschel had a full white beard and a shaggy hair, giving him the image of a biblical prophet that he drew upon as he became better known. In the last decade of his life, along with the publication of theological works on the biblical prophets, rabbinic Judaism, chassidism and ethics, Rabbi Heschel began to speak more boldly about social problems as spiritual challenges. He addressed important and sensitive subjects such as civil rights for African-Americans, religious revisionism in the Catholic Church, the oppression of Soviet Jewry and the conduct of the Vietnam War. Was his concern for the larger world in the 1960s and earlier in the 1930s an outgrowth of his work on the prophets? Did it stem from his understanding of medieval philosophy as an intellectual enterprise stimulated by a spiritual quest?

Kaplan devotes close attention to Rabbi Heschel's role in the development of the papal encyclical *Nostre Aetate*, which declared that Jews were not responsible for the death of Jesus. We see how personal friendships and theological relationships opened doors for Rabbi Heschel to advocate for a changed understanding of Judaism and Jews in the eyes of Roman Catholicism.

In hitherto secret memoranda, Zachariah Shuster of the American Jewish Committee claimed that Rabbi Heschel overplayed his hand in a crucial audience with Pope Paul VI, almost dooming the historic opportunity for change within the Roman Catholic hierarchy. According to Shuster's account, Rabbi Heschel's sense of moral righteousness and his personal vanity endangered the negotiations at sensitive moments. This perspective, highly critical of Rabbi Heschel from a bureaucratic rival, is directly contradicted by Rabbi Heschel's own account. Shuster's description is difficult to accept, especially since Rabbi Heschel remained in close contact with the Vatican and was esteemed by leading Catholic theologians even after *Nostre Aetate* was issued. Among Catholic and Jewish scholars, Rabbi Heschel came to be seen as a signal figure in efforts to revise Catholic teachings about Jews and Judaism (a debate that's still in process in 2008).

Much has been written about Rabbi Heschel's last week and his presence at the Danbury Correctional Institute for the release of anti-war protester Rev. Philip Berrigan. I recall how frail Rabbi Heschel was on the Shabbat prior to his death. I escorted Sylvia and the rabbi home after the aufruf for his student, Rabbi Byron Sherwin. My wife, Josette, had made the air reservations for his flight to officiate at the wedding the following week in Chicago. I was to meet Rabbi Heschel at O'Hare Airport on Sunday morning. I'll never forget the call informing me that he had died. The many challenges presented by Rabbi Heschel's funeral on Sunday are described by Kaplan. In Chicago, the wedding of Rabbi Sherwin and Judith Schwartz went on, a mixture of the polarities of sadness and simchah.

Spiritual Radical is an excellent complement to the earlier volume, *Spiritual Witness*, offering a comprehensive picture of one of the most significant Jewish thinkers of the 20th century. Kaplan reveals the transitions of Rabbi Heschel from a Chassid to a European scholar to a post-Holocaust theologian who taught and embodied a vision of Torah that sought to bridge the intellectual, social and theological gaps of contemporary society. We come to see Rabbi Heschel as an exemplary individual (with flaws and foibles) whose mastery of philosophy, Kabbalah, chassidic thought and Jewish mysticism was linked to a esteem for the biblical prophets, a love for the State of Israel, and a reverence for the sanctity of all people.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl is spiritual leader of Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto.

Opinions

The humble hero

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Why be humble? It seems so passé. The word "humility" conjures up the medieval image of a cringing, cloistered clergyman, subsisting on bread crumbs and brackish water. This sort of self-abnegation seems out of place in the 21st century, where self-promotion and self-indulgence are the norm. Humility can only get in the way of "exercising leadership" or "promoting your personal brand."

We reject humility out of ignorance. Being humble has nothing to do with being meek or lacking self confidence. In fact, humility is the hallmark of any true hero. The humble hero doesn't aspire to glory, or even humility. He simply wants to do his job. Or, as the Mishnah puts it: "Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai would say: 'If you have learned a great deal of Torah, don't take credit for yourself – it's for this reason that you were created.'"

This Mishnah teaches us that authentic responsibility is not pursued in order to attain glory. The truly humble live to achieve lofty goals, but make little of it. They see themselves simply as doing what is expected of them. Their attitude is that they are "just doing their job."

"I'm just doing my job" is the motto of humble heroes. Their humility is based on a work ethic that drives them to succeed in silence, content to have accomplished what life expected of them.

On May 12, Irena Sendler passed away. During World War II, Irena, a young mother and social worker, was a member of a Polish underground devoted to saving Jews. With great courage and cunning, Irena used her position to smuggle 2,500 children out of the Warsaw ghetto and hide them in orphanages.

Reading the obituaries about Irena, it's hard not to notice the differences between this humble woman and today's erstwhile heroes. Our contemporary heroes are celebrities, people who look good on baseball diamonds, movie screens and the red carpet. The "entertainment media" breathlessly follows their every move. These celluloid heroes have our undivided attention and are famous for being famous.

But a real hero doesn't look good. They do good. And after they've done good, they don't revel in self-congratulation. Rather, they think about what more they could have done. After receiving a long overdue award from Poland in 2007, Irena declared: "I could have done more… this regret will follow me to my death."

Irena is a genuine hero. Like all humble heroes, she was "just doing her job." Or, to put it in her words: "Every child saved with my help and the help of all the wonderful secret messengers, who today are no longer living, is the justification of my existence on this Earth, and not a title to glory."

I wish the justification for my existence on earth was as good as Irena's.

We could do with more Jerusalem

Gil Troy in Montreal

June 2 marked Yom Yerushalayim," celebrating the 41st anniversary of Jerusalem's reunification, achieved in June 1967. Anniversaries invite celebration and contemplation. We delight in our good fortune, while reflecting on how to deepen our relationships with individuals or guiding ideas.

There is much to celebrate, especially when we recall the situation in May 1967. For 19 years, the border between Israel and Jordan had run through the city. This jagged gash cut across the heart of the Jewish people, dividing the Old City from the new, and east Jerusalem from west.

This border was neither quiet nor peaceful. Snipers from the Jordanian side occasionally took potshots at innocent Israelis, keeping them wary whenever they glanced toward their historic Old City. Meanwhile, the Jewish community that had thrived in the Jewish Quarter for centuries was in exile. Their homes were ransacked, and 58 of their 59 synagogues were destroyed and defiled. The Mount of Olives, a Jewish cemetery in continuous use for 2,500 years, had tombstones that were wrenched off and used to build a road and the Intercontinental Hotel, where Yasser Arafat formally launched his Palestine Liberation Organization in 1964.

Contrary to some recent historians' claims, Israel had no desire to launch the broader 1967 war or conquer Jerusalem. Even after the war began, even after the Jordanians had begun shelling west Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Eshkol sent Jordan's King Hussein a letter through the good offices of the United Nations general, Odd Bull, requesting peace – and warning of the risks if the Jordanians continued attacking. This gesture was not simply a hope for peace. Israel had few soldiers and minimal armaments in its capital, with little hope of repulsing a major Jordanian assault.

Israel's lightening quick and surgical victory was, therefore, all the more extraordinary. We need to remember the fragility and wonder of those times today. And we need to ask ourselves. "What does having a united Jerusalem do for us, for those living far away in Canada, the United States or elsewhere?"

Some think of Jerusalem as the great Jewish gravitational force, focusing the Jewish people throughout the years of exile – and today. As one speaker celebrating Israel's anniversary proclaimed, Israel's story "is the story of how faith guided the Jewish people through centuries of bitter exile. It is a story of how those living behind ghetto walls and barbed wire never lost sight of Jerusalem. And it is a story of how brave pioneers risked everything to redeem the promise of this land. It is a marvellous story."

Others think of Jerusalem as more of a building block of identity. A second speaker, celebrating Israel's anniversary recently marvelled: "The idea that one could hang onto one's sense of values, and have a sense of family, and despite being an outsider, somehow still have a place to come back to… Not only [to] a physical place, but also an emotional place and a spiritual place, was very powerful to me. So even before I fully understood the history of the Jewish people, the Zionist movement was something that I related to and connected to from my own experience."

The first speaker, U.S. President George W. Bush, deftly intertwined the forces of faith and history, emphasizing Judaism's uniqueness as both a religion and a nation - for a religion does not need a capital city, only a nation does. The second speaker, American Senator and presidential hopeful Barack Obama, appreciated the multiple dimensions of Jerusalem's meaning for Jews, both yesterday and today.

Together, these two tributes bring alive the words of Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harter, who said: "All of my life, Israel has been a symbol – a symbol of the triumph of hope and faith."

It's time to learn from our leaders. If these non-Jewish statesmen can find this much inspiration in our story, in our homeland, in our capital, why can't more of us? If these individuals can articulate what Jerusalem and Israel mean to them, why can't we?

We need more of this kind of depth and understanding in our lives, individually and collectively. Starting that kind of engagement is the best way to celebrate 41 years of peace and reunification. We need more Jerusalem in our lives.

On holidays, early and late

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Maybe it was the sudden burst of sunny weather that had long-buried bulbs pushing out of their beds in an explosion of bloom and colour, or the unseasonable warmth that gifted us here in Canada with a *chag ha'aviv* – a festival of spring – that truly felt spring-like. But over and over, people kept saying to me during the last round of festival celebration: "Ah, the holidays are late this year."

The current festival, Shavuot, it seems, will be late, as well. So far as I know, only Jews regularly comment on the premature or tardy arrival of their festival days. Other cultures seem to have better-trained holidays, as punctual and prompt as Swiss trains and computerized birthday reminders.

Ours, by contrast, are made more unruly by the interplay between lunar months and solar years. Like overeager dinner guests, our holidays catch us before we've mopped up the mess in the kitchen. Or, like party prima donnas, they make a grand entrance after the hors d'oeuvres have disappeared and the main course has dried up in the oven.

Cleaning up from the endless array of meals that are the hallmark of any Jewish celebration, I began to mull over what the appropriate rejoinder should be to remarks about the earliness or lateness of our holidays. Although Passover is long over, its accoutrements safely tucked away for next year, Shavuot is upon us, and it, too, promises to be "late." As all future major and minor festivals and fast days will be either early or late, I thought I should be prepared.

How might one respond to comments about the untimeliness of our holidays? One might offer a response that is simply informative, even pedagogic. "Yes, they're late this year, of course. It's a leap year." Or, "Early? Yes, certainly. That's why next year is a leap year."

Or one might offer the more elaborate, pedantic response. "You know, don't you, that the lunar calendar must be periodically adjusted to keep it in synch with the seasons of the solar year. The Jewish calendar works on a 19-year cycle, adding a total of seven months over the course of 19 years. Holidays are always 'late' in the third, sixth, eighth, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years, because that's when we add the extra month. Oh, and you must know that not every non-leap year has the same number of days, nor does every leap year have the same number of days. That's because sometimes, some months have 29 days, and sometimes these months have 30 days. The way it works is…"

By this point, before you can even get to the part about which days of the week certain holidays will never, ever, fall on, whoever made the innocent comment about the unpunctual holiday has long since disappeared, and you notice that people are staring at the person walking down the street and muttering into the air about months and days and moons and suns.

Alternatively, one might offer a statistical response, citing the number of times in a 100-year span that Pesach occurs in early and in late April, or that Shavuot occurs in May or in June. Or one might try the homiletic approach. "No, it is not the holiday that is early or late. The holiday is always on time. It is we who are too early or too late." Or the personal response: "The year I was born, the holiday was also very late." Or the perplexed response: "Why can't they just figure this holiday thing out for once and for all?" Or the frustrated response: "How can I be ready for the holiday when it comes this early?" Or the paranoid response: "They are deliberately trying to keep us off-guard." Or the feminist response: "The rabbis wanted to keep women in the kitchen." Or the Zen response: "Whenever it is, there it is."

As a literature professor, I'm partial to the metaphorical approach. This perennial tussle of riptides and solar squalls, this managed chaos that comes of dancing in the moonlight and singing in the sunshine to separate rhythms, this tension of ordering the ebb and flow of our lives according to celestial bodies that have their own distinct and different orbits – isn't this the stuff of our lives? Isn't it, after all, the blessing of creation?

The Kirshner File

Peace would be good for both Israel and Syria

The momentous news that Israel and Syria have laid the groundwork for a resumption of peace negotiations was surprising yet expected. In a joint statement issued on May 21, Israel and Syria disclosed that their representatives in Istanbul had conducted three days of secret indirect talks through Turkey. The two sides said that they had conducted a "dialogue in a serious and continuous manner" in a concerted effort to reach a comprehensive peace accord, and that they would meet again soon.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert described the meetings as a historical breakthrough, while Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem said that Damascus had agreed to revive the talks after receiving firm assurances from Israel, via Turkey, that Israel was willing to make a full withdrawal from the Golan Heights and thus restore the pre-1967 border.

Last week, Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan noted that talks may be upgraded to face-to-face encounters should "meaningful and concrete developments" take place in the near future. Babican's upbeat assessment caught many Israelis by surprise, given the accumulation of tensions between Israel and Syria in the past year.

Walid Moallem

Last April, nine months after the eruption of the Second Lebanon War, during which the Syrian-backed Lebanese militia Hezbollah bombarded Israel with nearly 4,000 rockets, the Israeli army held widely publicized training manoeuvres, supposedly in anticipation of an offensive by Syria to recapture the Golan. Syrian officials, from President Bashar Assad on down, had asserted that Syria was intent on regaining the Golan by means of diplomacy or war.

On Sept. 6, 2007, Israel turned up the heat by at least several notches when Israeli combat jets bombed a Syrian military site near Turkey. Not since October 2003 had Israel sent warplanes into Syria. Israel's air raid occurred shortly after a Palestinian suicide bomber linked to Islamic Jihad – supported by Syria – killed 21 Israelis in a Haifa restaurant, in one of the worst such incidents of its kind since the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000.

In a show of force meant as a warning to Damascus, Israel bombed a disused Palestinian base in Syria and acknowledged its deed. But after destroying Syria's North Korean-designed nuclear reactor, Israel remained conspicuously silent, refusing to take responsibility for the raid. Syria was embarrassed by the bombing, having failed to inform the International Atomic Energy Agency about its clandestine nuclear project. Syria, nevertheless, played it cool, insisting that Israel had merely hit an empty base. Israel did not press the point, unwilling to further antagonize the prickly Syrians.

Five months later, tensions boiled over yet again when Imad Mughniyah, the deputy secretary of Hezbollah, was gunned down in Damascus by unknown assailants. Speaking for Syria, parliamentarian Mohammed Habash claimed that Israel and its "Zionist agents" had carried out the killing. The Israeli government denied complicity, yet Israel had a sufficient reason to eliminate Mughniyah, one of the masterminds of the bombing of the Israeli Embassy and the Jewish community centre in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in 1992 and 1994 respectively.

Amid the rising tension, Israel and Syria were reaching out to each other in a bid to jump-start negotiations. Talks began in 1991 after the Madrid peace conference, broke off in 1996 after a succession of Palestinian suicide bombings that killed 60 Israelis within a period of about a week, resumed in 1999 in Shepherdstown, W. Va., under American auspices, and collapsed again in March 2000 following an unsuccessful meeting between the presidents of the United States and Syria, Bill Clinton and Hafez Assad, Bashar Assad's father.

Three years after his father's untimely death in June 2000, Assad told the *New York Times* that he was ready to resume talks with Israel. By Syria's count, 85 per cent of the issues had already been settled in previous rounds.

The Israeli prime minister of the day, Ariel Sharon, was loathe to relinquish the Golan, a strategic plateau captured by Israel in the Six Day War and now populated by some 18,000 Jewish settlers. Sharon said that new talks could not be launched unless Syria ended its armed presence in Lebanon, permitted the Lebanese army to patrol the Israeli frontier and closed the Damascus offices of such Palestinian radical group as Hamas and Islamic Jihad. Sharon, determined to keep the Golan at all costs, knew that the Syrians would not accept his conditions, and he was right. Talks never materialized.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan

In the winter of 2007, however, Olmert conferred with Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Istanbul, informing him that Israel was now prepared to sound out Syrian intentions. Previously, Olmert had expressed a vague interest in engaging Syria,

The benefits of a peace treaty with Syria are clear, even though U.S. President George W. Bush seems more intent on isolating Syria in punishment for its meddling in Lebanon and its implicit support of insurgents in Iraq.

For Israel, a rapprochement with Syria would be highly beneficial. Israel's existence and its place in the Middle East would be recognized by Syria, one of its most implacable enemies. And, of course, Syria could be a lucrative market for Israeli exports.

Recognition of Israel by other Arab League nations would eventually be forthcoming, and the Palestinians would be pressured to settle their conflict with Israel. Syria could be decoupled from the Arab rejectionist camp, possibly forcing it to downgrade its alliance with Iran, Israel's most dangerous foe today.

In addition, Syria could be weaned away from its active sponsorship of Hezbollah and Palestinian extremist organizations.

Syria would benefit as well. Syria would regain the Golan, thereby burnishing Assad's image and reinforcing his grip on the country. Syria's relationship with the United States and the European Union would undergo a sea change, much to the advantage of its creaky and anemic economy.

Once Israel and Syria were committed to using the Turkish back channel, they entered a new phase in their often hostile relationship, and the signs were unmistakable.

Last November, on the eve of renewing talks with the Palestinians in Annapolis, Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak – a seasoned veteran of the Syrian track – said that Israel should seriously consider opening negotiations with Syria.

In January 2008, the Syrian foreign minister declared that Syria was not seeking a military solution to its dispute with Israel and was primed for a fresh round of negotiations. In February, Alon Liel, the former director-general of Israel's foreign ministry, met Syria's ambassador to the United States, Imad Mustafa, and heard that Assad wanted to restart discussions. Jimmy Carter, the ex-U.S. president, reported two months ago that Assad was "eager" to deal with Israel.

Shortly afterward, a Syrian cabinet minister, Buthama Shaaban, officially broke the silence. She said that Olmert had indeed sent a message to Assad to the effect that Israel was ready to cede the Golan in exchange for peace. As if to confirm her comment, Olmert, in an interview with *Yediot Aharonot*, said, "I am very interested in a peace process with Syria." Ironically, Olmert may not be around to taste the fruits of his efforts to defuse Israel's six-decade-old conflict with Syria. Embroiled in a corruption scandal of the first magnitude, he may well lose his position as prime minister long before Israel and Syria ever get down to the business of fleshing out the terms of a historic peace treaty.

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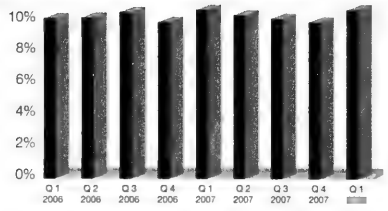

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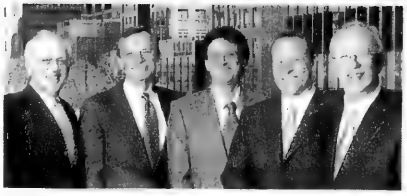

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Kensington designated a historic site

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Several hundred people attended a ceremony in the Kensington Market area on May 25, as a plaque was unveiled designating the once-Jewish neighbourhood in downtown Toronto as a national historic site.

Cyrel Troster, a board member of the Ontario Jewish Archives, gives *The CJN* a sneak peek of the large kosher cake served at the ceremony in Bellevue Square. [Bill Gladstone photo]

The event was sponsored by Parks Canada and included speeches by Jason Kenney, secretary of state for multiculturalism and Canadian identity, Toronto Mayor David Miller, and representatives of several ethnic communities.

Representing the Jewish community were David Koschitzky, chair of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and Ellen Scheinberg, director of the Ontario Jewish Archives, both of whom made short addresses from a flag-draped podium in Bellevue Square, just steps from the old Kiever Synagogue.

Kensington Market was an important staging ground for English and Irish working-class immigrants in the mid-to-late 19th century. A second wave of Jewish immigrants arrived between 1905 and 1930 and established the market and family-owned shops that defined the neighbourhood's character. Waves of Portuguese, Chinese, South Asians, Afro-Caribbeans and other immigrants added new flavour and colour in the postwar era.

The government's recognition of the neighbourhood "will ensure that the important history of this district will be appreciated for generations to come," Kenney said.

Parks Canada arranged for both klezmer music and cake following the ceremony. Hermes Bakery provided a large kosher cake decorated with a neighbourhood map and depictions of the area's many Victorian houses, streetscapes and distinctive buildings, including the Kiever and Minsker synagogues.

"The professionals who worked with us from Parks Canada – they were fabulous, by the way – wanted a cake for 400 people, and it was gone by the end of the event," said Cyrel Troster, a board member of the Ontario Jewish Archives, which gives occasional guided tours of the Spadina area, some hosted by Troster herself.

The plaque unveiled at the event will be permanently installed in Bellevue Square shortly. A second plaque, featuring the same illustrations as on the cake, is to follow within several months.

Beside two nearby park benches, a life-size statue of the late Al Waxman, star of the *King of Kensington* television show, seemed to smile approvingly at the proceedings, happy that his childhood domain was getting more of the recognition it so richly deserves.

Valuable tool used by police

Continued from page 6

hate groups on the Internet, is responsible for maintaining the team's database, which boasts 6,000 files, reports, photographs and other documents. The database is accessible to hate crimes and intelligence services of the 11 participating police forces as well as the RCMP and CSIS, said McKinnon. Police units in Toronto, London, Waterloo Region, Hamilton, York Region, Ottawa and Guelph are among the team members.

McKinnon said the program is a valuable tool used by police to gather intelligence and prevent hate crimes. If police attend hate marches or other events, they could nip in the bud any trouble that might occur, he said.

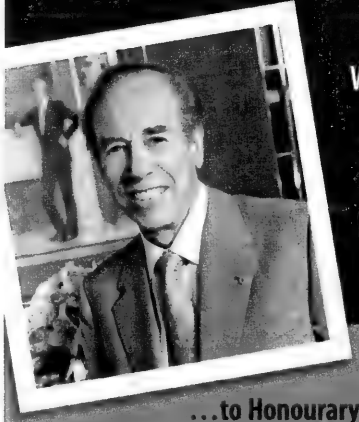
The unit has added an educational component to its work, he continued. It has produced three training videos on hate crimes distributed to frontline police officers, to community groups and to Crown attorneys and judges.

McKinnon said funding shortfalls have occurred in the last few years, though in the end the province came through with support. "It's always been last second funding," he said.

Tony Brown, a spokesperson for the ministry, said more than $726,000 has been provided to the police unit since funding began in 2003. "We have received a funding proposal and we are in the process of reviewing it," he said.

Brown said the unit's grants are reviewed annually. He would not give a timeline for a decision on the current funding request.

Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem



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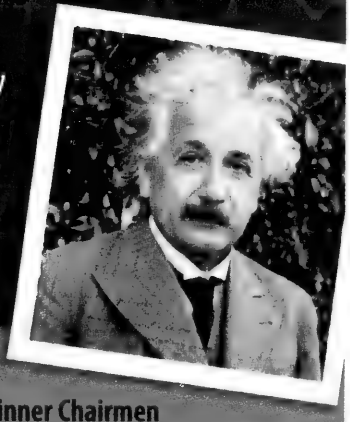

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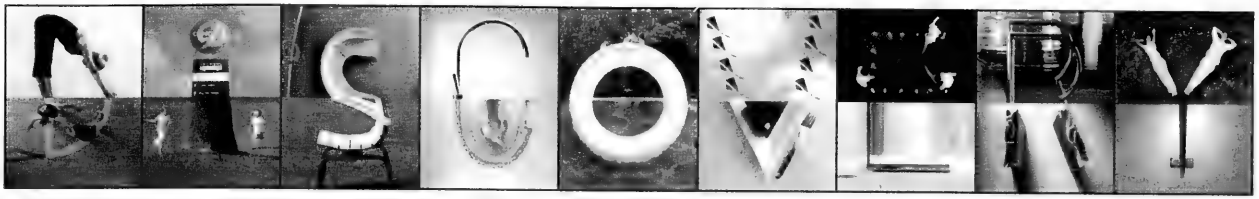

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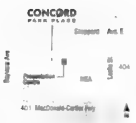

Presentation Centre:
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Associated celebrates its 100th anniversary

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto celebrates its 100th anniversary June 11 with a birthday bash at its Hurwich branch, one of a series of events this year that will culminate in a gala centennial dinner in November.

"One hundred years of Associated equals 100 years of Jewish education in Toronto," said Deena Nathanson-Gauze, a historian by training and an AHS parent who is compiling material for a collectible book on the school's history.

Before the school, which now serves 2,000 students on three campuses, first opened its doors in downtown Toronto, local Jewish families relied on private teachers to give their children a Jewish education.

Associated, which started its day school in the mid-1940s, has the same mission and philosophy as it did 100 years ago, Nathanson-Gauze said. The school has always been open to everyone in the community regardless of socio-economic status or level of Jewish observance, a notion that was innovative at the time, she added.

But a ledger from the school's early days reflects at least one aspect of life that has changed, said Nathanson-Gauze, who is also serving as archivist for the centennial project.

The ledger, dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, includes reasons for students' absences. "Some of [the students] had to go to work after school," she said. "These were children of immigrant families, and it was the Depression."

The school's "ladies' auxiliary," a precursor of today's parents' association, played a role that is still familiar today, fundraising for the school and its activities. However, Nathanson-Gauze noted, the group also ensured that children from financially strapped families had clothes and even shoes.

Probably the oldest artifact she has is a copy of a High Holy Day speech from the school's earliest days that was read from local pulpits, exhorting parents to send their children to the fledgling school.

"There are all sorts of wonderful things," Nathanson-Gauze said. She noted in particular an engraved silver trowel used at several groundbreaking ceremonies and dating back to the mid-1920s, when the school opened its building on Brunswick Avenue.

Nathanson-Gauze said she would welcome additional contributions – things like older photos, school projects and pictures of group activities like the annual Israel walk – which can be made through any branch of the school.

By the time Mark Smiley, the AHS director of education, was a student at the school in the 1960s and early 1970s, Associated was a fixture in the Toronto Jewish community at its then sole location on Neptune Drive.

Smiley recalls "wonderful Shabbatons" in grades 7 and 8, which he says are still a positive feature of the school.

But he also remembers, with what seems to be a mix of regret and nostalgia, the pranks his class used to pull.

"I'll be honest. Part of my success in the United States was knowing what we used to get away with here, and being a couple of steps ahead of the children," Smiley said of the early part of his career in Jewish education before he returned to Toronto.

"I happen to have an advanced degree in spitball shooting," he quipped.

However, he noted, school alumni have gone on to distinguish themselves in a diverse array of fields.

At least three other graduates head Jewish schools in other cities, and alumni can be found on university faculties, in research labs, in the legal field and in the film industry, he said. The school also has writers and rabbis, said Smiley, who was himself ordained by the Conservative movement last year.

The biggest difference at Associated today, Smiley said, is that "the school has fully embraced best practices in both Jewish and general education… [regarding] teaching and learning, technology, special needs and finding high level Judaic leaders."

As for the future, "the field of education never stops evolving," Smiley said. "I think if you allow yourself to stand still, you're going to fall behind."

For further information about centennial events, which include the establishment of a $5-million endowment fund and the dedication of a sefer Torah, go to www.associatedhebrewschools.com/Centennial.cfm.

ISRAEL@60 WINNER: **United Synagogue Day School student Joshua White won USDS' Israel@60 contest, held last month for some 270 middle school students from two USDS campuses to test their knowledge of Israel. Judges for the contest finals came from the Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Agency. Joshua won $1,000 toward a trip to Israel.**

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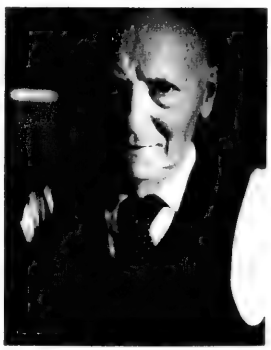

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Taking Care of Business

More than 300 people made their way to Toronto's Sheraton Centre Hotel recently, to hear – and learn – from some of the best and brightest within Toronto's business, retail, investment, real estate and entertainment communities.

This assortment of business leaders brought their entrepreneurial and business insights to UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Taking Care of Business 2 conference.

Some of the featured, high-profile speakers included Lawrence Bloomberg, BloombergSen; Mark Breslin, Yuk Yuk's; Aubrey Dan, DanCap Productions; Jay Hennick, FirstService Corporation; Warren Kimel, Fabricland; Caryn Lerner, Holt Renfrew & Co. Ltd; Jay Switzer, media consultant; Miles Nadal, MDC Partners; Sam Reisman, The Rose Corporation; Dori Segal, First Capital Realty; Avery Shenfeld, CIBC World Markets; and Fred Waks, RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust.

Chaired by Howard Lichtman, Cyril Drabinsky and Mitchell Oelbaum, Taking Care of Business 2 also featured some of Israel's leading entrepreneurs and venture capitalists.

"In keeping with our Jewish traditions and values, the title 'Taking Care of Business' relates not only to traditional business, but also to the obligation we all share of taking care of our community," said Lichtman.

(l-r) Cyril Drabinsky, Howard Lichtman, Mitchell Oelbaum, Co-Chairs, Taking Care of Business 2.

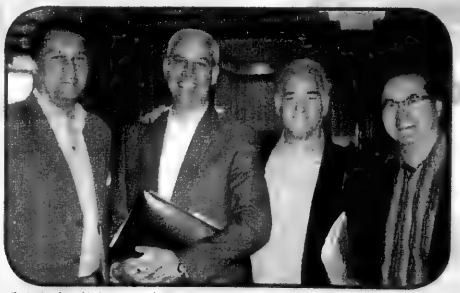
Jeff Sackman, President & CEO of Think Film, and a Taking Care of Business 2 Committee member and moderator.

(l-r) Elise Kalles and Susan Makin, participants at the event, alongside Jay Hennick, Founder and CEO of FirstService Corporation - speaker for the Entrepreneurial Panel.

(l-r) Leonard Abramsky (moderator), Managing Partner of Brookfield Financial Real Estate Group; Zelick Altman, Managing Director of Lasalle Investment Management; Tom Schwartz, President and CEO of CAP REIT; Fred Waks, Executive Vice-President & Chief Operating Officer, RioCan Real Estate Investment Trust; Dori Segal, President & CEO, First Capital Realty - speakers for the Real Estate Panel.

(l-r) Mark Breslin, Yuk Yuks; Aubrey Dan, President and Founder of DanCap Productions - speakers for the Entertainment Panel.

(l-r) Warren Kimel, G.M. and V.P. of Fabricland; Michael Waitzer, Acuity Group Inc; Caryn Lerner, President of Holt Renfrew & Co. Ltd. - speakers for the Retail Panel.



(l-r) Richard Wajs, President, TWC International; Steve Pezim, Co-Founder and Managing Director, The Bedford Consulting Group; Daniel Weinzweig, Managing Partner, Searchlight; Rick Chad, President, Chad Management Group - speakers for the Hiring Trends Panel.

(l-r) Cyril Drabinsky, Co-Chair of Taking Care of Business 2 with Gilbert Palter, Co-Founder of EdgeStone Capital Partners and speaker at the event.

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Greater Toronto Area

Annex Shul group gives back to community

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

In March 2007, Jonathan Polak was going through a difficult time in both his personal and professional lives.

Then Passover came along.

"It was a break in my life," Polak, 26, said. "I found myself completely surrounded by commotion and noise. I enjoyed that day, and I thought this should be the last time I enjoy my family by myself."

Polak, an active member of the Annex Shul, decided to bring that joy to the Jewish community by setting up a volunteer group for young students and professionals.

Along with his family and more than 20 volunteers, Polak organized the group's first event this past Passover at the L'Chaim Retirement Home, on Sheppard Avenue West.

"When we arrived, no one was saying anything or moving, but as people started coming, the atmosphere changed," he said.

The seder, held on the second day of Passover, brought together a variety of people from different religious backgrounds.

"Some of the secular Jews had nowhere to go for the seder. A lot of people haven't been to a real seder before. The event wasn't [just] religious. The purpose was to help people. We all have an interest in helping a disadvantaged group," Polak said.

While many volunteers were from the Annex shul, some came from as far as Waterloo. Others didn't belong to any shul.

"One girl who has never come out is now joining the Annex Shul for services," Polak said.

Rabbi Aaron Levy of the Annex Shul sees this group as a positive opportunity for the community.

"It's a fantastic initiative. It's an opportunity for young adults to bring joy to others," he said.

Polak will continue planning events and is in the process of organizing one for Shavuot. It will be held at the Wolfond Centre at the University of Toronto, in partnership with Reena.

Elana Metter, one of the volunteers, sees the group as an inexpensive way to give back to the community.

"A lot of ways to volunteer are cost prohibitive," she said. "For this, you're just giving your time. Everyone can give time."

Metter also enjoyed the variety of people who came out.

"It covered a broad spectrum," she said. "I like having people with different Jewish backgrounds there. You get a richer experience."

Through his new group, Polak is trying to create links in the Jewish community.

"There's a stratification of Jews. They tend to be friends with [people]from the same backgrounds. I'd like to see groups intermingle more."

Polak, who was born in Paraguay, has spent time in China, where he became involved in Shanghai's Jewish community.

He said there's a difference between that community and Toronto's.

"In Toronto, synagogues are not focal points. In China, [Judaism] is a societal religion. It's about people coming together. Here, we don't reach out. I'd like to see places of worship become more of a community."

Polak hopes his group will help create some of the connections he saw in China.

"In Shanghai, there is a small Jewish community. In Toronto, there isn't really a community. It's harder to live in China – the poverty is so powerful, the suffering is great and the compassion is so little. But having that community there [gives you] a sense of Judaism."

Polak said he experienced a unique sense of social bonding in China.

"There was one Israeli there that had a wine importing company. He had money troubles, and people in the community [raised] money for him. He was taken care of. I don't know if that would happen here. That's how Judaism should be."

Raviv Israel, one of the group's co-organizers, sees it as an opportunity to learn about different Jewish communities.

"It helps people connect. There's Judaism in different countries," said Israel, who was born in India.

"It's important that people know that there are Jews in India. A lot of people aren't aware of that. [Groups like this] help expose them to that, especially if you have people from India or China. People asked me a lot of questions at the event, but that's good. I'm all for that."

Israel hopes the group will expand.

"We were [at the seder] for a couple of hours. After that, life goes on. It made Passover better, but it wasn't life changing. In the future, I want us to establish ourselves. Hopefully we'll look into ongoing events," he said.

Metter wants to continue volunteering with Polak's group.

"I said I'd help his mother cook for the next event," she said. "I hope it grows but it's too early to say. Grassroots groups [like this one] start small, but they have the potential to grow."

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Greater Toronto Area

Syria's motivations for talks spurs debate

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The recent revelation that Israel had begun indirect peace negotiations with Syria brought a flurry of media analysis, including an opinion piece in the *Globe and Mail* by Michael Bell, a former Canadian ambassador to (at different times) Egypt, Jordan and Israel ("A conversion on the road to Damascus?" May 27).

Bell rejected the view of some that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was trying to distract attention from the corruption scandal he's currently embroiled in. Instead, Bell praised Olmert for having "displayed courage and foresight in committing to negotiations."

Bell wrote: "With the threat of Islamic radicalization rife in the region, Mr. Olmert realizes it's in Israel's most basic interest to make substantial concessions for peace, including it seems, the return of territory to Syria," namely, the Golan Heights.

But what about Syria's concessions to Israel? Bell's answer is twofold: First, Syria would rein in Hezbollah in Lebanon, and second, Iran, by losing its only Arab ally, Syria, would suffer a serious blow to its regional ambitions, including its support of Hamas.

In fact, according to Bell, if Israeli-Syrian negotiations succeed, "the so-called Shia crescent, linking Iran, through Iraq, to Syria and Lebanon, could well crumble."

This sanguine view doesn't explain why, apart from getting the Golan Heights back, Syria would be willing to give up its radicalism, including its close, long-standing relationship with Tehran. Beyond relinquishing its support for extremists operating against Israel, would Damascus be prepared to offer Israel full peace?

Bell acknowledges that, currently, a majority of skeptical Israelis oppose negotiations with Syria. They see the Golan Heights as too valuable a strategic asset and do not trust Syria. Bell, however, notes that according to "many in Israeli military intelligence," in a missile age, "withdrawal from the Golan with appropriate guarantees of demilitarization, would enhance, not imperil, security."

There is a debate in Israel on all these points. Barry Rubin, author most recently of the book *The Truth About Syria*, takes a very skeptical view about Syria's interest in peace with Israel. In his May 25 *Jerusalem Post* column, headlined "The Syrian talks aren't serious," he wrote that "the idea that Syria wants real peace, will recognize Israel, move away from Iran, abandon Hamas or Hezbollah, and cease terrorist meddling in Iraq is the purest nonsense. All these steps are against the regime's vital interests. Yet... it can play the talks game without doing any of these things."

* * *

Last month, it was announced (including by cbc.ca) that Tony Burman, CBC News' editor-in-chief for the last seven of his 35-years with the network, would join Al-Jazeera English as the managing director. His appointment follows that of Avi Lewis, a former CBC host, who joined the network's Washington bureau in February.

Meanwhile, David Marash, a veteran American correspondent and substitute host for ABC's *Nightline*, quit his job as Washington anchor for Al-Jazeera English in March. Marash said he could no longer tolerate the network's anti-American bias and increasing editorial control from its Doha headquarters, mostly at the hands of its British administrators.

Tony Burman

A May 15 *National Post* report, "Burman to head Al-Jazeera station," cited a *Guardian* newspaper interview in which Burman said he would "put an emphasis on the expansion of Al-Jazeera's vast audience reach into important new areas of the world, most notably North America."

Al-Jazeera English was launched in November 2006 and has an estimated audience of 110 million viewers worldwide. However, Bruce DeMara, in his *Toronto Star* story on Burman's appointment ("Ex-CBC editor joins Al-Jazeera," May 15), wrote that the network is not available in Canada and the United States. (In fact it's mostly unavailable – it's carried by a very small number of local U.S. cable outlets, but no Canadian cable companies offer it.)

Burman, now based in Doha, told DeMara that this lack of access "is something we're all determined and hopeful will change, because I think Canadians, particularly Canadians, would respond incredibly well to the richness and range of Al-Jazeera's programming."

DeMara explained that while Al-Jazeera has received "tentative regulatory approval" in Canada, "cable companies have not applied to carry its signal because of onerous monitoring requirements aimed at preventing the spread of anti-Semitic and anti-Israel bias."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

We deeply mourn the passing of our beloved

Roszika (Oma) Ziner OBM

a beacon of light, a pillar of strength, generosity and love to mankind.

May her memory and legacy be inscribed in our hearts forever.

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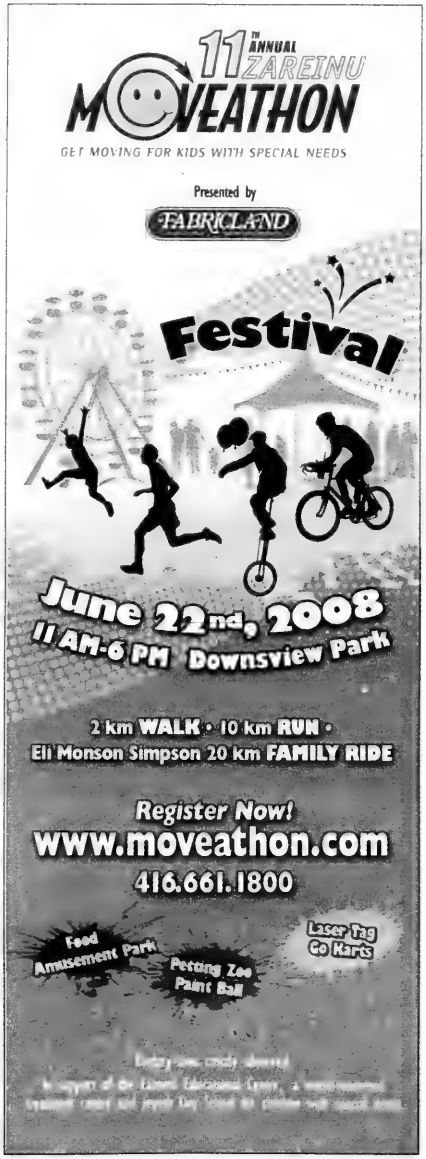

Jewish Life

This, too, is Torah

By RABBI MARK FRIEDMAN

Reb Haim Brisker, the grandfather of the distinguished scholar and teacher, Rabbi Joseph Ber Soloveitchik, was recognized as a gaon, a genius and luminary who was respected by the entire European Jewish community. He was also a very special individual who had great concern for the needs of every Jew.

Occasionally, Reb Haim was confronted with the problem of children who were born out of wedlock. Sometimes a girl who was unmarried and pregnant would come to him and fearfully reveal her secret. Reb Haim would comfort the girl and tell her to bring him the baby when it was born, and he would find a good home for child.

Sometimes such babies were left on his doorstep without the mother identifying herself, and Reb Haim would make certain that the baby was placed with a good family. Before the baby was placed in a home, Reb Haim would arrange for a wet nurse to take care of it.

Once, a nurse Reb Haim had hired came to his home and demanded her pay for taking care of the child. Reb Haim, who had very little money because he was always sharing it with people in need, apologized, and asked if she would come back the next day when he would pay her. But the woman was insistent. She was not to be mollified. The woman became very angry. She shouted at Reb Haim: "If the rabbi wants to raise a mamzer [illegitimate child], then let him have the money ready. I am not leaving until I get my money."

Reb Haim excused himself and went into a nearby room where the beit din was adjudicating cases. He approached one of the judges and asked if he could borrow some money. For Reb Haim, of course, the request was granted. Reb Haim went to the nurse and paid her. Then he spoke softly, but firmly, to her.

"I want to make two requests of you. When you go home, please wait about an hour before you nurse the child. I am concerned as you are quite angry. And perhaps, in such a state, your milk may harm the child. And I have a second request. Please take good care of this child. Consider him to be a good and pure child. Please do not consider him to be a mamzer. What his parents might have done is no fault of his."

The Talmud informs us that the great sage Rabbi Akiva once noted that he followed his teacher, Rabbi Yehoshua, into the washroom and learned three things about personal care from him. One of his colleagues, Ben Azzai, rebuked Rabbi Akiva for acting in such an unseemly and disrespectful fashion toward his teacher. Rabbi Akiva replied to him: "This, too, is Torah, and I needed to learn it."

In a few days, we will be celebrating the Festival of Shavuot, the commemoration of the giving of the Ten Commandments to Moses and the children of Israel by God upon Mount Sinai. It is a time to celebrate and to reflect upon Torah and its meaning for the Jewish people. I submit that Torah is more than that found in the printed volumes of Tanach, Talmud, midrash, and codes that we study. It also includes the actions of those who study and live their lives by its teachings. It includes how these individuals comport themselves in their daily lives. It includes how they interact with colleagues and community leaders. And, in particular, it includes, how they interact with abandoned infants and wet nurses.

To paraphrase Rabbi Akiva, this, too, is Torah and we need to learn it.

Rabbi Mark Friedman is the rabbi of the Castel Royale Senior Residence in Montreal.

The end of the Bronze Age

By ALEX GROPPER

The Bronze Age (circa 3100-1200 BCE) was a major milestone in human achievement.

It saw the birth of civilization in the ancient world, especially in the Near and Middle East, where the great hydraulic, or river valley, civilizations of Mesopotamia and Egypt were born. Both of these civilizations would have a major impact on ancient Israel.

The Bible tells us that Abraham came from Ur, which was originally equated with the great Sumerian city. Ur was dug up by English archeologist Sir Leonard Wooley in the 1920s and '30s. However, some now believe that the "Ur" Abraham came from was not the monumental Sumerian city that reached its zenith in the late third millennium BCE, but rather another "Ur," in the area of northern Syria and southern Turkey.

John Van Seters, formerly a professor at the University of Toronto, came up with the controversial theory that the patriarchal stories of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, with their wanderings back and forth to Haran, also in southeastern Turkey, reflects the period of the exile of the "10 Lost Tribes." Archeological evidence indicates that people with Israelite names turned up in the period after 722 BCE, when the Assyrians had destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel and carried off some of its people into captivity.

This dating of the Patriarchs well into the first millennium BCE is at least 1,000 years later than that proposed by the legendary W.F. Albright and his disciples. Finding a proper historical time for the Patriarchs has consumed biblical scholars and archeologists for a quite a while. Two eminent Israeli scholars, Benjamin Mazar and Avraham Malamat, preferred a later date than the one proposed by Albright. They believed the patriarchal period should be intermediate to Albright's and Van Seter's dating.

Their dating would explain such anachronisms in the patriarchal stories as camels, which were not domesticated until the end of the second millennium BCE, as well as the mention of the Philistines, who were not around until the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age, sometime around 1200 BCE.

This was a tumultuous time in the history of civilization in which the Philistines played a role. It saw the disintegration of the old order in the eastern Mediterranean, which James Henry Breasted, the founder of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, had called the First International Period. A number of prominent civilizations collapsed or were permanently weakened. Among these were the Hittites, in Asia Minor, and the Egyptians, as well as the Mycenaeans, in the Aegean region. This was also the period in which many scholars place the Trojan War. Coincidentally, it is also the time in which many biblical scholars would place the Exodus.

It is amazing that two of the seminal events in the history of western civilization occurred at the same time. The Trojan War is crucial to the birth of Greek civilization, while the Exodus and the theophany at Sinai play a pivotal role in the birth of Israel and its faith.

I have often wondered whether it is coincidental that these twin pillars of western civilization occurred at roughly the same time and what this means. What appears certain is that these two events were part of the upheaval around the death of the Bronze Age and the birth of the Iron Age.

Both of these events – the Trojan War and the Exodus and the theophany at Sinai – would play a major role in the development of their respective cultures, but they would also as an inspiration to others. The experience of the Hebrew slavery and bondage in Egypt would be a touchstone for blacks in America, where it would be lamented in spirituals and used for inspiration in Martin Luther King's classic, "I have a dream" speech. Once more the Past would come Forward to inspire the future.

Jewish Life

With Torah, the journey is the goal

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

The holiday of Shavuot has arrived again this year, and, as always, we gather to celebrate the giving and receiving of the Torah.

It's customary to stay awake and study all night. Anyone who has participated in these all-night study events knows that the wisdom of Torah truths in the middle of the night contain a different flavour than they do during the daytime. Rabbi Jose is quoted in the Zohar as stating that Torah is clearer at night, for the oral Torah belongs to the night. But the nighttime is not only unique in the context of study. It's also a very intimate time for us. Husbands and wives seek each other in their own unique ways once they are secluded in the depths of the night.

Just as true lovers can never be satisfied with each other but will always search for more, the Midrash tells us that the one who loves Torah can never gain satisfaction of learning but will always seek more. Our engagement with the words and truths of Torah touch us intimately.

Our love of Torah is not time-bound, nor can it be measured. The school of Rabbi Ishmael taught that the obligation to study Torah is not like a normal debt, where one could discharge the debt by paying the owed amount. On the contrary, according to Rabbi Ishmael, we are duty bound to Torah in a way that no person has the authority to release themselves. We are not the masters of our love.

Yet if we are not masters of this relationship, and we are never fully satisfied but are always yearning for more, and if it's an unending, ongoing search, why would anyone begin?

To answer this question, we must challenge our modern orientation of assessing every task by its end goal.

With most of the initiatives we undertake today, we envision a goal at the end and outline the steps we need to take to get there. Being goal-directed, we reassess and navigate along the way, always reorienting ourselves toward the goal.

With Torah, the goal is the journey itself – our reference points are redefined.

God approaches Abraham and Sarah in Genesis and tells them to "*lech lecha*," take a journey. God identifies the goal as "a place I will show you." When God instructs Moses to lead Israel in building a Tabernacle, a place of spiritual expression, the instructions begin with the innermost part, and there is no initial vision of a finished product. Activating the teachings of Torah is the goal, and the Torah itself is the beginning.

The Sages of Pirkei Avot are aware of this unending process and clearly teach us that it's not our duty to complete the work, but also that this does not free us from the obligation to engage in it.

Clearly any tools we can bring to the task would be invaluable. In the introduction to the Geonic work *Halachot Gedolot*, it states that kindness spoke to Torah and said, "You are beautiful only if I beautify you. You are like a beautiful woman who needs a handmaid to guard over her beauty."

Torah is the journey, intimacy with God is the goal and kindness is the tool.

Shavuot foods

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

From cholent to chicken soup, much of the Jewish gastronomic year seems to revolve around meat and poultry. But with the longer days and warmer temperatures of the Shavuot season, our palates turn to dairy foods. Today, some of the finest kosher dairy recipes on the web.

Shavuot is best known for the giving of the Torah, so why the association with dairy foods? Virtual Jerusalem lists seven reasons. Two of the most famous: On Shavuot, the Jewish people received a new code of law, including the dietary restrictions that became part of their daily life. Since the new laws of separating meat and milk were still unclear, only dairy products were eaten on Shavuot to avoid transgressing the unfamiliar laws. Another reason: the Torah is compared to milk, as it is written: "Sweetness drops/ From your lips, O bride; honey and milk/ Are under your tongue." (Song of Songs, 4:11). **[tinyurl.com/6rph9k]**

Let's start with some of the dairy classics. The Jewish-Food Blintz Archives has three-dozen variations including Asparagus and Cheese, Elaine's Bubbe's and Henny Youngman's. (Take his blintz, please?) **[tinyurl.com/5b68qg]**

As for the other holiday staples, when I last checked, I found 16 cheesecake and 24 varieties of kugel at the RFCJ Recipe Archives. If you want to be more adventurous, check out this site's large Shavuot recipe archives where you'll find out how to prepare Goat Cheese and Scallion Kugel, Carrot Vichyssoise with Orange Nectar and some good old Montreal Cheese Bagels. **[tinyurl.com/2cyn7]**

Jewish Heritage Online Magazine has a lovely article that focuses on some lesser-known Shavuot foods. "Jewish women in Oriental countries took pride in baking for Shavuot a seven-layer cake called Siete Cielos (Seven Heavens), symbolic of the traditional seven celestial spheres God traversed to present the Torah to Moses on Mount Sinai… Jews of Kurdistan prepare large quantities of butter and cheese for the festival. Their special dish was ground wheat cooked in sour milk with dumplings of butter and flour." **[tinyurl.com/5egmjs]**

Food writer Sybil Kaplan continues the international survey. "Because the Yemenite Jews from southern Arabia do not consider themselves a part of either the Ashkenazim or Sephardim, they do not eat dairy foods on Shavuot and presume the children of Israel knew about kashrut while waiting for Moses… They eat meat and pita or traditional Shabbat foods with their condiments – schug, the paste made with red peppers and spices; and hilbe, a paste made with fenugreek seeds." Syrian Jews eat "Atayef, a filled cheese pancake, and ruz ib asal, a baked rice pudding with honey and rose water, [they are] are traditional for Shavuot." **[tinyurl.com/5uksba]**

Having a Jewish holiday focused on dairy may seem liberating but not so if milk products make you ill. Merrell Candace Mastin is lactose intolerant and wanted to know how she should celebrate the holiday. The Aish HaTorah rabbi put it into perspective: "When all is said and done, eating dairy on Shavuot is only a custom, whereas 'enjoying Yom Tov' has the status of Torah law. So when the two ideas conflict, as in your case, it is better to preserve your enjoyment of the Shavuot holiday and not eat dairy. Of course, you could try soy milk as a substitute." **[tinyurl.com/5ado9b]** Or you can try a few of the 1,000 pareve recipes at the OU site. **[tinyurl.com/475ucu]**

For some people, sitting down to a Shavuot meal means eating both dairy *and* meat – with an appropriate pause between them. If you want to try this, first listen to Rabbi Dovid Bendory as he explains the source of this custom and the details for performing it. **[tinyurl.com/4d76us]**

Finally, if someone you know loves cheesecake but lives far away, you still can mail them a piece – via e-mail. Just go to Virtual Jerusalem, where you can send off an electronic postcard with a delicious photo of a virtual cheesecake along with a virtual blintz and virtual bourekas. Sure, they'll never compare to the real thing. But at least the calories are virtual, too. **[tinyurl.com/6pz4yz]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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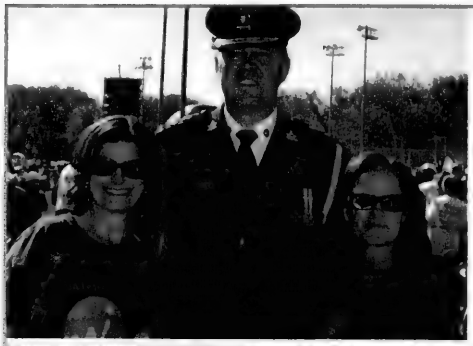

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Health & Lifestyles

Pre-schoolers run mini-marathon for charity

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Sixty children aged two to six ran a half-kilometre track May 21 in a mini-marathon that raised more than $7,000 for their school – Torah Tots – and to help others.

In addition to Torah Tots preschool in Thornhill, the funds will go to the Zareinu Educational Centre and Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. The kids were the youngest participants in Canada to take part in Kilometres for Kids, an event sponsored and run by the non-profit organization Crafting for a Cure, which was created to raise money for the Hospital for Sick Children, specifically the pulmonary department.

Zareinu, a Jewish day school and treatment centre, provides special education and individualized therapies to children with developmental challenges.

Crafting for a Cure's Creating Breathing Space is a foundation whose mandate is to redesign the playrooms at SickKids and to raise money to find a cure for chronic lung disease.

Under its president, Pamela Bielak, Crafting for a Cure has donated crafts for children in the emergency rooms at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto and the Royal University Hospital in Saskatoon.

Bielak's son Daniel, the catalyst that led to the formation of the charity, has a rare form of asthma and is allergic to puffers. His immune system rejects medication, and his condition is so rare that doctors do not have a name for it yet, Bielak said. The Bielaks found emergency rooms didn't have enough play items for children and set out to change that.

Six-year-old Amanda Gawza of Torah Tots' senior kindergarten donated her tooth fairy money to "help a little boy breathe." Her mother, Naomi, noted how seriously her daughter took the mission.

"She called all of her relatives and emptied out her piggy bank. She told people, 'I need at least $10, but you can give more if you want to.'"

Touched by her daughter's enthusiasm, she asked Amanda if she realized that was the same amount of money to buy a Hanna Montana DVD. Her response was, "I still want to give it to the boy to help him."

At the fundraiser, Doo Doo the Clown, Toronto Argonaut Andrew Durie and YTV host Tonya Harper helped add to the fun for the kids. The event at Torah Tots was also sponsored by CTV, the Toronto Argonauts, Starbucks, Nascar Speedpark, Farco Entertainment, Creativ Festival, and Dare.

Durie has a special connection to the work that Zareinu does. His son, six-year-old Malcolm, has autism. "I just had to come to show support. I know how scarce funding is. Anything I could do to help, I wanted to be a part of."

Bielak credits the idea for these marathons to Josh Hoffman of Charlton Public School in Thornhill. His bar mitzvah project in 2003 was to raise money for his school and for the Hospital for Sick Children. Since then, under Bielak's leadership, Kilometres For Kids has had more than 5,000 participants in the GTA and 450 in Saskatoon.

Torah Tots, which is run by Chabad Lubavitch, teamed up with Crafting for a Cure in January, when Bielak became acquainted with Torah Tots' preschool director Goldie Plotkin.

"For us, it was an amazing breakthrough to the Jewish community. Hopefully more Jewish schools will follow suit," Bielak said.

LAG B'OMER BASH: Close to 800 people enjoyed an Israeli-style Lag b'Omer celebration on May 22 in G. Ross Lord Park, hosted by the Beth Chabad Israeli Community Centre and the "Israeli House." It featured a clown act, bouncing castles, a barbecue, live music and an enormous bonfire.

TV show gives kosher restaurant a makeover

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Following Joe Boo's Cookoos recent restaurant makeover, owner Joe Boussidan says his restaurant finally looks as good as his food tastes.

The kosher chicken restaurant, located at Chabad Gate and Bathurst Street in Thornhill, Ont., was recently done over by Food Network Canada's *Restaurant Makeover*, a show whose challenge is to renovate, revamp and relaunch local restaurants.

Joe Boussidan watches over his chickens in his renovated restaurant.

"My food has always been delicious, but the décor was Home Depot gone wrong. It looked like we built it from extras in our garage," said Boussidan, a 45-year-old father of seven who started Joe Boo's about four years ago.

A former caterer at the Sephardic Kehila Centre, Boussidan, a native of Morocco, opened Cookoos with the goal of "serving the best food that just happened to be kosher."

He scoured the market for about 1½ years before opening, he said, and finally came upon a rotisserie manufactured in Seattle, Wash., that cooked chicken solely with the heat of burning logs.

He travelled to Seattle with three kosher chickens and cooked them using a brand-new oven so the chickens would remain kosher.

"After four hours, I took them out and tasted them. They were juicy, but nothing special. However, two hours later in my hotel room, the aroma of the wood surrounded me. I was overwhelmed by the delicious smell and immediately knew that people would love it. I was convinced."

Once in business, though, he found that customers were mostly buying his chicken wings, hamburgers and steak sandwiches.

"The wood-burned chicken was a sleeper. Then I perfected the roasting and seasoning.

"One Friday morning at 3 a.m., I was getting my chicken ready for Shabbat and the art of smoking came to me. I was alone with the fire and with God, and I figured out exactly how much wood to use, how close to the fire to cook and for how long. On that morning, I discovered how wood behaves."

He took notes, he said, and after that his chicken sales doubled. "I use very little spices. The smoke seasons the chicken, and with 40 chickens cooking at a time, they self- baste."

Since then, he said the *Toronto Star* has named his chicken the best rotisserie chicken in the Greater Toronto Area, and *Toronto Life* magazine has listed Cookoos as one of the best takeouts.

All this time, however, he concentrated on his food and overlooked the imperfections in his surroundings. "I had Band-Aid solutions to repairs, and the restaurant desperately needed refreshing."

He contacted *Restaurant Makeover*, he said, and in his application told them that he needed a facelift of the restaurant's physical structure and it's menu and food presentation.

"The drama of my appeal lay in the fact that I had put everything on the line to produce the best roasted chicken. I had mastered the cooking technique, but I needed guidance to make my concept a genuine success story. My restaurant needed a new soul."

As Cookoos was the first kosher restaurant to have a makeover done by the show, Boussidan had to teach the crew – including Toronto chef and Food Network Canada host Michael Bonacini – about kashrut.

The show also had to change its production schedule, because while a restaurant is typically redone in one week, they had to cease work for Shabbat.

Michael Taylor, *Restaurant Makeover*'s line producer, called Boussidan "the perfect candidate. He's hardworking, ambitious, funny, and most important he has a great concept. The kosher aspect was no problem at all – we worked it into our schedule."

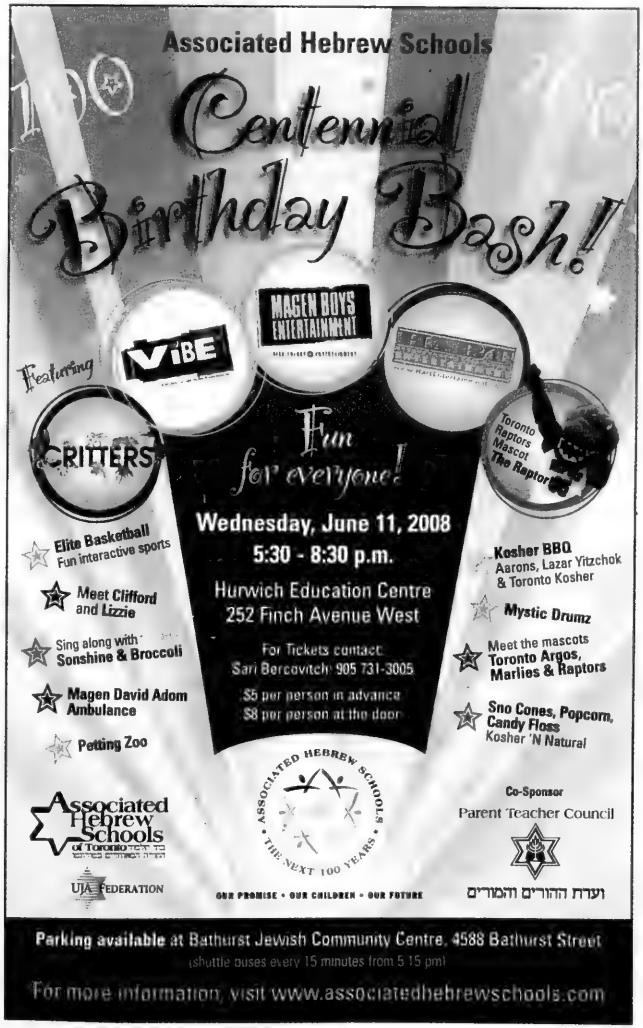
The results, said Boussidan – he was not allowed into the restaurant until it was ready – "are amazing. When I first walked in, I was shocked."

The most important change, he said, is that the crew, along with restaurant designer Glen Peloso, framed his "chicken theatre" with stone. "It is the centrepiece of the store, and it shows beautifully. Now when people walk in, they are greeted by a gorgeous stone wall."

They also replaced the counter that ran along the window and wall with a banquette and tables, redid the tile walls, and replaced the diamond-tiled floor with a tobacco-coloured stained wood. "

Boussidan said that chef Bonacini developed a Joe Boos homemade barbecue sauce and chicken rub, and created a grilled chicken salad with baby spinach, mango and avocado in a lime citrus dressing and a grilled chicken wrap with pareve cheese.

"It was his first adventure into kosher food," Boussidan said, "and he enjoyed it."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Coast to Coast

Chai Folk Ensemble will perform in Toronto, Vancouver and Detroit

Chai Folk Ensemble tours Canada, U.S.

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG —The Sarah Sommer Chai Folk Ensemble, Winnipeg's 44-year-old Israeli dance troupe, recently won a gold medal at the annual Winnipeg Dance Festival.

The internationally renowned Chai dancers competed in the festival on May 19, for the first time in many years. Chai won the medal, with the highest marks ever in the competition.

In mid-June, Chai is off on a tour that, under the leadership of volunteer executive consultant Earl Barish, has become an annual event. For this year's Am Yisrael Chai Independence Tour, the young artists will perform at the Toronto Centre for the Performing Arts on June 15; in Detroit (for the very first time) on June 17; and in Vancouver, in a June 19 performance sponsored by the Louis Brier Jewish Aged Foundation.

"Pearl Gladman from B'nai Brith was in the audience when Chai appeared in Toronto last year," Barish says. "She was so impressed with the show that she arranged with B'nai Brith and Maccabi Canada to invite Chai to come back again this year."

The Detroit performance is in honour of Arline Bittker, a longtime B'nai Brith leader in that city. Chai appeared in Vancouver two years ago to help the Louis Brier Home and Hospital.

The tour will "bring the ensemble back to some of the very stages from which the magic of Chai's performances first touched national audiences," artistic director Tracy Kasner-Greaves says.

"Chai's national reputation has been growing steadily over the past several years, and it is an honour for us to be chosen by so many communities to represent the essence of Israel's milestone birthday."

Barish says there were other cities that wanted Chai this year, but the company couldn't fit them into the schedule. "Perhaps next year," he adds.

It was in 1964 that Sarah Sommer, a popular music teacher in Winnipeg's Jewish school system, had an idea for a new Jewish-Israeli folk dance group. She started the company with a half-dozen teenage girls, students at Joseph Wolinsky Collegiate. Unfortunately, Sommer did not live to see the fruits of the seed she planted.

Chai, with a staff of 45, including dancers, singers, musicians and technical people, performs a variety of Israeli and Yiddish pieces, many of them choreographed for the company. Dances from countries in which Jewish culture has flourished – Yemen, Morocco, Spain, Greece, Brazil, Russia, Poland and Israel – are part of the company's repertoire. Performances include horahs and Oriental rhythms, klezmer and chassidic melodies and the latest Israeli hits. Each year, the ensemble tries to introduce new material.

Chai has performed across Canada and has made appearances in Florida, at Walt Disney World; in Mexico City at the Festival Aviv; and has toured Israel in 1998.

Chai returns to Winnipeg after its Vancouver performance to begin preparing for its next local performances at the Israel Pavilion's Shalom Square during Folklorama, from Aug. 3 to 8.

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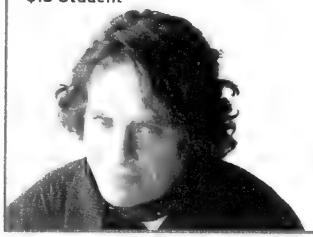

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Coast to Coast

Winnipeg walks with Israel

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Community members, young and old, Jewish and non-Jewish, celebrated Israel's 60th birthday May 25 with a solidarity walk that had close to 250 participants, many of whom waved Israeli flags and wore Celebrate 60 – Walk the Land T-shirts.

Most people walked and talked with friends and aquaintances, and a group of spirited walkers sang Israeli songs in Hebrew.

Irene and John Plantz and their family came from Dugald, Man., to participate. "My husband, John, learned that his father was Jewish after he was studying in Bible college and met a rabbi who told him his last name was a Jewish one," said Irene Plantz, who is a Mennonite. "John began looking into his roots and found out his grandfather was Jewish. We just returned from Israel where we looked up our name in the Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv. My husband says that, even as a child, he always wanted to go to Israel. It's like it was in his heart. Even before we learned of this, we had signed up for Christian Friends For Israel. We wanted to do this walk together."

Winnipeg's walk in support of Israel drew members of the First Nations community.

Karla Berbrayer and Allan Kraut, who have four children, even brought their dog, Zooky. "When we were at the door about to leave the house this morning, we told everyone that we were going to the Walk For Israel, and Zooky was the first one to show up. So we decided to bring him," said Karla, who is the producer of the Israeli concert series here.

Ksenia Khomenko, a young Israeli of Russian descent now living in Winnipeg, was glad to come and bring her 22-year-old friend Margarita Sajin, who came to visit her from Israel.

"I didn't expect something like this to be taking place here," said Sajin, who lives with her mother in Haifa. "I just finished my Israeli army service not long ago, and it's very encouraging to see an event like this taking place. It's nice to hear so many people speaking Hebrew. The security situation in Israel is not a simple one, and I feel that things there can change suddenly."

Twenty members of the First Nations community also joined the walk. Jason Monias, a 29-year-old student training as a computer technician, and his friend William Robertson held a large banner that read: "Canadian First Nations Stand with Israel." Monias said he had heard about the walk from the pastor of his church and was glad to participate.

Marsha and Allen Freidman and their two daughters, Shira and Hadara, decided to ride their bikes instead of walking, just in case it started to rain.

Nola Lazar, who was walking with her family, said she "could use a good falafel after this walk."

Participants in the one-hour walk met at the Asper Jewish Community Campus and followed a route down Corydon Avenue through North River Heights and Wellington Cresent.

After the walk, there was a celebration at the community campus attended by more than 400 people. Children were treated to entertainment, inflatable bouncers, face painting, balloon shapes and Israeli arts and crafts. Transportation to and from the campus was available for seniors, provided by the Daniel Tallman Family Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba.

The events were sponsored by the Rady Jewish Community Centre, Jewish National Fund, Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University and the Jewish Federation of Manitoba.

"We're very pleased with the way this day turned out. There was a really nice atmosphere," said Tamar Barr, programming director of the Rady JCC. "This Walk the Land celebration is a worldwide event, and we're glad that Winnipeg is one of the participating communities.

"Years ago, when I was a child, there used to be walks for Israel like this, but we haven't done something like this for a long time," Barr added. "So we thought it was an appropriate way to celebrate Israel's 60th. I'm glad that all of the organizations joined forces to do this together."

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES for What's New: Thursday, June 5, is the deadline for the June 19 issue. Monday, June 16, is the deadline for the June 26 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, June 5

CHARITY LADIES NIGHT

Mifgashim and One Family Fund host an exciting evening for ladies. 7:30 p.m. Information, **Dorit**, 416 520-4351 or **Gila**, 416 843-6248.

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Ron Arons speaks on "The Internet Beyond JewishGen and **Steve Morse**'s Website" at the Jewish Genealogical Society meeting. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Non-members $5. www.jgstoronto.ca

Saturday, June 7

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

Abe Birenbaum discusses the weekly portion, Naso, 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433.

PRIDE SHABBAT

Congregation Shir Libeynu celebrates LGBTTIQQ Pride during Shabbat service, featuring innovative liturgy for queer Jews, contemporary readings, music and storytelling. Service includes Torah portion and discussion about Shavuot. 10:30 a.m. in the chapel at the Miles Nadal JCC followed by kiddush. Childcare available during the service. 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

Sunday, June 8

ONE FAMILY FUND RIDE

Join the 4th Annual One Family Fund Ride for Israel through the countryside north of Toronto to raise funds for victims of terror and their families in Israel. Prizes and giveaways for all riders of all levels. Two routes, a 20-km route and a 50-km route. Information, 416-644-4955 or linda@onefamilyfund.ca.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Walk and Talk Etc., for Jewish singles 50+, will explore the Guild Inn's grounds, a garden for rescued architectural artifacts atop the Scarborough Bluffs. Meet in the parking lot at 201 Guildwood Pkwy. at 9:30 a.m. Information, walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

CHORALAIRS CONCERT

The Choralairs of North York perform their 45th concert with Broadway, pop and folk music. 2 p.m. at Earl Bales Park social hall. Free. Information, **Brian Slepchik**, 416-631-0029.

SINGLES GET TOGETHER

Singles 50+ meet for coffee, 5:30-7:30 p.m. Information, **David**, 416-781-7947.

ALL-NIGHT LEARNING

Join Beth Tzedec Congregation, Congregation Beth Haminyan and Beth Sholom Synagogue for all-night learning on Shavuot beginning with services at 8:30 p.m. followed by lasagna and pizza dinner at 9:30 p.m. No reservations required. **Rabbi Mark Smiley** of Associated Hebrew School will speak on "Children and parents in Jewish Law and Tradition" at 10 p.m. **Rabbis Aaron Flanzraich, Baruch Frydman-Kohl, Jennifer Gorman, Sydney Goldenberg** and **Joel Eisen** will present seminars on this theme throughout the night. Sunrise morning service 4:30 a.m. and pancake breakfast 6 a.m. The evening includes a kids' track for grades 5-7 and a Kadima program at 8:30 p.m. Information, **Andre Ivory**, 416-781-3514, ext. 239.

Monday, June 9

CELEBRATE SHAVUOT

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham invites the community to celebrate Shavuot with live biblical characters

Continued on page 27

ב"ה
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Gary Gladstone, CFRE Campaign Coordinator at 416-830-4313
or check us out on Facebook, Group: Cheder Chabad
or email info@chederchabad.com

Feeling depressed or low?
Age 60 years or over?

Doctors at Baycrest's Research Centre for Aging and the Brain are conducting studies on emotion in late-life depression, and need participants who are:

- 60 years old or older
- Currently depressed with symptoms such as:
  - poor appetite and sleep
  - low motivation and energy
  - poor memory and concentration
  - change in ability to enjoy activities
- Not on antidepressant medication
- In good general health

Eligible participants will receive a thorough mood assessment and compensation for time and travel expenses.

For more information, call 416 785 2500 ext 2142
Baycrest

What's New

Continued from page 26

to re-experience the Mount Sinai drama. Be part of the annual children's *bikurim* parade. Services 9:30 a.m. followed by the program at 11 a.m. featuring dairy lunch, ice cream bar, prizes for the kids and more. 905-886-0420, ext. 225

Tuesday, June 10

BOOK CLUB

Holy Blossom Library Book Club discusses *The Ministry of Special Cases* by **Norman Englander**. 9:30 a.m. All welcome. Information, **Anne** 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

Wednesday, June 11

ASSOCIATED @ 100

Join us at Associated Hebrew Schools' centennial birthday bash and enjoy an evening of entertainment with a kosher barbecue, Magen Boys music, inflatable rides, mascots, basketball, rikudiyah, choir and VIBE dance, karaoke, arts and crafts at the Danilack Middle School, 252 Finch Ave. W. 5:30-8:30 p.m. $5 in advance, $8 at the door. Tickets, 905-731-3005 or www.associatedhebrewschools.com.

Other News

SURVIVAL IN WARSAW

The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation will present the 2008 **Louis Lenkinski** Award to **Stacy Hushion**, Thursday, June 12. Hushion will present her paper on "Jews, Gender and Survival in Aryan Warsaw" and discuss her research. 7:30 p.m., 2 Covington Rd. www.pjhftoronto.ca

UPTOWN CHABAD BENEFIT

Uptown Chabad presents "Save a Soul, Save a World," with **Leon Leyson**, the youngest Holocaust survivor from Schindler's list sharing his Holocaust experiences, and M-Generation, a boys choir. Sunday, June 16, at Leah Posluns Theatre followed by a dessert reception. Tickets $90 and $180. Information and reservations, 416-635-9696 or www.uptownchabad.com.

PRAYER CONFERENCE

The Toronto Jewish Healing Project holds a conference on "The Security of Prayer: Who is Speaking? Who is Listening?" Keynote speaker is **Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl**. Tuesday, June 17, at Beth Tzedec Congregation. Registration, 416-944-3359.

SUPPORT SAFED'S NEEDY

Nachal Novea Mekor Chochma, an organization that provides social and educational assistance to families in need in Safed, Israel, hosts an evening of music with the trio Simply Tsfat and Consul General **Amir Gissin**. Paintings, sculptures and artifacts by **Haim Sherrf** will be displayed. Tuesday, June 17, at the Eglinton Theatre. $72, students $18. Tickets, **Deena** 416-887-3779.

BROADWAY & BEYOND

Beth Tzedec Congregation 2008 concert series Musical Magic concludes with a concert by **Cantor Simon Spiro** accompanied by a full orchestra. Tuesday, June 17, 7:30 p.m. Tickets, 416-781-3514, ext. 218.

ZAREINU MOVEATHON

Zareinu 2008 Moveathon community festival takes place at Downsview Park, Sunday, June 22, with 2-km walk, 10-km run, 20-km family ride, games, food and entertainment. The events raise funds for Zareinu, an educational and treatment facility for children with physical and developmental challenges. www.moveathon.com.

L'CHAIM SUPPORT GROUP

L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women provides confidential, caring support via telephone or personal visits for women facing cancer diagnosis and treatment. L'Chaim members are all cancer survivors. Information, 416-630-0203.

AMPUTEE SUPPORT

Chazak V'Ematz, outreach support for amputees to help them adjust to life, meets to discuss new products and prosthetic devices. Information and confidential support, **Ruth**, 416-783-3717.

JF&C GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child, 4600 Bathurst St., 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215, for information and registration.

High Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents to lessen the impact of divorce on their children. This workshop requires active participation and is not for individuals in an abusive situation. Tuesday, June 17, 6:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Adolescents and Divorce: A workshop for parents who have adolescents and are going through a separation or divorce, to help understand their children during this transitional time and help them cope. Tuesday, June 17, 7-9 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

Developing a Successful Relationship With Your Ex: A workshop for parents wanting to develop a businesslike relationship with their former partners by negotiating the day-to-day details of their children's lives based on their needs. Wednesday, June 18, 7-9 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the Miles Nadal JCC hosts author **Shirley Kumove** on "About Yiddish Folk Sayings." Thursday, June 12, 1:30 p.m. Information, **Phyllis Fien**, 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Beth Tikvah Synagogue Friendship Group offers A Taste of Opera, a program of operatic music presented by **Syd Seltzer** featuring Jewish opera singers who performed at the New York Metropolitan Opera. Thursday, June 12, 2 p.m. $3, non-members $5. 416-221-3434

The Association of Jewish Seniors hosts a "To Our Good Health" seminar with **Jan MacQuarrie** on "Laughter is the Best Medicine." Monday, June 23, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre. Lunch and entertainment included. Free for members who pay next year's dues, guests $10. Reserve by June 16. **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Wednesday, June 18; No dances in June. New clothing sale, June 11, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Information about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom Social Club offers summer theatre trips to see *Wonderful Town*, Wednesday, July 2, *A Little Night Music*, Tuesday, Aug. 12, and *The Music Man* at Stratford Sept. 3. $85 each includes orchestra seats for matinee performance and transportation. Reserve, 416 633-3838.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Ice Cream Social, Thursday, June 5, 1:30-3:30 p.m. in the Wagman lobby.

Laurie Katila will speak on "Preparing Your Next Generation for Wealth" Thursday, June 5, 2 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Diabetes Education and Counselling, Tuesday, June 10, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Call 416-787-1676, ext. 301 for appointment.

Community Care Information Clinic, Wednesday, June 11, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Chiropody Clinic, accepting new clients, up to 6 visits a year $42.50. Appointment, ext. 131.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Lunch 'n' Learn with **Rabbi Moshe Stern**, Friday, June 6, 12-1 p.m. Free. Bring your lunch, tea and coffee served.

Tickets still available for *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, St. Jacobs Theatre, Tuesday, July 8; *Annie*, Orillia Festival Theatre, Wednesday, July 30; and *Man of La Mancha*, Stirling Theatre in August. Each includes lunch, show and transportation. Call ext. 235.

BJCC 6th Annual Golf Tournament Thursday, June 26, at Glen Eagle Golf Club. **Jim**, ext. 371.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Each course is four weeks, two classes/week for a total of 16 hours. Register, ext. 0.

Conversation Cafes, newcomers to Canada practise speaking English with JIAS volunteers in a casual, friendly environment. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

The Annex Shul and MNJCC host Shabbat services and dinner for young adults in their 20s and 30s, Friday, June 6, 6:30 p.m. $18. Advance registration only, **Rabbi Aaron**, info@annexshul.com, 416-546-6043, ext. 154, or randis@mnjcc.org.

"Hebrew from Scratch," an ulpan for beginners. Learn how to read with and without vowels. This is the perfect way for beginners and those looking for review to jump start their fun with Hebrew. June 16-19, 7-9 p.m. $90, non members $110. Ext. 154

Jazz @ the J, Ron Davis Sextet, Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. $24, students $15, day of show, $28. Ext. 0.

Volunteers Wanted

WEEKLY HOME VISITS

Circle of Care is looking for mature thinking individuals to share a few hours visiting with a housebound senior in North Toronto. Yiddish, Russian, Hungarian and Polish speakers especially welcome. **Selena**, slynch@circleofcare.com or 416-635-2900, ext. 462.

The Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living seeks friendly visiting volunteers with 1-2 hours per week for regular visits, in person or over the phone, to isolated seniors. Choose the day that best suits you. Call **Naomi Ziegler**, 416-225-2112 ext.127 or naomiz@betelcentre.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

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FIRST NARAYEVER CONGREGATION - NOTICE-

The First Narayever Congregation has submitted by-laws to the Registrar of the Cemeteries Act (Revised) for its sections at the Bathurst Lawn Cemetery and the Dawes Road Cemetery.

Any interested parties may contact the First Narayever Congregation at 416-927-0546 for information, or to make copies.

These by-laws are subject to the approval of the Registrar, Cemeteries Act (Revised).

In addition, the First Narayever Congregation requests that **all persons** who have documents or information regarding ownership or reservation of a plot or plots at the Dawes Road or Bathurst Lawn Cemeteries to please contact the Congregation at 416-927-0546 without delay.

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BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Evgeny Kravchenko	May 16/08	520 9th Street
Bella Sanders	May 18/08	3 Bachelor Pl
Stewart Kates	May 19/08	46 Shady Lane Cres
Morris Klayman	May 20/08	54 Heathdale Rd
Fay Harris	May 21/08	3560 Bathurst St
Alla Rivchin	May 21/08	37 Alexis Blvd
Annie(Stoneman) Soren	May 21/08	4266 Bathurst St
Louis Sher	May 23/08	205 Cummer Ave
Muriel Goldstein	May 23/08	645 Castlefield Ave
Peter Levetzow	May 19/08	155 Marlee Ave

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YIDDISH CORNER
Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

די לוחות ווערן נאָך אַלץ צעבראָכן

(שבועות געדאַנקען) פֿון אַלעק סילווער

ווי עס איז אַנגענומען אין דער וועלט האָט יעדע נאָכּעלע אינסטיטוציע, רעליגיע, געזעלשאַפֿטלעכע אָרגאַניזאַציע און זיכער רעגירונגען אוך מלוכות אַן עטישן „אני מאמין" בײַ וועלכן זיי פֿירן זייערע אָקטי־וויטעטן. ווי די עטישע אויספֿירונג זאָל זיך נישט אויסדריקן, איז יעדע מענטשלעכע מאַראַל באַזירט אויף יענע געבאָטן, וואָס האָבן אָראַפֿגעדונערט אויפֿן פּאַלק פון באַרג אין דער מדבר בשעת מתן תורה . . .

לערנט מען אַדורך די דאָזיקע צען געבאָט, קען מען איינזען, אַז קיין שום רעגולאַציע, קיין שום געזעץ קען נישט זיין מענטשלעכער, איינפאַכער אוך פֿשוטער ווי די צען גענעזען, וואָס דער גאָט פון ישׂראל האָט אין יענעם טאָג געשענקט זיין פֿאָלק — דאָס עם ישׂראל. יעדער געבאָט איז אַן אָנווייזונג, אַ רמז, וואָס מיר זיינען שולדיק אונדזער „מיט־מענטש". זיין לעבן, פֿרייהייט, אַרבעט, זיין גאַנץ אייגנטום, וואָס ער פֿאַרמאָגט זיינען אַ „פֿאַרבאָטענע זאַך", וועלכע קיין צווייטער מענטש האָט נישט קיין רעכט אָנצוגרייפן, פֿאַרגוואַלדיקן, גנבענען אָדער נעמען מיט גוואַלט.

דער אמת איז אָבער, אַז נישט יעדע זאַך, וואָס איז לויט אונדזער מיינונג פֿאַרשטענדלעך אוך גוט, באַקומט דעם דערפֿאָלג, וואָס זי פֿאַרדינט. פֿאַראַן אַ סך נישט־פֿראָקטישע אוך שעדלעכע נעזעצן אוך רעגולאַציעס, וואָס ווערן רעספּעקטירט אוך אָפּגעהיטן אויפֿן שאַרפּסטן אופֿן. צום באַדויערן איז דאָס נישט דער פֿאַל מיט די עשׂרת הדברות. משה האָט צעבראָכן כלויז די לוחות. די געבאָטן ווערן צעבראָכן טאָג אויף, טאָג אויס אוך דערווייל זעט מען נישט קיין סוף צו דעם.

ציווילידירטע פֿעלקער אוך מדינות, וואָס גרויסן זיך מיט זייער גייסטיקער ירושה, מיט זייער קולטורעלער פֿאַרגאַנגנהייט אוך מיט זייערע אַספּיראַציעס צו באַפֿרייַען די וועלט פון קאָלאָניאַליזם אוך שקלאַפֿערי, פֿאַרגוואַלדיקן די עלעמענטאַרע רעכט פון אַנדערע קלענערע אוך שוואַכערע פֿעלקער יעדן טאָג פון יאָר.

טאָקע אין צוואַנציקסטן יאָרהונדערט האָבן מיר געהאַט קלאָסישע ביישפּילן פון ברעכן די מצוות פון די עשׂרת הדברות. די ערשטע זיינען געווען די נאַציס, מיט איר „דייטשלאַנד איבער אלעס", וואָס איז פֿאַרוואַנדלט געוואָרן אין מערדערישן נאַציזם, וואָס האָט פֿשוט אין גאַנצן אוועקגעוואָרפן די צען געבאָט פון באַרג סיני אוך האָבן פֿונקט פֿאַרקערט נאָכּגעפֿאָלגט זייערע אייגענע ליידנשאַפֿטן. אַ סך קרבנות זיינען געפֿאַלן אין דער וואַקכאַנאַליע.

אַן ענלעכן שגעון האָט די וועלט דערפֿילט פון דעם קאָמוניסטישן אימפּעריאַליזם, וועלכער האָט צוליב זייערע אייגענע כוונות, אומגעבראַכט מיליאָנען אוך מיליאָנען מענטשן, צוגענומען בײַ זיי די רעכט אוך פרייהייט, וואָס וועלן אַזוי דייטלעך אַרויסגעזאָגט אין דער צייט פון מתן תורה אויפֿן הר סיני.

די גרעסטע אַנטוישונג אין דער איצטיקער צייט איז די „יוניטעד נעישאַנס" — די פֿאַראייניקטע פעלקער. לויט דער קאָנסטיטוציע פון דער דאָזיקער פֿרעסטיש־פֿולער אָרגאַניזאַציע דאַרף זי זיין דער אמתער טרעגער פון די עשׂרת הדברות. דער אמת איז אָבער פונקט פֿאַרקערט. ספּעציעל וועלן די דאָזיקע וועלט־געזעצן פֿאַראומריניקט, פֿאַרשוועכט אוך פֿאַרגוואַלדיקט לגבי מדינת ישׂראל — דאָס לאַנד אוך פֿאָלק, וואָס האָט צום ערשטן מאָל אויסגעשריגן צו דער וועלט איז געזעצן, וואָס דאַרפֿן זיין די מאָראַלישע עטיק פֿאַר אַלעמען.

בלייבט נאָר איבער פֿאַרן ייִדישן פֿאָלק זיך אָנצוגעדענקען אין די עשׂרת הדברות אוך מיר חזרן דאָס איבער אין יעדן יום־טוב שבועות אוך כמעט יעדן טאָג פון יאָר.

Ben Ari to play Toronto benefit concert for Sderot

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Israeli roots and reggae singing star Mosh Ben Ari will be making his North American debut in Toronto later this month in a benefit concert for Sderot.

On Sunday, June 15, at 8 p.m., Ben Ari will kick off a three-week North American tour, his first, with a concert at Toronto's Mod Club (722 College St.), with proceeds going to the beleaguered Negev town.

Three nights later, he'll play Montreal's Club Opera before moving on to San Francisco, Los Angeles and New York City.

The lead singer for the acclaimed world-music group Sheva, Ben Ari has released three solo albums, the last of which, 2006's *Massa Umatan* (Go Giving), became one of the best-selling Israeli albums of all time.

Rachelle Bronfman, a local Israel activist and an executive producer for the concert, told *The CJN* she helped convince the event's organizers to make it a fundraiser for Sderot.

She's also doing her part to drum up additional money for the town by selling special "VIP tickets" to fans and supporters.

"I am personally selling tickets for $250 each to ensure that enough money is raised," she said. Though VIP tickets are already being sold for $65, Bronfman said she wanted to hold back a block of them for concerned people who could "afford to spend the extra money" to help Sderot.

The VIP tickets grant the holders the privilege of a dinner and "meet and greet" with Ben Ari and his band after the show. As of last Friday, Bronfman said she'd sold 100 of her tickets.

"The residents of Sderot want to build a reinforced Gymboree that will be attached to the grocery store in Sderot. Right now, parents have to decide if they should leave their children at home with the high possibility of being hit by a rocket, or do they bring them to grocery shop with them with nowhere to run for safety when rockets rain down," Bronfman said.

Proceeds from the concert will go to the Sderot Defence Council (Ofek Chadash Division), to "assist in the process of rebuilding vital infrastructure and to provide aid to those families who are suffering not just emotionally but physically and financially as well as a result of these constant rocket attacks," organizers said in a press release.

Ben Ari, who is of Yemenite and Iraqi descent, is a student of Middle Eastern music. Besides singing, he plays a variety of instruments, including classical guitar, Indian Sarod, Persian Tar, Turkish Jumbush and Moroccan Ginberi.

For more ticket information, visit www.ticketweb.ca or contact Rachelle Bronfman at RB18@sympatico.ca.

Prominent Calgary lawyer Robert Barron dies at 91

By IRENA KARSHENBAUM
Special to The CJN

CALGARY — Prominent Calgary lawyer Robert Barron died May 15 in Calgary at age 91.

Barron, the second son of J.B. and Amelia Barron, was born in Calgary on Nov. 29, 1916. A lifelong Calgarian and a member of the city's highly influential Barron family, he graduated with the Chief Justice's Gold Medal in Law and other awards from the University of Alberta law school in 1938.

Walter Barron, Robert's first cousin, who has been practising law since 1952, remembers him as "one of the most brilliant legal minds I had ever met.

"Whenever I called him, he would have an answer for me within minutes."

Among his many achievements in the Jewish community, Barron served as president of the Calgary Hebrew School for 14 years.

For full obituary, please go to www.cjnews.com.

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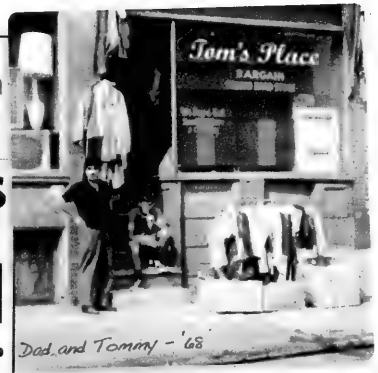

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—Joe Fiorito, *Toronto Star, May 2008*

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On Campus

Queen's think-tank praises Israeli democracy

By JORDAN PRESS
Special to The CJN

KINGSTON — Despite constant threats to its existence, the State of Israel has built a flourishing democracy that could serve as a model for its Arab neighbours, according to two new studies by a Queen's University think-tank.

Israel's experience over the past 60 years is also relevant to ongoing efforts to create a stable Afghanistan and American efforts to create a democracy in Iraq, said the chairman of the university's Centre for the Study of Democracy.

Tom Axworthy believes that Canadian and NATO forces that are trying to build a democracy in Afghanistan could have avoided pitfalls in the process had they looked at the birth of democracy in Israel.

Over the past 60 years, Israel has become a country that gives rights to its Arab minority and holds human rights in the highest regard, despite constant threats to its existence, Axworthy said.

"When we read of Israel… the image is always of the Gaza Strip or security issues. The more positive issue is a people building democracy in the Israeli state," said Axworthy, who was a senior aide to former prime minister Pierre Trudeau. "Israelis have been able to balance their immediate fear about security to a longer commitment to freedom and tolerance."

Country's experience relevant to situation in Afghanistan, Iraq

Axworthy said Israel's democratic development holds lessons for other countries in the Middle East.

"We're not saying Israel's a perfect state, but out of a difficult situation, they created a democracy under extreme duress," Axworthy said. "If someone had said Israel was going to, A, survive and, B, create a stable democracy in 1948, there were a lot of people who wouldn't have taken that bet."

On May 20, the centre released two papers about Israeli democracy on the 60th anniversary of the state's founding. The first is a detailed analysis of four key lessons from the development of democracy in Israel. The second outlines how Israeli courts and the Knesset developed a human rights code without the help of a constitution and made human rights the highest priority in Israeli law-making.

The centre has been invited present the first study, titled "New State to Sustained Democracy," at the 12th Biennial Jerusalem Conference in Canadian Studies in Israel next month.

The papers are the first in a series of studies on foreign democracies that the centre is releasing this year. Future studies will look at Liberia, Costa Rica and the Palestinian territories. Previous studies examined Taiwan and Afghanistan.

One of the first moves the new Israeli government made in 1948 was to disarm all the private militias that had been established in the years leading up to independence.

Then-prime minister David Ben Gurion made this bold step to ensure that order spread throughout the land, Axworthy said.

"How many times have we not done that?" he asked.

He added that "we're fooling ourselves" if Canada believes that private militias in Afghanistan will disarm on their own.

Canadian forces and the Afghan government haven't disarmed warlords and their private armies because of the ongoing fight against the Taliban, Axworthy said.

Until the warlords are disarmed, Afghanistan "will never be a secure state," he said.

The same applies to ongoing U.S. efforts in Iraq, he added.

"Israel made a whole series of intellectual decisions in its founding that would have been helpful in Iraq," Axworthy said.

Based on the Israeli model, stability can only come about if people believe the law will protect them, Axworthy said.

Israel's founders focused on creating a state in which citizens believe in the judicial system and don't take the law into their own hands, he added.

"If there's one thing lacking in the Middle East, it's that – the rule of law," Axworthy said. "The key thing is one cannot begin a democratic state with private militias with vast amount of arms."

Canadian and NATO forces also shouldn't have tried to craft the perfect constitution for Afghanistan, he said, adding that Israel's democracy evolved because the founders "built on what they knew and improved it."

He concluded: "The lesson of Israel is don't start anew. Don't write a new constitution. Write something based on what people know."

Over the years, the second study argues, the courts in Israel and the Knesset allowed for the development of human rights without the help of a written constitution. Each time the courts ruled that government policy violated human rights, laws changed, but Knesset members didn't enact new laws to overrule the courts.

"The Knesset, for it's part, did not stop the court from fulfilling its human right aspirations," the study says. "Despite constant criticism of the court's activism, the Knesset did not take any actual steps to curtail the court's power.

"Therefore, ironically, even though the Israeli system has been the subject of a tortured debate between the powers of the courts and the powers of the legislature, what enabled the most distinctive feature of the rule of law in Israel was the partnership between them."

The courts have ruled in cases that promote freedom of the press, freedom of speech and equal rights for Arabs.

The papers are available online at www.queensu.ca/csd.

And now for something completely different: **HEEBONICS**

Toronto photographer lives a life in snapshots

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Life as a photojournalist is often full of challenges, but the adrenalin surge of being on scene to capture a specific moment in time, a historic event or a snapshot of human drama, makes up for it all.

So says Joshua Meles, 34, a Toronto photographer and former Israel-based freelance photojournalist who worked to cover some of the events of the second intifadah in the early part of the decade.

Joshua Meles

"It's a rush making a connection with strangers," he admitted. "The camera allows me to witness human behaviour during and after an event."

A lifelong Zionist and Israel activist – Meles has visited Israel numerous times and worked for a year as the national co-ordinator for Betar in New York in the late 1990s – the York University political science grad decided to pursue the art of the camera shortly after his studies.

Meles moved to New York to apprentice with a studio photographer after graduating and eventually found himself working as a photojournalist with the *Jewish World Services*.

In 1999, the publication sent him out on a 10-day assignment to Israel, and he stayed on at his expense for another two weeks. The experience only served to whet his appetite for pursuing photojournalism, particularly in the Holy Land.

Then, one day in October 2000, Meles made a spur-of-the-moment decision to go back. He booked a ticket to Israel from Toronto, then called his family to let them know where he was going to work.

Like any journalist thinking about covering a "hot" zone, Meles had his reservations about leaving the comfort of North America to work in the often chaotic Middle East, but in the end couldn't resist the allure of being on the ground in the Holy Land to snap away as events unfolded.

"My family was concerned [about the decision], but there was nothing they could do because I was already in the cab on the way to the airport," to catch his El Al flight to Jerusalem, he said.

A construction worker at Charles and and Wellesley streets in downtown Toronto

Once there, Meles was hired by Flash 90, a Jerusalem-based photo agency that provides pictures to many of the country's daily newspapers and for international news agencies.

It was a lifestyle he loved, he said.

"It wasn't a nine-to-five job. I had a cellphone and a pager, and this other radio device. When I went to bed at night, I never set an alarm because one of them would start beeping," Meles told *Heebonics* in a recent interview at his Toronto studio.

"If I [was roused] at night, I knew it was bad news for someone," he said, referring to the tragic nature of some of the stories he'd have to cover. "I loved the unpredictability of it."

Meles made aliyah in 2001. However, things didn't pan out with work prospects in Israel, and he returned to Canada in September of that year to resume his photographic career as a local freelancer and portrait photographer.

But the call of Israel was too much to resist for long, and in 2003 Meles went back to "pound the pavement" and look for more work in his new homeland, he said.

"The sort of things I was seeing in Israel impacted me greatly," Meles said. "My grandparents were Holocaust survivors, so I had very strong opinions [about Israel]."

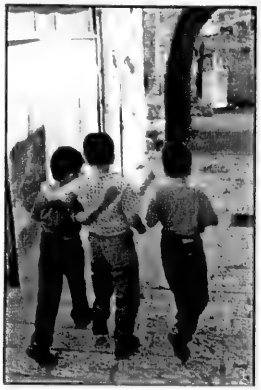
Meles said that while he still considers himself an ardent Zionist, he concedes that his work in Israel "opened my eyes."

"I realized my view was narrow. I was seeing a lot of suffering on both sides... and I realized how difficult it is to form any point of view about the [Palestinian-Israeli] conflict from abroad. The delineation of sides in Israel is not as clear there as it is from Toronto," he said.

In the course of covering numerous stories throughout Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Meles said the absurdity of watching people his own age trying to kill each other eventually overtook his thoughts.

"There's a pointlessness to it all," he said, sighing. "I thought, 'here are these peoples who could have a good future. Instead, they're throwing rocks or shooting at each other. I didn't see how this could achieve any change. The Palestinians' energy... could be better used spent building lives rather than throwing rocks. I wish their leadership would take those lives into consideration instead of focusing on the struggle against Israel."

Despite the suffering he observed, Meles said the mere fact that he could work as a freelance photographer and cover any story he wished, unfettered by restrictions, made him appreciate the unique nature of Israel in the region.



Children walking in the old city of Hebron

On his website, www.meles.ca, Meles features a picture he captured of a Palestinian youth in Ramallah throwing a rock at Israeli forces. The image is striking in its clarity, and one wonders how a Jewish cameraman was allowed access to the scene.

A Palestinian boy tries to hit an Israeli girl in Hebron following an exchange of slurs, as an Israeli soldier and police officer look on. [Joshua Meles photos]

In answer, Meles grants that he realized being in the presence of armed Palestinian militants was potentially hazardous to his health, but that he felt compelled to be there, he said.

Though he was rarely required to show identification to his Palestinian guides – who assumed he was a Canadian journalist and were unsuspecting of his ethnicity – Meles noted that he knew there were times and places where he should "not be practising my Hebrew" and where he would only show his Canadian identification and not his Israeli one.

"Without my job, I'd have no business being there," he said. "But I enjoyed making a connection. Being in that situation, you saw that these people, with their different goals, were still human."

Stating his belief in the potential for rapprochement in Israel, Meles recalled a story he covered about a Palestinian family that decided to donate a family member's organs to an Israeli patient after he'd been killed by the Israel Defence Forces in a skirmish.

"Holding a gun or having one pointed at you is an unfortunate way to spend your life," he mused.

Meles has since returned to Toronto, gotten married and has opened his own studio, where he shoots portraits for a wide range of clients.

He noted that one of his major sources of revenue now is taking portrait shots for Jewish singles who want to look good on Internet dating sites.

"Those clients all say the same thing, 'I don't want it to *look* like a studio photo," he said, smiling.

He's also in the business of photography for weddings and other events, while he continues to pitch his freelance skills to publications around town.

In the end though, photojournalism remains his passion. "This is something I'll always be doing."

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Dairy recipe for Shavuot

By JUDY BART KANCIGOR
Special to The CJN

If Pesach signals the emergence of spring, then with Shavuot, the season bursts forth in a riot of colour and luscious flavours.

"The midrash tells us that although Mount Sinai is in the desert," writes Susie Fishbein, author of the popular *Kosher by Design* cookbooks, "it suddenly bloomed with fragrant flowers and grasses on the morning that the Torah was given to the Jewish people. The custom of decorating our homes and synagogues with leafy branches and flowers is based on this miracle."

The concept for the first book in Fishbein's series, *Kosher by Design* (Artscroll), began with a Shavuot idea. To celebrate the holiday, Fishbein visualized a cascading flowerpot salad bar and began interviewing party planners to help create this setting.

"There was a glimmer in one woman's eye as she started to rattle off ideas to make the salad bar even more spectacular," Fishbein told me by phone from her home in New Jersey, "and I cancelled all my other appointments. I knew she was the one."

"The one" turned out to be Renee Erreich, and the luscious table settings and presentation ideas she and Fishbein created – and photographer John Uher shot – fairly leap off the page.

"Food is so much a part of the Jewish holidays that it enriches the experience to tie the food into the holiday traditions," Fishbein said. "I picked recipes for specific holidays if they fit in a fun or interesting way."

When we think Shavuot, we think dairy, and Fishbein's Savoury Goat Cheese Strudel makes an elegant holiday dish. "People want things that are different, but they don't have the time or the ability to spend seven hours in the kitchen," she said. "The one or two times that I put something more labour intensive in the book was because it's really worth it, like this outrageous recipe for Shavuot. It has a lot of steps, but it's laid out very carefully."

But why cheese for Shavuot? I asked James Beard award-winner Gil Marks, author of *Olive Trees and Honey: A Treasury of Vegetarian Recipes from Jewish Communities Around the World* (Wiley Publishing).

"The use of dairy to celebrate this holiday is not a biblical injunction, nor is it mentioned in the Talmud," Marks told me. "Shavuot falls when the animals are beginning to be weaned away from the mother, so you have a surplus of milk and therefore cheese, yogurt and dairy products. Once you have a tradition, you will find biblical reasons for it."

Herdsmen of almost 6,000 years ago stored milk in the waterproof stomachs of animals – "the first bottles," he said. These ancient people discovered that when the milk separated, it coagulated into curds – the first fresh cheese – which not only tasted good, but lasted longer than milk. (Blintzes would come much later!)

More importantly, Shavuot commemorates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. "No Jews existed before the giving of the Torah," Marks said. "Technically speaking, Israelites before then were not Jews. One of the new laws concerned keeping kosher, and since their utensils and any meat products they had produced before were no longer kosher, for the first Shavuot, they had to eat dairy products.

"In addition, the tradition exists that while they were at Sinai receiving the Torah, when they came back to camp, their milk had curdled into cheese, so you have a variety of mystical and somewhat biblical reasons that developed for the association with dairy."

Judy Bart Kancigor is the author of Cooking Jewish: 532 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family *(Workman) and can be found on the web at www.cookingjewish.com.*

SAVOURY GOAT CHEESE STRUDEL

Source: *Kosher by Design by Susie Fishbein*

12 thin asparagus spears (only the top 3 to 4 in.)
2 portobello mushroom caps, cleaned with gills scooped out
olive oil
salt
freshly ground black pepper
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 large Vidalia or Spanish onion, sliced into thin rings
1 sprig fresh thyme, stem removed
4 tbsp. sugar
1 cup white wine vinegar or red wine vinegar
14 oz. goat cheese
2 sticks unsalted butter, melted
1 package phyllo dough sheets, defrosted
2 cups Merlot or other dry red wine
1 tsp. cornstarch

Preheat over to 425. Place asparagus and mushrooms on a baking sheet. Brush with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast for 12-15 minutes. Remove from oven. Slice mushrooms into very thin slices; set aside.

Heat the 1 tbsp. olive oil in a medium pot over medium heat. Add sliced onion and cook for 6-8 minutes, until translucent. Add leaves from sprig of thyme and sugar. Cook for 6-7 minutes; onions should be caramelized. Add vinegar. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer; cook about 12-15 minutes or until the vinegar is almost all gone. Make sure not to burn onions, and stir occasionally. You should have a soft nest of golden sweet onions. Season with salt and pepper.

While onions are still hot, place them in the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Add goat cheese and pulse until thoroughly combined. Remove and reserve at room temperature.

The dish can be made in advance up until this point and brought back to room temperature, assembled and cooked before serving.

Preheat oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Unfold sheets of phyllo dough so you have a large horizontal rectangle in front of you. Using a sharp, not serrated knife, make a vertical cut down the middle so you are left with two stacks of vertical rectangles.

Take one sheet of phyllo, brush with melted butter, and top with another sheet of phyllo. Do this again so you have a stack of four buttered sheets. Form an even, log-shaped mound of the cheese mixture along the bottom shorter edge of the pastry.

Top with 3 asparagus spears and a few slices of portobello. Roll once to cover filling. Fold the right and left sides over the centre and roll, jelly-roll style, until completely closed. (Like a blintz.)

Brush with melted butter. Place on prepared baking sheet. Repeat 3 more times. Bake uncovered for 6-8 minutes or until golden brown.

Place the Merlot in a small saucepan. Dissolve the cornstarch in 1 teaspoon water. Whisk into Merlot. Bring to a boil; sauce will thicken. Drizzle over the strudels, or place in a squeeze bottle and decorate the plate with the syrup. Makes 4 servings.

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U.S. businessman testifies about ties to Olmert

By ROY EITAN
JTA

JERUSALEM — After weeks of legal limbo and widespread speculation about his role in Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's latest corruption scandal, American Jewish businessman Morris Talansky had his day in an Israeli court last week.

The Long Island, N.Y., financier was deposed May 27 by Israeli prosecutors, bringing into public view the story that broke in April when Talansky was questioned by police during a Passover visit to Israel.

Occasionally breaking down in tears and appealing to be allowed to return home to New York, the 75-year-old Talansky told Jerusalem's District Court about some $150,000 (US) in cash handouts he allegedly made to Olmert in the 15 years before Olmert became prime minister.

"I looked at him as a man who could accomplish a great deal," Talansky said, according to court reporters.

Talansky said he admired Olmert's "ability to articulate, his ability to reach out to the American people, the largest and richest community of Jews in the world – and we are losing them at the fastest rate you can imagine."

"And that's why I supported him," Talansky said. "That's why I gave it to him. That's why I supported the man, that's why I overlooked – frankly and honestly – a lot of things. I overlooked them. Maybe I shouldn't have, but I overlooked them."

Olmert has admitted taking money from Talansky, saying it was used to finance his successful 1992 and 1998 campaigns for the Jerusalem mayoralty, as well as an unsuccessful bid in 2003 to head the Likud Party.

Though Israeli law puts strict limits on foreign contributions to political causes, Olmert has insisted on his innocence and pledged to resign if indicted.

The prospect of such a major government shake-up comes as Olmert pursues renewed peace talks with Syria as well as efforts to clinch an accord on Palestinian statehood before U.S. President George W. Bush leaves office in January.

Talansky's payments to Olmert have raised the spectre that the prime minister could be charged with bribery. Olmert has denied taking bribes, and he has tried to distance himself from Talansky by saying that his former law partner, Uri Messer, handled the exchanges of money.

Morris Talansky *[Israel Sun photo]*

Talansky, who has worked as a fundraiser for Israeli charities and has an international minibar business, told the court he received nothing from Olmert in return for the cash.

"I never expected anything personally," he testified. "I never had any personal benefits from this relationship whatsoever."

But apparently it was not for lack of trying.

According to Talansky, Olmert put him in touch with U.S. Jewish casino mogul Sheldon Adelson, Israeli real estate magnate Yitzhak Tshuva and the late Roland Arnall, the founder of Ameriquest, in the hope they could do business. Nothing came of the contacts.

"I said to myself, 'I'm never going to go to a politician for business,'" Talansky told the court with a laugh. "He wanted to do me a favour and it never worked out."

Talansky's May 27 court appearance was a "preliminary deposition" – a procedure Olmert's lawyers tried, and failed, to block.

Talansky was questioned by State Attorney Moshe Lador, who said the probe is focusing on Olmert's receipt of large sums of undocumented cash while serving as the mayor of Jerusalem and as Israel's minister of industry, trade and infrastructure.

Lador's office has withheld comment on what, if any, charges could be brought against the prime minister, who has survived three other criminal probes of his conduct in public office.

"We are not currently thinking of an indictment," Lador told reporters, adding that Talansky would be recalled next month for more questioning. In the meantime, he was expected to be allowed to leave Israel and return home to the United States.

Israel still waiting for answers from Hezbollah

Continued from page 1

and show that in exchange for body parts, they get a live person."

Israeli officials said they thought the prisoner swap would take several weeks to finalize. Hezbollah-run Al-Manar television said Sunday that the rest of the Lebanese prisoners in Israel would be released "soon."

Pathologists at the Abu Kabir Institute of Forensic Medicine began examining the remains on Sunday and hope to come up with positive identification, possibly in as little as two days, though the process could take up to several weeks.

The Israel Defence Forces has a list of nine soldiers killed in the 2006 war who were not buried intact, and the pathologists will attempt to match up the remains with those soldiers, after which the additional remains will also be buried.

The families of soldiers who were not buried intact were informed of this before the funeral, a senior military official said. The IDF said Maj.-Gen. Elazar Stern has appointed a team to update the bereaved families as necessary.

Security officials said Sunday they thought the remains would also include the body parts of soldiers killed when a helicopter was damaged by a Hezbollah rocket in southern Lebanon. Five people were killed in the helicopter crash.

Nasser was returned to Lebanon by the International Red Cross under the military supervision of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. He was transferred directly to Hezbollah representatives.

The contact between Israel and Hezbollah took place with German mediation under the aegis of the United Nations. German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, who visited Lebanon Sunday, said he was glad of the developments and hoped they would help the talks taking place.

Meanwhile, Israel has yet to receive a clear response from Hezbollah about its agreement to the conditions for the prisoner swap, which calls on Hezbollah to free IDF soldiers Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, whose abduction sparked the Second Lebanon War. In the deal, Israel would release several Hezbollah prisoners and Palestinian terrorist Samir Kuntar.

"The ball is in Hezbollah's court," said a senior security source involved in talks with Hezbollah. "We explained our conditions and they still have to give us answers." The source said Israel expected to hear a detailed answer from German mediator Gerhard Konrad.

At a festive welcome reception held in a soccer field in the Lebanese village of Naqoura, Hezbollah official Nabil Kaouk said: "There is no full sovereignty and no full dignity as long as even a single prisoner remains in an Israeli jail." Kaouk said Hezbollah would work to free the other Lebanese prisoners and that this was the only standard by which the dignity of the nation could be measured.

Nasser, a former Israeli citizen and the father of two Israeli daughters, kissed the ground when he set foot in Lebanon. He embraced his six siblings and his mother, Valentine Nasser, who grew up Jewish but converted to Islam when she met Nasser's father.

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יישר כוחכם

Israel Briefs

Security talks held

Israeli and Palestinian security heads met May 27 in Ramallah to co-ordinate policy. Talks focused on "the activity of the Palestinian Security Forces in the area of Jenin and northern Samaria," the Israeli army said. A major Palestinian Authority force was deployed in Jenin in recent weeks, the first since before the second intifadah started in 2000. Washington had pressed Israel to facilitate the deployment, saying the relatively moderate PA government needs troops to shore up its credibility and confront Hamas, the terror group that controls Gaza and has designs on the West Bank. Israel is wary of allowing the PA force to build up arms because of past defections from such forces to terror groups.

MK threatens Olmert?

A right-wing Israeli MK drew fire for suggesting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert should be executed if he cedes the Golan Heights to Syria. "Anyone who has committed an act which could cause the country's territory to be ceded is liable to imprisonment or the death sentence," Arye Eldad of the National Union bloc said May 26, after it was announced Israel and Syria had relaunched peace talks. For many, the remarks recalled the rhetoric against prime minister Yitzhak Rabin before his 1995 assassination by an extremist opposed to Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Eldad said he was merely citing Israel's penal code. Unlike the West Bank and Gaza, the Golan was annexed by Israel, meaning it falls under sovereign law.

Shekel goes global

Israel's currency, the shekel, is now legal tender internationally. It can now be used in trading overseas, with banks worldwide converting it to other currencies, the Israeli business daily, *Globes*, reported. Israeli firms will also be able to make payments in shekels to customers abroad. The change comes after Israel received recognition from CLS Bank International, the international currency clearing system. Mexico's peso was also recognized. The CLS membership recognizes the shekel as one of the world's strongest currencies, *Globes* said.

U.S. eyes more Syrian sites

The United States reportedly suspects Syria of hiding several nuclear sites besides a secret reactor destroyed by Israel. Citing U.S. officials, the *Washington Post* reported May 29 that the Bush administration wants the International Atomic Energy Agency to expand the scope of a planned inspection of Syria. The IAEA has asked Syria for permission to examine a site bombed by Israel last September that the CIA says was a secret, North Korean-built plutonium reactor. *The Post* said the United States is now arguing that at least three other Syrian locations should be looked at too.

– *files from JTA*

Embattled slaughterhouse seeks new CEO

By BEN HARRIS
JTA

NEW YORK — Mounting pressure from Jewish groups and members of the U.S. Congress has led America's largest kosher slaughterhouse to start looking for a new CEO just weeks after federal agents arrested nearly 400 of its employees in a huge immigration raid.

Aaron Rubashkin, the founder of Agriprocessors, said May 23 that he intends to find a replacement for his son, Sholom, as company CEO.

The announcement follows statements from three Jewish organizations raising the specter of a boycott, the launch of a campaign by the United Food and Commercial Workers Union, and a call from U.S. Rep. Bruce Braley for an investigation of the company.

"The best course of action for the company, its employees, the local community and our customers is to bring new leadership to Agriprocessors," the senior Rubashkin said in a statement.

The Brooklyn butcher and Chabad-Lubavitcher, who founded the company in 1987, added, "The company has begun the search for a new permanent chief executive officer. We have engaged a team of industry experts to help us identify and secure a new leader who can help us meet the needs of Agriprocessors today and in the future. We will make more information on the search process available by the end of next week."

The statement reiterated that "due to pending legal issues," the company would not respond to specific allegations. They include charges of hiring underage workers, sexual harassment and withholding of overtime pay.

Rubashkin's move to replace his son comes as Agriprocessors is facing mounting legal problems and boycott threats following last month's raid. The company's problems have raised fears about a possible shortage of kosher meat and fired up the debate over whether Jewish religious bodies should take a more active role in monitoring the working conditions at kosher factories.

In response to the raid and related allegations about the situation at the plant in Postville, Iowa, the Jewish Labor Committee issued a statement May 23 calling for a boycott of Agriprocessors.

The company sells its kosher meat under various labels, including Aaron's Best, Aaron's Choice, Rubashkin's, European Glatt, Supreme Kosher, David's and Shor Habor.

In its statement, the Jewish Labor Committee asserted that the company had displayed "a clear pattern of employer negligence and even lawlessness," including the violation of child labor laws and toleration of various forms of worker abuse.

The committee's statement was followed by a "request" from the Conservative movement's top bodies that kosher consumers "evaluate whether it is appropriate to buy and eat meat products" from Agriprocessors.

Largest raid of its kind in U.S. history

That same day, Uri L'tzedek, a project started by students at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, a liberal Orthodox rabbinical school in Manhattan, began circulating a petition asking Agriprocessors to pay its workers at least the federal minimum wage, abide by laws pertaining to workers' rights and treat employees according to Torah standards.

Organizers said that about 450 people from across the denominational spectrum had signed as of last week.

"Until these changes are made, we feel compelled to refrain from purchasing or consuming meat produced by your company, and will pressure every establishment with which we do business to cease purchase of your meat," the petition reads. "Effective June 15, 2008 we will stop patronizing any restaurant that sells your meat."

Meanwhile, the food workers union has taken out advertisements in major Jewish newspapers detailing the allegations against Agriprocessors. The union, which has waged a legal battle over its still-unsuccessful efforts to organize plant workers, has also started a website, EyeOnAgriprocessors.org, to publicize claims against the company.

The May 12 federal raid is said to be the largest of its kind in U.S. history. Of the 389 illegal immigrants apprehended, 297 pleaded guilty within days and were sentenced to short jail terms or probation, to be followed by deportation to their native countries.

Speculation is rife over whether prosecutors are investigating the company itself, especially after one Postville resident with ties to Agriprocessors confirmed last week that he had been summoned to appear before a grand jury. The local U.S. Attorney's Office wouldn't comment on the matter.

In Washington, the House Committee on Education and Labor held a hearing May 20 on the raid, focusing mainly on its impact on the children of detained workers. But members of Congress also have expressed concern that the raids targeted illegal workers while letting their employers off the hook.

Braley, who represents the northeast Iowa area where the plant is located, has called for a probe of the company.

Rabbi Menachem Genack, head of the Orthodox Union's kosher department, the largest kosher certifier of Agriprocessors, said the OU is awaiting the outcome of legal proceedings against the firm before making any decision. If Agriprocessors is found guilty of criminal charges, he said, the OU will withdraw its hechsher.

Interviews with some of Postville's Chabad residents and other observers suggest the haredi community is taking the accusations against Agriprocessors with a grain of salt. "The problem is, there's a mindset that you have to give the person the benefit of the doubt," said Binyomin Jolkovsky, editor of *Jewish World Review* and a longtime observer of haredi Jewry.

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Israeli flag at the top of the world

By DAN GOLDBERG
JTA

SYDNEY, Australia — The first mother-daughter team to reach the summit of Mount Everest waved an Israeli flag on their way to the top.

Cheryl Bart and her daughter Nikki of Sydney, Australia, arrived atop the world's highest mountain in the wee hours of May 24, Nepal time.

"I am at the top of the world," Cheryl Bart radioed back to her colleagues at Everest Base Camp.

On May 27, a day after descending to the base camp, Cheryl Bart told JTA by satellite phone, "It hasn't really sunk in."

She said the view from the summit was awe-inspiring.

"Stepping up onto the roof of the world, my feeling was one of awe, silence and awe, that I was there," Bart said. "It was a full moon, so when you lifted your head up you could see the reflection of the mountain. It was quite spectacular. The sun just started to rise over in Tibet, so the pink clouds and pink tops of these mighty mountains were awesome."

Mother and daughter are both graduates of Moriah College, Australia's largest Jewish school. Cheryl is a non-executive director of several companies in Australia as well as an ambassador of the Australian chapter of the Peres Center for Peace.

Nikki Bart, in her final year of medical school, is co-chair of the Medical Students' Aid Project, which donates medical equipment and pharmaceuticals to Third World hospitals.

They are also the first mother-daughter duo to scale the peaks of the so-called seven summits – the highest mountains on each continent.

With a small flag of Israel in their backpack, the pair arrived in Nepal at the end of March, taking weeks to acclimate to the high altitude and bitter cold in preparation for temperatures that plunged to -30 C. They also had to overcome several setbacks during their ascent: the weather, nearby avalanches and high security when the Olympic torch was carried up the mountain.

On May 27, Cheryl Bart said she was looking forward to going home to Australia and to new challenges beyond.

"We have to go home, and we can't wait to see family and friends, have more showers and eat ice cream," she said. "But having reached the highest point on earth, we should probably go to the Dead Sea."

Israel & the Jewish World

UN critic sees worrying signs about Durban II

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A "non-paper" distributed to participants of next year's Durban II conference contains worrying indications that the anti-racism gathering will cast Israel as a racist oppressor of Palestinians and will challenge freedom of the press, warns Anne Bayefsky, a law professor who monitors UN activities.

Bayefsky, who operates the Eye On The UN website, said the non-paper "is a laundry list of all the things governments intend to discuss" at Durban II, the followup to the notorious Durban I, the United Nations World Conference Against Racism. Critics say the 2001 gathering in South Africa was marked by anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism. "Egypt and Iran intend to discuss Israeli 'racism' against Palestinian victims [at Durban II]," the non-paper said.

Not given a formal UN symbol or number, the non-paper was discussed at the first substantive session of the Durban II preparatory committee, which met in April during the Passover holiday. "We can expect the African regional group, driven by the Organization of the Islamic Conference, will put this subject matter on the agenda. There's no sign the European Union is going to be able to prevent this discussion," Bayefsky said.

In addition, the document suggests implementing "a code of conduct on journalists, limiting freedom of expression. That should ring alarm bells for all democratic societies."

Bayefsky noted that in 1991 the United Nations rescinded its 1975 resolution equating Zionism with racism, but since then Israel's opponents have been attempting to portray the conflict as one of an Israeli apartheid regime targeting Palestinians.

"It's really Zionism as racism by any other name. Since it's passé and not in favour, it's taken on new words. Some people will invoke the language of apartheid regarding Israel."

With the Durban II planning committee headed by Libya and Iran and with other foes of Israel participating, the trend toward vilification of the Jewish state is becoming clear, Bayefsky said.

"There's no sign the EU is going to be able to prevent this discussion," she continued. They were unable to stand up to African and Islamic groups during discussions in the preparatory committee, including Islamic countries' efforts to disqualify the Canadian Council of Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA)'s request for accreditation. (CIJA eventually withdrew it's application.)

"On one item after another, they [the EU] roll over and play dead," she said.

"In some respects, Durban II will be worse than Durban I," Bayefsky continued. "Not just to isolate Israel as a racist state, but also assault on human rights' dearest values, particularly freedom of expression."

Some of the world's worst rights violators are using the defence of religion "to mount an attack on freedom of expression," she added.

On a brighter note, Bayefsky said Durban II, which will be held in Geneva from April 20 to 24, 2009, will not be accompanied by a parallel meeting of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). At Durban I, the NGO gathering was "where some of the most overt examples of gross anti-Semitism took place," she said.

Meanwhile, Jewish organizations from around the world gathered in Geneva last week as guests of UN Watch, another UN monitoring organization, to consider a Durban II strategy. Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, and former Congress president Keith Landy attended the meeting.

Farber said an alternative conference was discussed, but he believes it would be difficult to organize between now and April. "We're not there yet," he said, adding that an alternative conference could be held after Durban II instead.

"Canada was very much part of the focus in all the discussions because it took the lead" in withdrawing from Durban II, he said. "It was seen as a moral and ethical lead," and one that could influence other governments to do the same.

The participants of last week's meeting discussed "formulating red lines. After they are crossed, Jewish organizations would advocate that their governments pull out" of Durban II, Farber said.

Bayefsky believes the United Nations has "roped in" EU countries by holding the conference in its backyard, and she expects European countries will provide much of its funding.

If democracies remain at a conference marked by anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, it is like debating Ernst Zundel about the Holocaust. It merely lends credibility to the anti-Semites, Farber said.

"Even for those who want to be at Durban II, once you determine the red lines, you just can't negotiate and be on the same stage with those who seek to discredit and disenfranchise the Jewish people and the State of Israel," he added.

Lapid served as justice minister

JERUSALEM — Yosef Lapid, a former Israeli justice minister who campaigned against Orthodox religious controls in the Jewish state, died.

Lapid, who was known by his childhood nickname Tommy, succumbed to cancer in a Tel Aviv hospital Sunday. He was 77.

Born in the former Yugoslavia, Lapid lost his father in the Holocaust but managed to survive in hiding with his mother. He immigrated to Israel as a youth, mastering Hebrew and becoming a leading journalist and playwright.

His bitterness at the welfare benefits and exemptions from military service enjoyed by fervently Orthodox Jews in Israel led Lapid into politics. At the helm of the secularist Shinui Party, he made impressive gains in the 2003 elections and was appointed justice minister in Ariel Sharon's coalition government.

Shinui eventually would bolt in a funding dispute and, its public image eroded by infighting and Lapid's occasional invective against minorities, was trounced in the 2006 elections.

Lapid returned to journalism, appearing regularly as a political commentator and defending his friend, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, against mounting allegations of corruption. While no friend of the Palestinian Authority, he also inveighed against the conduct of radical Israeli settlers in the West Bank.

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Ruth Panofsky: *Laike and Nahum: A Poem in Two Voices*
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1948...They Were There

Machalnik recalls the fight for Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

They say you can't go back again, but if they let him, Louis Laurie would do so in a heartbeat. Go back to fight for Israel, that is.

A tough-talking, no-nonsense octogenarian, Laurie is one of the surviving members of Machal – the group of nearly 3,500 foreign volunteers from 37 countries who rallied to the defence of the nascent Jewish state during Israel's 1948 War of Independence.

Recruited by agents of the Yishuv in 1947, Laurie and two other Jewish friends from Montreal signed on to help fight for the Jewish state's cause out of a deep sense of duty and kinship with their brothers and sisters across the sea, he told *The CJN* in a recent interview.

As he tells it, one day in 1947, he was contacted by a recruiter for the fledgling Zionist fighting force being assembled in British-occupied Palestine.

A painting titled *Men Who Took the Hill at Tamra* reproduces B Company as it stormed the hill, rendered by former Machalnik and B Company soldier Stanley Klorman.
[Reproduction courtesy Louis Laurie]

"I'd had no interest in Israel until that time," Laurie said. "But we heard the story of [then-Canadian prime minister] Mackenzie King and his quote of 'none is too many,' and we got angry. And having served in the Canadian forces, we agreed to go to Israel."

Laurie and a host of Machalniks from the United States, Great Britain, Canada, South Africa, Morocco and elsewhere, arrived in Israel by boat in 1948 – Laurie sailed on the Pan Swallow out of Marseille, France. He recalled that upon their arrival, they were immediately given a speech by the soon-to-be first prime minister of Israel, David Ben-Gurion.

"The first words out of his mouth to us were, 'Chayalim v'chayalot!' (soldiers!)," Laurie said with a smile. "Then we were sent to a former British camp north of Nahariya. We were only there a few days before we saw our first action on Tamra Hill [in the western Galilee]."

For followers of Israel's War of Independence, the Tamra Hill battle represents a unique and historic moment in modern Israeli warfare.

Throughout the summer of 1948, the hill was held by regulars of the Arab Liberation Army in support of Syrian troops in the area. As a strategic position, it allowed the Arab army to fire upon traffic on a main road that bridged the north and south of the Galilee.

Laurie and a host of other Machal fighters were assigned to B Company of the 72nd infantry battalion. Orders came down from command that on Sept. 6, 1948, at 10 p.m., B Company was to take the hill and hold it for the Haganah (the pre-state militia).

"We were stuck in Tamra for 36 hours, fighting Iraqis," Laurie said.

According to literature from the American Veterans of Israel (AVI), over the course of the next two days, platoons from B Company rushed the hill, attacking with bayonets affixed to their rifles, eventually winning the skirmish.

The AVI says that engagement remains "the only bayonet charge in the annals of the IDF."

Louis Laurie, top row, third from left, poses in a group shot with his Machal brothers-in-arms of the 72nd battalion, some time in 1948. [Photo courtesy Louis Laurie]

But there were more battles to be fought by Laurie and B Company.

"We were in Sasa, Tsfat... we did a lot of patrols behind enemy lines, that was our job. You never knew where bullets would come from," Laurie recalled of his unit's activities. "We were doing something very few people would want to do and we were proud. I was proud of it."

Once the war was over, Laurie stayed on in Israel for an extra year, training as an officer. However, he fell ill and was released by the Haganah. He returned to Canada in 1949, eventually settling in Toronto, where he met his wife, Rose, in 1950.

He became a successful entrepreneur, heading up various businesses over the years, and at 80, is now the president of Laurie Associates Inc., a metals and magnets manufacturer in Toronto.

"I need to do things, I can't sit still," he said. "My main interest in life is doing things others don't want to do – which is why I make magnets out of polyester now."

Born in 1928 in Montreal, Laurie moved in the 1930s to Ottawa, which at the time, was "famous for a lot of racial fighting," he said.

It was there that he learned the lesson to always "fight back" when it came to defending his ethnicity and religion.

"I can't tell you how many fights I had over my faith," he said.

At 16, Laurie joined the Canadian Navy as a photographer-gunner, though he saw no significant action, he said.

Afterward, with his skills as a cameraman, he found work with *ABC News Pictures* in Montreal, where he had a chance to meet and photograph many dignitaries and luminaries of the day.

When he thinks of Israel now, 60 years after his part was played in its formation, Laurie gets both nostalgic and upset.

"I cry for Israel. People don't know the truth about it. Every [country] has a reason for doing what they do," he said. "But the only country given hell for what they do is Israel. I believe strongly in Israel and if they'd let me, I'd pick up a rifle and go back."

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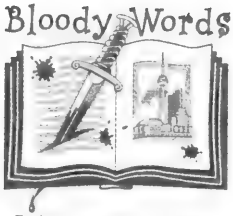
Books & Authors

Mystery writers visit Toronto for a bloody good time



By BENJAMIN GLEISSER
Special to The CJN

People with murder on their minds are coming to Toronto. But don't worry – they only break the Sixth Commandment on paper.

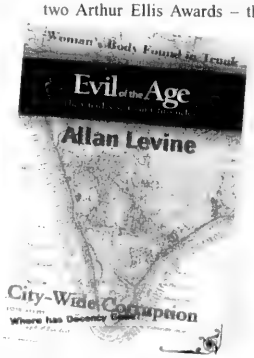
A slew of mystery and crime writers and several hundred of their fans will visit Toronto for Bloody Words VIII, to be held June 6 to 8 at the Eaton Centre Downtown Marriott Hotel. Bloody Words is Canada's oldest and largest convention of professional writers, amateur sleuths, librarians and readers who love things that bleed, bark, bang and go bump in the night. The whodunit summit features panels of authors debating the state of mayhem in literature today, as well as lectures by experts in the fields of criminology and forensics.

Fictional detectives are a diverse group, says conference organizer Cheryl Freedman, executive director of Crime Writers of Canada. Indeed, there are Jewish detectives, Muslim detectives, mothers, blind doctors, psychics, and even vampire detectives.

Author Barbara Fradkin muses that there are probably more Jewish detectives in mystery novels today than on most big-city police forces.

The Ottawa native has written six novels featuring inspector Michael Green, a no-nonsense cop who often forgets to pick up a challah for the family's Sabbath meal. Fradkin has won two Arthur Ellis Awards – the highest honour for a Canadian mystery writer – for her Michael Green novels *Fifth Son* (2005) and *Honour Among Men* (2007).

Allan Levine



"My guy is the only child of Holocaust survivors," says Fradkin, a child psychologist who now pursues her craft full time. "This influenced his childhood and shaped his vision of justice and power. His passion is hunting down people who are truly evil, and he sees himself as a voice for the powerless."

History also figures prominently in Allan Levine's mysteries. Levine, a Winnipeg native, set his trio of Sam Klein novels in turn-of-the-century Winnipeg, where immigrant Jews faced overwhelming discrimination.

In *The Blood Libel* (1997), Klein, a minder at a brothel, works to clear a rabbi who has been falsely accused of murder. The novel won the Margaret McWilliams Medal for best historical fiction. Klein sleuths again in *Sins of the Suffragette* (2000) and *The Bolshevik's Revenge* (2002). *Evil of the Age*, published in May 2008, is the first book in a series featuring New York City journalist Charles St. Clair.

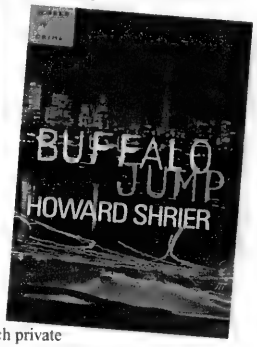
"Why did I choose a Jewish protagonist?" Levine, a history teacher at St. John's-Ravenscourt School says, "It's the old phrase: 'Write what you know.' I'm particularly attracted to the underdog experience, and I'm very familiar with stories of the Diaspora – they're filled with colourful characters and great plots."

Levine, who describes himself as a "historian first and fiction writer second," has also penned non-fiction tomes including *Scattered Among the Peoples: The Jewish Diaspora in Ten Portraits* (2002) and *Fugitives of the Forest: The Heroic Story of Jewish Resistance & Survival During the Second World War* (1998), which will be re-released this fall to coincide with the movie *Defiance*, about partisans in the forests of Belarus who saved 1,200 Jews.

Next year, Levine will publish *Coming of Age*, a history of Jewish life in Manitoba that was commissioned by the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada.

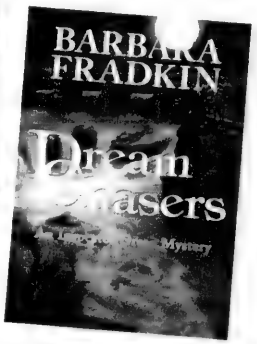
Howard Shrier

Toronto's Howard Shrier has been to several Bloody Words conventions in the past, but this year, he is attending as a published writer. The former corporate communications adviser just released *Buffalo Jump*, in which private eye Jonah Geller performs acts of tikkun olam while helping a hitman through a crisis of faith.



"My protagonist is a progressive Jew who's also a seeker – like me," Shrier says. "So there's a lot in the book about progressive Jewish culture."

Barbara Fradkin



In addition to author talks, Bloody Words will have seminars on topics including "CSI: Toronto," where Canadian police officers explain how they investigate crimes; "The Fraud Squad," about how scam artists work; "Deadly Doses," a discussion of poisons; and "World Enough and Crime," featuring the former head of Interpol.

Despite all the bloody talk, Bloody Words is one of Canada's most fun literary events, Freedman says.

"It's an intimate gathering, so people really have the chance to meet and talk with their favourite authors," she says, adding that people like reading crime novels because it's cathartic.

"Sure, we see terrible things in the newspaper, but mystery stories are different. It's satisfying to read about a crime being solved and justice prevailing. It's comforting to know that justice prevails somewhere."

For more information on Bloody Words, go to www.bloodywords.com or call 416-597-9938. To read more about Barbara Fradkin, go to www.barbarafradkin.com; find Allan Levine at www.allanlevinebooks.com.

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CJN Profile

Benmergui sought the 'real' Israel for TV series

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Toronto broadcaster Ralph Benmergui sought out the "real" Israel for his five-part, first-person Vision TV series, which was timed to coincide with Israel's 60th anniversary celebrations.

"I wanted to show people the country, not the cartoon and the usual stereotypical representations," he said in an interview over lunch recently.

Ralph Benmergui: My Israel, which was also screened at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival last month, covers a wide range of topics: Jerusalem; the security barrier; race and class; the influence of Orthodox Jews in Israeli society; and Israel's future.

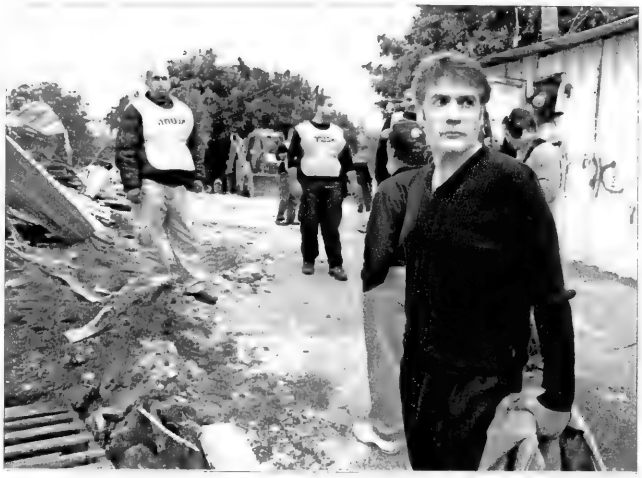
Benmergui, who had a 20-year career at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and now hosts the *Benmergui in the Morning* radio show on Jazz.FM 91, was not interested in regurgitating the media's "extreme version" of Israel in which Israeli Jews and Palestinians Arabs are in constant conflict over a tiny contested piece of land. In this hackneyed journalistic formula, he explained, what usually emerges is a "good guy/bad guy" portrayal of Israel with little or no nuance

Benmergui, who describes himself as a "liberal, egalitarian Jew," spent two weeks in Israel, mostly in the central corridor, gathering material. He was accompanied by, among others, executive producer Allan Novak and a cameraman.

Starting with the assumption that far too many Jewish visitors take the "Disney tour" of Israel, Benmergui was determined not to interview the usual array of politicians and experts, who would most likely bombard him with "spin" and thus divert him from a genuine understanding of a complex and evolving nation that is still very much a work of progress.

Instead, he talked to "real people," ranging from ordinary Israeli Jews and Arabs to Palestinians. Whenever possible, he interviewed them in their living rooms or on the streets they usually frequent. "Above and beyond, I was listening to them."

Philosophically, Benmergui approached Israel from a non-partisan point of view, being convinced that Canadian Jews are generally reluctant to criticize Israel when its policies warrant criticism.



Broadcaster Ralph Benmergui stands next to Israel's security barrier in Bethlehem

"We have to find a deeper way to understand Israel without axe grinding," he said, observing that such an understanding is of the utmost importance because Jews tend to be defined by Israel.

Proceeding from the assumption that Israel is a country pressed by enormous internal and external pressures, Benmergui believes that its serious social problems, from poverty to the widening gap between rich and poor, are trumped by security considerations.

Concerned that the Jewish state is being shaped by Orthodox Jews with a definite right-wing agenda, he said Israel should be more pluralistic and inclusive.

A Sephardi Jew born in Tangier, Morocco, 52 years ago, Benmergui argues that his fellow Sephardim are under-represented in positions of power despite recent signs of progress in this respect. "It's systemic discrimination," he claimed. "Israel is a European construct."

In his opinion, Israel's treatment of its substantial Arab minority leaves much to be desired. "Israeli Arabs should have better access to basic services," he noted.

Turning to the Palestinians, he said they should not be dehumanized.

He also wonders whether the Holocaust should be such a focal point of Israel's identity. "As a Sephardi Jew, the Holocaust does not resonate as much for me."

Benmergui's critique is a function of his devotion to Israel. "Israel matters to me. It's part and parcel of my existence."

As a youth, he idealized Israel. "It was a utopian dream with heroic Jews, a fairyland."

He first questioned Israel's direction during its 1982 invasion of Lebanon. The first Palestinian uprising – which brought Israel's occupation of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip into sharper focus as a legitimate issue – clarified and crystallized his thinking.

He has visited Israel four times, the first time in 1990, shortly after Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Benmergui, whose family left Tangier in 1957, has visited Morocco once since then. "I got to see where my parents worked and found the woman who took care of my two older brothers."

His father, Mair, was an administrator in a Jewish hospital, while his mother, Rachel, was a nurse there.

They decided to leave Morocco following the rise of pan-Arab nationalism in the wake of Israel's creation, the advent of Moroccan independence, the Arabization of Moroccan society and the outbreak of the 1956 Suez war.

They chose Canada rather than Israel due to their perception that Moroccan Jews were not fully appreciated in Israel. "My mother said, 'Why would we go from a place where we were treated like dirt by Arabs to a place where we would be treated like dirt by Jews?'"

Culturally, his Moroccan Jewish heritage is very important to him. "It has defined me," said Benmergui, whose wife is of Polish Jewish origin.

Raised in a Jewish neighbourhood in Toronto, where he attended a local Jewish school, Benmergui was originally an actor and a standup comedian, performing for Mark Breslin's Yuk Yuk's comedy troupe.

At 27, he turned to journalism and entered Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. After he graduated, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation offered him a research job in Winnipeg.

Within eight months, he got his first big break as host of *Nightlines*, a late-night music show on CBC's stereo network. From there, he segued to a succession of gigs. He hosted *Prime Time*, a radio program, and then moved on to co-host CBC-TV's *Midday*, where he polished his interviewing skills. As well, he hosted *Friday Night With Ralph Benmergui* and *Benmergui Live*.

"I liked the CBC," said Benmergui, a contract employee who was never on staff. "I got to do the shows I believed in. I really believe in public broadcasting."

Before leaving the CBC, he produced a Christmas special for Stuart McLean and completed *Seekers*, a Vision television series about five people in search of spirituality. He says he joined Jazz.FM 91 because he had been at the CBC long enough.

The radio station hired him not as a jazz authority but as a broadcaster with a fine track record. "I know a lot more about jazz today than when I was hired," said Benmergui, who wakes up at 4:30 a.m. so that he can launch *Benmergui in the Morning* at 6 a.m.

A voracious reader who often discusses his favourite books on air, he hopes to compile a book based on *Ralph Benmergui: My Israel*.

"I'm talking to an agent about it," he said.

And much further in the future, he wants to go to the United States and write a spinoff, *Ralph Benmergui: My America*.

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
President

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

ISRAELI STAR MOSH BEN ARI PERFORMS SDEROT BENEFIT

Israeli roots-soul-reggae singer **Mosh Ben Ari**, lead singer of the renowned group **Sheva** and composer of the hit song *Salaam*, performs a benefit concert for the community of Sderot with special guest **Dylan Murray**. $25 and $35; $65 for VIP tickets with a "meet and greet." The Mod Club, 722 College St. Sunday June 15, 8 p.m. Tickets available at Israel's Judaica and at www.ticketweb.ca.

* * *

Tribute Gala: Anne Golden is the honoree at Building Community Together, a tribute gala in support of the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School. The evening is hosted by **Bob Martin**, star of *The Drowsy Chaperone* and entertainers includes guitarist **Mighty Popo**, comic **Sean Cullen**, **ProArteDanza**, **Andy Massingham**, **Nicola Pantin** and the comic troupe **Women Fully Clothed**, consisting of **Kathryn Greenwood**, **Robin Duke**, **Debra McGrath**, **Jayne Eastwood** and **Teresa Pavlinek**.

Leah Cherniak is director, **Danny Greenspoon** is producer, and **Alon Nashman** is artistic director of the event. Tickets are $250 and include a dessert reception. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadel Jewish Community Centre, June 16, 8 p.m. 416-928-3537, judy@djds.ca

* * *

Names in the News: Vancouver-based musician, educator and choral conductor **Elizabeth Wolak** has won the 2008 Herbert Drost Award from the British Columbia Choral Federation for her distinguished service and support of choral music.

A Holocaust survivor, Wolak spent the war years imprisoned in a Soviet labour camp in central Russia. The Cracow native graduated with distinction from the Cracow Conservatory of Music and was associate conductor of the Cracow Philharmonic Boys Choir. After arriving in Canada in 1963, she founded and led the **Jewish Community Choir of Vancouver**, the **Temple Sholom Choir of Vancouver** and the **Shiron Singers**, and produced three recordings of Jewish music.

* * *

At the Fringe: *Taking Liberties*, a drama by playwright **Dave Carley**, looks at an Ontario city through the prism of civil rights and invokes issues involving Holocaust denial, affirmative action, censorship and other matters. The cast includes **David Fox**, **Richard Lee**, **Michael Rubenfeld** and **Dixie Seatle**. The Uncivil Theatre Co-op production is part of the Fringe Festival. Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor, July 2 to 13, 9 p.m. nightly; no show July 7. $10. www.fringetoronto.com, 416-966-1062

* * *

Nava Waxman

Arts in Brief

• **David Buchbinder**'s *Odessa/Havana*, a "fiery and inventive fusion of Jewish and Cuban music," performs at the Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W. $15, $18. Wednesday, June 11, doors open 7 p.m., show 8:30. www.smallworld-music.com, 416-588-0307

• Author-Yiddishist **Shirley Kumove** speaks on "About Yiddish Folk Sayings" at 55 Forward… For Active Seniors. Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, June 12, 1:30 p.m. Contact Phyllis Fien, 416-924-6211, ext. 155.

• Jazz @ the J, featuring the **Ron Davis Sextet**, is at the Al Green Theatre, Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. $15, $24, $28. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• Toronto photographer **Sheila Goldgrab** has produced a web-based book of photographs from Morocco. The book is "a real book that could be published in the traditional way, but it's on the web, not on the coffee table," Goldgrab said. "It lets me share my photos with thousands of people internationally." It can be seen at http://sheilagoldgrab.com.

• The 2008 Helen and Stan Vine Jewish Book Awards ceremony takes place at the Leah Posluns Theatre on Wednesday, June 4, 8 p.m. Guest speaker is **Michael Wex**, author of *Just Say Nu*. Free admission, everyone welcome.

• Guitarist-pianist **Brian Katz** and clarinetist-flutist **Jonno Lightstone** explore some rarely performed klezmer repertoire; the inviting texture of the classical guitar and flute will especially intrigue listeners who have yet to hear the quieter side of klezmer. House concert hosted by **Lynda Batist Friedman**. 150 Winona Drive (St. Clair and Oakwood.) Wednesday June 11, 7:30 p.m. Reservations, 416-653-9768. $15 (includes snacks and refreshments). Seating limited.

* * *

At the Galleries: Israeli-born artist **Nava Waxman**, who moved to Toronto with her family in 2003, is having her first solo exhibition here this month. Waxman has received much positive attention and several awards since she left a high-pressure IT career for the art world. Her "New Work," curated by gallery director Yael Gluzberg, is at the Blue Dot Gallery, Distillery District, 55 Mill St., Building 47, from June 12 to 26. 416-487-1500, info@ thebluedotgallery.com

• Flex, an exhibition of art involving the traditional handmade Japanese paper called "*washi*," includes works by **Mark Adair**, **Elizabeth Babyn**, **Yael Brotman**, **Kelly Cade**, **Gary Clement**, **Elizabeth D'Agostino**, **Martha Eleen**, **Maria Gabankova**, **Candida Girling**, **Charles Hackbarth**, **Libby Hague**, **Isabelle Hemard**, **David Holt**, **JJ Lee**, **Liz Parkinson**, **Maureen Paxton**, **Barbara Rehus**, **Rochelle Rubinstein**, **Yvonne Singer** and **Adrienne Trent**. Loop Gallery, 1174 Queen St. W. On view until June 15. www.loopgallery.ca

Three Israeli movies at Worldwide Short Film Festival

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The 14th annual edition of the Worldwide Short Film Festival runs from June 10-15 this year. Among the 268 films from 31 countries are four on a Jewish theme, three from Israel and one from Canada.

Death of Shula, by Asaf Korman, will likely appeal to animal lovers.

***Death of Shula* will appeal to animal lovers.**

Shula, a shaggy dog, seems to be in poor health. His owner takes her to a vet, and the news is bad. Shula has a tumour in her intestines.

The vet is honest. Surgery will be expensive and risky. What to do? The owner, deeply attached to his beloved hound, wants to go ahead with the operation. His wife, however, is skeptical. What's the point?

Shula is euthanized and placed in a large cardboard box for burial. Neither the owner's son nor his daughter has the time to accompany him to a burial ground in Tedl Aviv.

Admittedly, his daughter sheds a tear or two for Shula, but no one but the owner really cares about Shula, which is sad because Shula has been around for so long.

Death of Shula is really about self-absorption to the point of callousness. Ther owner's wife and two grown children have lived with and known this family pet for many years, yet they forsake her on her final journey.

Korman captures these conflicting emotions in this somewhat touching documentary.

Home, by Alejandro Levy, is a strange film.

A young man is upset, understandably so, because her home is a toxic mess. The discoloured walls are full of pock marks, holes and mould.

Yet oddly enough, her disengaged and negligent parents seem resigned to the situation.

What does it all mean? Your guess is as good as mine. But perhaps the horrible condition of this family's home is a metaphor for a woman's quest for normalcy in a dysfunctional atmosphere.

Another Day, by Amit Turkenitz, unfolds in Tel Aviv as several cool young men are about to be called up for military service.

They work out their anxieties, jealousies and frustrations through the new girlfriend of one of the guys.

The film strings you along and leaves you with an empty feeling. It also seems pointless at times.

Song of Solomon, by Emmanuel Shirinian, is a gleefully subversive film.

Yossi, an Orthodox rabbi, is mildly reprimanded by a *macher* in his synagogue, told in no uncertain terms that his interpersonal skills are in dire need of improvement.

"You need to relax, to have some fun," a friend advises.

Yossi takes the advice to heart. Improbably, he visits a gay bar and dances to the beat of catchy music.

The *macher* is not amused by his escapade as the film cuts to Yossi praying fervently in the shul.

Asked to explain his bizarre behaviour, Yossi says, "Music and dance have long been expressions of joy in our faith."

The explantion has a kernel of truth to it, but how will Yossi atone for eating pork?

We're only human, aren't we? That appears to be the underlying message in this quirky film.

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Arts & Travel

Photographer inspired by nature

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

The work of award-winning photographer Sheila Reisman will be shown in an exhibition in Collingwood, Ont, this month.

The exhibit of 42 photographs, Heaven and Earth, can be viewed at the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts from June 7 to 26.

Reisman has had numerous group and solo exhibitions and her photographs are in private and corporate collections.

A former model and a world traveller, she moved to Canada 35 years ago and has residences in Toronto and Collingwood.

She has taken photographs in Africa, Europe, Mexico and the United States, as well as in Canada.

Reisman says that she is intrigued by how she is affected by the weather and the environment.

"When I observe a storm, a peaceful blue sky or a calm sea in relation to the sky, I am touched and motivated by the wonders of nature throughout the world.

"I decided that through my Heaven and Earth show, I would document how our home in Collingwood and our beautiful earth influences us. I have eagerly captured beautiful, magical and intriguing skies and ever-changing landscapes."

Reisman has printed her photographs for the Heaven and Earth show on canvas, in both black and white and colour.

Reisman is the winner of the 2008 Stratford Award and the Ryerson University Award for black and white photography.

She has had solo exhibitions at the Elevator and Sutton galleries in Toronto; the Hospital for Sick Children; and the Engel Gallery in New York. Her photographs can be found in the collections of Merchants Bank of New York; the School of Philosophy in London, England; and the state attorney's office in Tampa, Fla.

Reisman has donated photographs for many fundraisers and to charitable and arts organizations, including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

She will be publishing a photo journal of her works in the near future.

For more information, call the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts, 705-445-7843, or Reisman, 705-445-3333, or e-mail sreis14128@aol.com.

A photography exhibit by Sheila Reisman, above, is on at the Blue Mountain Foundation for the Arts in Collingwood, Ont., June 7 to 26. [Michael Klar photo]

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Sisters Rosensweig opens at Harold Green Theatre

By RENA GODFREY
Special to The CJN

Three American Jewish sisters, originally from Brooklyn, N.Y., gather in London to celebrate the birthday of the oldest sister Sara (Rosemary Dunsmore). Sounds like a recipe for a disaster, but quite the opposite unfolds.

Under Jim Warren's insightful and skilful direction, Wendy Wasserstein's comedy, *The Sisters Rosensweig*, presented by the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company, will be staged June 7 to 21 at Toronto's Jane Mallett Theatre.

Wasserstein wrote *The Sisters Rosensweig* in 1993, against the tumultuous backdrop of the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is a rich play filled with articulate and humorous dialogue, yet there are serious undertones as most of the characters appear to be at a crossroads in their lives.

"*The Sisters Rosensweig* is very much about the characters' search for their identity," Warren says.

Warren is enthusiastic about the Toronto cast and refers to them as "smart, investigative actors who know how to uncover the layers."

The story unfolds over the course of a weekend in late August 1991, at Sara's home in Queen Anne's Gate, a posh residential area close to Buckingham Palace. Throughout the weekend, the sisters lovingly push and pull each other, discussing their own lives, loves and desires.

Sara is a "handsome" 54-year-old woman who is a high-powered banker, extremely intelligent and a double divorcée. She spends much of her energy on her 17-year-old daughter, Tess (Sara Farb), and is determined to control Tess' future, until Mervyn (Richard Greenblatt) a New York faux furrier and a potential love interest for Sara, enters the scene.

Pfeni (Sarah Dodd), Sara's youngest sister, is an accomplished journalist, who has chosen travel writing as her current vocation. She is laid-back, open to new experiences and grapples with relationship with her bisexual boyfriend, a renown stage director, Geoffrey (Steve Cumyn).

Gorgeous (Linda Kash), the middle sister, makes a comedic entrance, wearing a fake Chanel suit and too much makeup. She is a Massachusetts' wife of a "prominent attorney," mother of four, and a radio show host. At first glance, Gorgeous appears to be frivolous and somewhat obnoxious, but as the play progresses, it becomes evident that she is desperately trying to keep up appearances, as her life back home crumbles beneath her fake designer shoes.

With humour and wit, the characters continuously challenge each other and themselves. "The characters are extremely intelligent and well-read, and they use their humour as armour to deflect what is really going on," Warren says.

He loves the characters for their courage and ability to not give up. " It's not a sentimental play. These characters don't whine or wallow in self-pity. They may be stuck for a while, but they get on with it and move forward."

Although, the sisters' dead mother, Rita, is not present on stage, her presence is undeniable in their lives. Alongside this maternal strong-hold is the conflicting relationship that the sisters have with their Jewish roots.

Sara has gone to extremes to shed her Jewish identity, by moving to Queen Anne's Gate, where she tries hard to keep up a non-Jewish image and lifestyle. Pfeni travels around the globe, choosing to roam, rather than face her own reality, while Gorgeous tries to maintain the persona of the perfect Jewish woman from Massachusetts.

Despite the Jewish content of the play, audience members will be able to relate to the characters and their relationships, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, Warren says.

He attributes the universality of the play to Wasserstein's brilliantly crafted and detailed script. "This is a piece that seems on the surface very funny, clever and witty, yet on further investigation, you see how much depth is in all of these characters, and how truthful and potentially moving and real this story is."

The play is energetic and full of surprises. "You're constantly surprised by what you think these people are. Nothing is tied up in a bow. You're hopeful about a few relationships, but you really don't know what is going to happen in the end."

The Sisters Rosensweig is sure to have the audience thinking long after the curtain call.

The show previews from June 7, runs June 12 to 21, at the St. Lawrence Centre for the Performing Arts, Jane Mallett Theatre. For tickets, call 366-7723 www.hgjewishtheatre.com

Adam Sandler comedy messes with Israelis and Arabs

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Adam Sandler's new film, *You Don't Mess with the Zohan*, will inevitably be compared to Sacha Baron Cohen's howler, *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America for Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*.

Like its uproarious predecessor, Sandler's movie, scheduled to open in Toronto on June 6, is a wild foray into a politically incorrect universe where nothing is sacred and everything is fodder for its dark, twisted humour.

In the mockumentary *Borat*, a zany, downright racist journalist from Central Asia, Cohen, is plopped down in the middle of United States and left to his own devices, with predictably crazy results.

Borrowing a page from Cohen's playbook, but hewing to a more traditional, scripted comedy, Sandler plays a legendary Israeli commando who is sick and tired of war and fakes his own death in a battle with his Arab nemesis so that he can fulfil a dream and become a hairstylist in New York City.

Like Borat, Zohan is a fish-out-of-water, comic-book character defined by deadpan behaviour and physicality. But unlike Borat, Zohan is something of a bionic man, an indestructible ninja steeped in the martial arts who's unfazed by onerous challenges.

At heart, Zohan is a pretty decent chap who likes the ladies – irrespective of their age, looks and physical attributes – and who desires nothing more than a quiet, uneventful life.

The film, directed by Dennis Dugan and written by Sandler, Judd Apatow and Robert Smigel, opens on a bright, sparkling summer day as Zohan relaxes on the Tel Aviv beachfront.

Judging by his juvenile but endearing antics, bikini-clad women just love this nice, but eccentric, Jewish boy. Before too long, a military helicopter lands and scoops up Zohan. Duty calls, much to his regret.

At headquarters, Zohan volunteers to take on the feared Phantom (John Turturro), an Arab fighter based in Beirut. Prior to embarking on his top-secret mission, Zohan joins his patriotic parents for a meal and admits that he has grown weary of the endless violence of the Arab-Israeli dispute.

"I've done so much for the country," he says. "When does it end? When can I move on?"

Between mouthfuls of hummus, his mother urges him to remain in the army and "play it safe." When he reveals that his ambition is to cut and style hair, his surprised, dumbfounded parents assume that he's gay.

Dugan milks this mordant situation to the maximum and, later, he pokes fun at the non-culinary uses of hummus.

Having fought the Phantom in his hideout in Beirut, Zohan confronts him yet again and pretends to have been defeated in a watery duel.

Finding himself in Manhattan, where he goes by the name of Scrappy Coco, Zohan shops around for jobs and deflates pompous bullies.

Unable to land a position as a hairdresser, Zohan wanders into a shady "going out of business" electronics store. Here, in rollicking fashion, the film mercilessly skewers the bait-and-switch tactics of its Israeli sales staff.

At the suggestion of an Israeli who recognizes him and admires his exploits, Zohan is directed across the street to an Arab-owned hair salon. Dalia (Emmanuelle Chriqui), the Palestinian proprietor, gives him a chance, and Zohan is off and running.

Zohan's silky smooth cut-and-bang technique is a hit with the ladies, particularly the geriatric set. These ribald scenes are both amusing and overdrawn and seethe with crass sexuality. Sandler is kinetic, a whirling dervish of energy with his ersatz Hebrew accent.

The film unfolds to the beat of a Hebrew soundtrack, the first I have heard in a mainstream Hollywood movie. It also satirizes a Hezbollah phone line and Muslim bombmakers, and delivers a dig at actor and director Mel Gibson.

More often than not, Sandler's film elicits belly laughs, but it also dredges up tiresome jokes and offends cat lovers as it runs out of steam.

One skit, in particular, is in poor taste. "Who would write Arab go home," asks an Arab man as he reads nativist graffiti on a wall. "Ninety per cent of the world," counters an Israeli boor.

Strangely enough, however, the film promotes universal brotherhood within the context of American democracy.

Zohan, falling hard for Dalia, says, "I will only be stiff for you." Dalia appreciates his sentiments, but realistically realizes that a romance between an Israeli and a Palestinian is an unlikely possibility. Or is it?

Like Zohan, Dalia has settled in the United States to distance herself from the conflicts and hatreds of the Middle East. In this multicultural spirit, Israelis and Arabs unite, if only momentarily, to confront a group of white supremacists in the employ of a greedy developer who wants to tear down a charming neighbourhood.

You Don't Mess with the Zohan is notable for its moments of hilarity, and Sandler tries hard to please, but in the final analysis, it's a pale imitation of *Borat*.

Jewish acapella group wows Holy Blossom

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

The sound of a snare drum echoed through the Holy Blossom Temple, followed by a bass drum, a trombone and, in a tribute to Scotland, the distinct sound of bagpipes. Yet there were no instruments in sight. The music was coming from the performers' mouths.

Armed with nothing more than microphones, Six13 performed on May 25 to a crowd of more than 300. The New York-based Jewish a cappella group, made up of six young performers, transformed several Jewish hymns with their unique mixture of melodic harmonies and beatbox skills (a form of vocal percussion).

Six13 was the last performance in the temple's musical heritage series. The concert, a tribute to Israel's 60th birthday, opened with the Lachan Jewish Chamber Choir, led by musical director Cantor Benjamin Maissner. When introducing the group, Maissner said that he had fallen in love with the "youngsters" as soon as he met them.

Dressed in identical black suit jackets, white dress shirts and blue jeans, the members of Six13 transfixed the audience with a mix of original songs and adaptations from their first two albums. While about 70 per cent of their concert was made up of originals, the group also performed songs such as *Adon Olam*.

Many of the group's original songs came from the member's personal reactions and experiences. *Home*, a song on their first CD, was born out of an interview the group saw on the news. A bus driver who had been through three suicide bombings told a reporter that he would continue driving the bus. When asked why, he simply said, "I have to, this is my home."

Son, a song from their second album, was dedicated to kidnapped soldiers.

"People take it for granted [that parents send their] kids off to war," said Alan Zeitlin, one of the members of the group. "Our hearts are with them."

While Six13's beatbox styles add a kick to their songs, the group's voices stand on their own. With their perfect mix of tenor, bass and baritone melodies, their signature song, *Lecha Dodi*, was so pure it gave me goose bumps.

Still, the best part of the concert was not the beatboxing or the melodies, it was the audience's reaction. In the midst of all the humming and applause, a single Israeli flag waved in the audience, keeping up with the beat.

While there were a few teenagers in the crowd, it was the adults who sang along to the music, swaying rhythmically like teens at a Coldplay concert.

Far from just singing, Six13 bonded with the crowd. The group's secret is its charisma. The laughter of the people in the audience rippled through the room when they were not applauding or humming along.

Each performer had a share of the spotlight – from Justin Rosenblum's reminder that he's completely single, (hint, hint) to Mike Boxer's beatbox tutorial.

It wasn't hard to find the performers after the concert, but it was nearly impossible to reach them. The second Six13 walked off the stage, swarms of people surrounded them and began shaking their hands, patting their backs and buying CD after CD. The only thing missing was an angry bodyguard.

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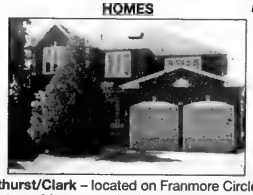

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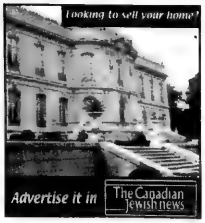

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Feature

Auschwitz survivor recalls St. Louis passenger

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

In Auschwitz-Birkenau, Kapos were privileged prisoners given the power of life and death over the inmates under their control. Armed with a truncheon provided by their Nazi overlords, some were known to beat inmates to death for no particular reason at all.

Felix Opatowski had that in mind when he approached Kapo "Ziggy" to ask for reassignment to less rigorous work. He knew he was taking his life in his hands, but Kapo "Ziggy" – Opatowski doesn't know his last name – was not one of the brutal supervisors. In fact, Ziggy was quite helpful, directing Opatowski to another kapo who recruited him to the job he held for most of his two years in Birkenau, cleaning and maintaining the electric wires that surrounded the camp.

Felix Opatowski

Opatowski, 84, recalled that first encounter with Ziggy last week when he read *The CJN*'s coverage of the Canadian government's program to commemorate the St. Louis, a passenger ship crammed with more than 900 Jews fleeing Nazi Germany. In 1939 the liner was turned away by Canada, the United States, Cuba and a number of Latin American countries.

Denied refuge in the months preceding the war, the ship returned to Europe where its passengers disembarked. About one-third are believed to have been killed. One of them was Ziggy, who Opatowski saw shot only feet away from him by a high-ranking Nazi officer after inmates sabotaged the gas chambers and crematoria at Birkenau on Oct. 7, 1944.

Opatowski is writing a book about his experiences and a movie is in the works, but last week he recounted his and Ziggy's role in the sabotage operation.

A native of Lodz, Opatowski was not yet 17 when he was arrested for smuggling food into the city's Jewish ghetto. Torn from his family, he was sent to Poznan for hard labour. "I was heartbroken to leave my mother, my father and my brother," he said. "That was the last I saw of them."

In the spring of 1943, after two years in Poznan, he was shipped to Auschwitz, where he would remain until the camp was evacuated in January 1945.

After a few months in quarantine, he was put to work "in a very bad place, a field full of broken airplanes" where he and others salvaged parts. Given no tools or gloves, he felt his strength slipping away and he realized he'd likely not survive the job.

That's when Opatowski decided to risk everything by approaching one of the kapos for help.

It was his first contact with Ziggy, but their paths would intersect often in the months ahead.

In the meantime, he was put to work maintaining the wires that were designed to keep prisoners. Many, at the end of their endurance, used the wires to commit suicide by throwing themselves on the high voltage lines. "When people committed suicide, it was our job to take them off. That happened every day," Opatowski recalled.

By chance, Opatowski came into contact with a Hungarian woman on the other side of the wire. She threw him a rock with a message scrawled on it. He learned she was inquiring after her husband.

Opatowski later returned the rock by hurling it back into the women's camp and his exploits in passing messages back and forth quickly came to the attention of the camp's Polish underground.

They recruited him as a messenger and smuggler to the I.G. Farben synthetic rubber factory (Buna Works) in Monowitz, also known as Auschwitz III. In the morning, he would join a work group marched to the factory under the supervision of Kapo Ziggy. It was that same group of prisoners who would return to the main camp at Birkenau with dynamite stolen by female labourers at Buna, he said.

A British prisoner of war, (Charles Coward), known as the "Count of Auschwitz," helped organize the smuggling operation and Opatowski is confident Ziggy was in on the plot.

The dynamite was smuggled through circuitous means to the sonderkommando prisoners who worked in Birkenau's four crematoria/gas chambers.

On Oct. 7, 1944 the prisoners attacked their SS guards and blew up the crematoria. Hundreds escaped but were quickly rounded up and killed. Opatowski, along with the two Polish underground members and many others were assembled at the SS headquarters and interrogated. One of the Poles died under torture and Opatowski said "I was lucky. I survived. Every time they tore [out] my fingernails, I fainted."

Ziggy wasn't so lucky. "A high officer" arrived on a motorcycle and "shot Ziggy practically in front of me."

It was at that time that one of the Polish prisoners told him Ziggy had been on the St. Louis, but it was only after the war that he learned the full story of the ill-fated liner.

Opatowski survived the torture and spent the next few months on a labour detail repairing the crematoria. In January 1945 he and thousands of other prisoners were force-marched out of Auschwitz ahead of advancing Soviet forces.

He was liberated in Ebensee, a satellite labour camp of Mauthausen in Austria.

While it is believed many St. Louis passengers survived the war, those who were sent to Auschwitz were generally not among them. According to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, "approximately 200 [St. Louis] passengers were deported from Belgium, France and the Netherlands to the Auschwitz and Sobibor killing centres in Poland, only four of whom are known to have survived."

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Wolves' backup goalie eager to play in finals

By ELI SHUPAK
Special to The CJN

Robert Gherson wasn't expecting to see much action between the pipes during the Calder Cup championship against the Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins, but the backup netminder for the Chicago Wolves was raring to go.

Playing behind American Hockey League (AHL) rookie-of-the-year candidate Andrej Pavelec, Gherson turned in a solid regular season, going 8-6 with a pair of shutouts and a 2.61 goals-against average along with a .914 save percentage. In 17 minutes spread over two playoff games, his save percentage dropped to .750.

Most importantly, however, he proved to himself and others that he can play at this level.

"I'm just trying to stay consistent and play well every chance I get," Gherson said a while back in his hometown during the AHL Western Conference finals against the Toronto Marlies. Chicago won the best-of-seven series in five games.

"Everything kind of fell into place here, and I got my chance. It's gone well this year."

After starting the season with the Elmira Jackals of the East Coast Hockey League (ECHL), the 24-year-old caught a break when the Wolves, the Atlanta Thrashers' AHL affiliate, came calling at the end of October. Chicago was in need of a backup goalie after Fred Brathwaite went to Russia and the six-foot-one, 175-pounder fit the bill.

Robert Gherson in the crease

"He came in and played outstanding for us," said Wolves coach John Anderson, the former Maple Leafs right winger. "We're lucky to have him. Certainly, he's impressed everybody here."

After four seasons in the OHL with the Sarnia Sting and Owen Sound Attack, Gherson was chosen by the Washington Capitals in the fifth round of the 2002 NHL entry draft. He was unsigned after attending two of their camps, but turned pro nevertheless, bouncing around the minor league circuit.

He made his professional debut with the Quad City Mallards of the United Hockey League in 2004, earning all-rookie honours in going 24-12-7 and posting a 2.25 goals-against average with three shutouts in 45 games.

That earned him a trip to the New York Rangers' training camp and a shot the following season with their AHL farm team in Hartford. He signed a tryout contract and again put up solid numbers, 20-11-2 with a 2.69 goals-against average in 35 games.

He joined the Columbia Inferno in the ECHL the following season.

Gherson had a disappointing 2006-07 campaign with Columbia, going 13-21-3, with a 3.80 goals-against average. He was invited to compete in last summer's World Jewish Cup in Israel – a tournament with teams from Canada, Israel, the United States and France – but declined for personal reasons.

Anderson made his international coaching debut at that competition, leading the United States to the gold medal in Metulla. Wolves owner Don Levin had asked him if he'd be interested, and Anderson jumped at the opportunity.

"We just had a fun time over there," Anderson recalled. "I rafted down the Jordan River, went to Jerusalem and the Old City, spent two days in Tel Aviv. It was great!"

Meanwhile, Gherson is hopeful that one day he will get to represent his country in Israel, perhaps even at the Maccabiah Games, an event his father Maurice participated in 35 years ago.

Maurice Gherson competed for Great Britain at the 1973 Games in cricket and was voted Maccabi Personality of the Year.

He had the honour of hitting the first ever six in a match (equivalent to a home run) in Israeli International cricket and vividly recalls the opening ceremonies at Ramat Gan Stadium in Tel Aviv.

Standing in the front, a few feet from a very emotional Israeli prime minister Golda Meir as she observed the Jewish youths from around the world, he remembers shouting, "Long live Golda."

The senior Gherson added: "She turned gently towards the British team, smiled, waved, raised her arms and shed a tear – a very moving moment, which will live with me forever."

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Dr. J considers himself an ambassador for Israel

Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

JERUSALEM — Basketball great Julius Erving, known as Dr. J. for his superb play in the 70s and 80s, told Israeli President Shimon Peres that he considers himself an ambassador for Israel.

Erving was in Israel last week, along with fellow NBA Hall of Famer Rick Barry, on a goodwill tour to raise awareness of the Migdal Ohr youth village for underprivileged children in northern Israel.

Erving called Israel an inspiration for Jews in America as well as other minorities. "I am truly inspired to be an ambassador for the country and for the village," he said.

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Inside Back

I promise: no melting Nazis!

ALMOST FAMOUS
BY JACOB MEDJUCK

What was the first movie you ever saw?

I was four years old and we were living in Israel at the time. Movies were cheaper than babysitters, so my parents would leave me in movie theatres for hours on end. Let's save the negligence issues for another column and instead celebrate the irony that I am now a filmmaker myself.

You really are what you eat, and I was screen fed.

One of my parents glanced at an ad for a film called *The Ark*. It was easy to assume it was about Noah's Ark, and that a movie about animals and moral lessons regarding God's cataclysmic wrath would be good building blocks for any young boy. (I was four years old. I must remind you of that.)

And although wrath of God it had, Noah's Ark it was not. Rather, the ark in question was the Ark of the Covenant, and the movie was *Raiders of the Lost Ark* – that is, Indiana Jones, the first installment.

I was four years old when I saw the fingers of God burn holes in the torsos of Nazi soldiers and then watched their commanding officer's face melt off.

Fantastic. Thank you, Mom and Dad.

I ran out of the theatre screaming and into the front seat of Dad's Jerusalem jalopy.

"Did one of the animals scare you?" he asked. "God was fair and saved even the alligators."

"No Dad," I replied. "When the Nazi's face melted off, that's when I lost my hardened toddler nerve."

It's almost no surprise that I'm about to enter into arguments with the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) about the rating of my own film. The discussion will be about my "skewed" perspectives on what is and what is not appropriate for children to see.

I'd wager that I've come by my benevolent misjudgments naturally.

Raiders was a wild inauguration into the world of cinema. After that sensational movie about adventure in the ancient desert, I ran out to my father's sandy car, which was waiting for me in the ancient desert. It became my perspective thereafter that movies were about where you lived. It followed only fittingly that my first film would be about summer camp, where I'd done the rest of my living.

Now, almost three decades later, the saga of Indiana Jones comes to a climactic conclusion with the release of its fourth, and likely final, instalment, *Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of The Crystal Skull*. Its opening coincides with the eve of my nephew's third birthday. Will I shape the course of his life by way of this daring introduction? Or will I wait until the MPAA or his parents decide for him?

OK, I'll wait for his parents' permission. But wouldn't it be totally worth reading his *CJN* article in 30 years about how I scarred his youth. It's a family tradition, after all. It seems unfair to avoid the duty.

With this final Indiana Jones release, and my nephew's birthday, I feel the torch has finally been passed. Now it's my generation's turn to wreak visual havoc on your younglings, to leave them with memories of boundaries crossed, without corrupting their kindness or robbing them of their youth.

The festival warning on my current film mentions, "Just because this film features your children does not mean it is *for* your children."

So, babysitters beware. Parents, be forewarned. That is my notice to the painfully responsible. However, as my own parents once did, if you really prize your quiet time, send your children to see my stuff. And double your vacation afterward by seeing it yourselves, taking comfort that, warnings aside, rowdy audiences of all ages so far have thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

This is the best I can offer: to offend many and hurt no one.

Just to be safe, I should tell you that no one's face melts off in my camp movie.

See you on the circuit.

CARAMELIZED ONION & GORGONZOLA GRILLED PIZZA

- 6 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 1 c Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
- 1/4 c chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 14-16 oz pizza dough, thawed if frozen
- 1/2 c walnuts, toasted, coarsely chopped
- 2 lg. onions, halved lengthwise, thinly sliced
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper

Heat 1/4 c oil in skillet over medium-low heat; add onions, salt and pepper, stirring occasionally until golden, 15-20 mins. Transfer to small bowl and keep warm. Heat BBQ on low-med setting. Stretch dough into roughly 10"x12" rectangle on a large baking sheet; brush with 1 tbsp oil. Oil grill rack, then put dough, oiled side down, on grill and brush top with remaining oil. Grill, covered, until underside is golden brown, 1½- 3 min. Using tongs, return crust to baking sheet, turning crust over (grilled side up). Sprinkle evenly with onions, cheese, nuts, and parsley. Slide pizza from sheet onto grill and grill covered until underside is golden brown and cheese is partially melted, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board and cut into pieces.

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Cardio vs. resistance training

FITNESS CORNER
BY FELYCE ZOMPARELLI

Every year before summer, I get asked the question: which one, cardio or weight training, will help me lose weight faster for the summer?

The truth is that both help you burn calories and lose weight.

If you just do cardio training, such as running, walking, biking, aerobics etc., you are burning more calories than sitting on the couch. But the effect only lasts for the time you are working out and two hours after. Cardio training speeds your metabolic rate up, but if you haven't eaten, cardio forces your body to consume its own muscle mass for fast energy. The scale in your bathroom does move down relatively quickly, especially if you exercise consistently. But if you don't replace the muscle mass that cardio training eats away, you may be left with a different look than you expected.

Resistance training – using free weights, bands or your own body weight – burns just as many calories as cardio training, if not more, depending on your fitness level while working out, and continues to burn calories at that rate for the following 24 hours.

That is traditionally why to lose weight, you are usually urged to do cardio training every day, or resistance training three times a week and cardio training twice a week. Be aware, however, that the scale doesn't change as quickly when you are resistance training, because muscle is heavier than fat, but it definitely looks better.

As we age, our bodies lose the muscle mass we don't use, but, unfortunately, the older we get, the more important muscle mass is to our bodies' overall health.

Muscle mass increases your metabolic rate and causes your body to burn fat 24 hours a day. The best way to lose weight and keep it off is to do both cardio training and resistance training, not only to get the look you are after, but also for the total wellness of your body.

If you have never trained before, hire a personal trainer to teach you how, and be sure to check first with your doctor.

Reach me at felycesfitness @rogers.com.

The bullied day school student

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

We send our children off to school and pray that the world is gentle to them. At the end of the day, our girl or boy comes home, excited at having discovered something special about himself or herself, or a bit beaten up by having spent a day as part of a group that has some members who can be harsh or unkind.

This is the third column in my series on flaws in the Toronto Jewish community. It's about a community member who, as a boy, studied in our private day school system and today, a number of years after his graduation, still feels a bit beaten up and traumatized by his experiences there.

Baruch (as we'll call him) never felt as though he was part of the "in" group of students – a group he described as "cool with a great sense of entitlement." He told me that from early on in his education, he was pegged as a "faggot, queer, homo," and this label put him on the fringe of his class and school.

"I never got physically beat up [at this point he sighed], but at one point, I counted the number of guys who would take turns embarrassing me and humiliating me. There were about 12 of them. They never let me forget what they thought of me and spread rumours around the class that were very hurtful." He felt ashamed.

According to Baruch, the hounding he incurred in the Jewish day schools was incessant and followed him throughout the system, and it left him feeling very angry.

"I have very bitter feelings toward those who bullied me. I really hated them," Baruch told me. "There was a guidance counsellor, but he didn't have the tools to deal with these problems, and besides, most of the bullying came from kids from the wealthier homes, the supporters of the school, and, therefore, they were rarely challenged."

The saddest aspect of Baruch's experiences is that they are not specific to him. I have spoken to many people, older and younger, who feel disenfranchised and suffer from low self-worth and self-esteem because of the insensitivity they were subjected to at a school, camp, shul or other institution in our community.

One woman I spoke to left the day school she attended as soon as she was given the option by her parents, because she felt alone, not able to afford the "hipper" clothing and shoes to keep up with the "Goldsteins." Another young man expressed to me how in public school he was voted "student of the year" because of his quirky, creative and embracing character. In the Jewish community, he had no friends.

Baruch says the Jews of Toronto need to know that many Jewish students are suffering in our Jewish day schools, and in the community in general, because they feel marginalized by the "in" group.

"There were many students who were so unhappy," Baruch said. "We all knew who was being picked on, and they were generally nice kids who didn't have the courage to stand up for themselves."

"I'm not unique in that respect. Kids like that came before me and afterward."

We need to hold our Jewish day schools to a higher standard of *midot* (behaviour), otherwise why should we send our children there at all?

Ask your child, or the students you teach, if they believe they have a voice in our schools and community and feel safe. Give them that chance so that the Toronto Jewish community becomes truly inclusive, and a warm and respectful home for all of our members.

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Party Planner

The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

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Make your party a rocking affair

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

There's nothing like sharing your simchah with the likes of John Lennon, Keith Richards, Tina Turner and even Britney Spears. At the Hard Rock Cafe, guests are surrounded by original memorabilia, from Bob Dylan's Washburn six-string guitar to a jacket worn by Prince.

"Our memorabilia is very unique," said director of sales and marketing Marcelo DeOliveira. "We already have a theme built into the venue."

At the café, everything revolves around the entertainment. The café has an in-house audio-visual technician and the latest equipment.

In fact, the staff doesn't just host events, they plan them too.

"We are in contact on a regular basis to learn about the customer's needs," DeOliveira said.

The staff works with clients on everything from the menus and entertainment to the décor and linen selection.

"The attention to detail starts from the initial contact," DeOliveira said. "Other places have preset packages, but we try to make every event different. We have the freedom and flexibility to customize the evening."

Toronto's Hard Rock Cafe at the corner of Dundas and Yonge streets is one of more than 138 Hard Rock Cafes, hotels and casinos spanning 42 countries. The collection of more than 70,000 pieces of music history was started about 37 years ago with one guitar from Eric Clapton. After that, the guitars sailed in, followed by drums, scarves, harmonicas and hand-written lyrics.

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At the Toronto location, some of the most popular items on display include an original sketch drawn by John Lennon, a pair of Paul Stanley's black and white platform shoes, Bob Dylan's hand-made Mariachi suit and the guitar Rush's Alex Lifeson used on the Presto tour.

The café keeps up with the times with newer memorabilia from the latest stars. While The Beatles are well represented, so are artists such as Britney Spears.

In the last few years, the Hard Rock Cafe has become a popular venue for bar and bat mitzvahs.

"Most kids can relate to music," DeOliveira said. "We work with the leading DJs in the city. More attention is given to the entertainment than the menu because kids are involved in current [music trends]."

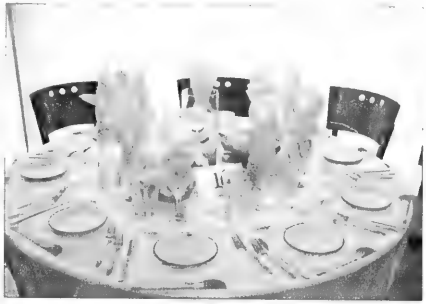
The Toronto location (416-362-3636 or online at www.hardrock.com/toronto) has two floors which can both be rented out. The main dining room holds up to 350 people (150 for a sit-down dinner) and the upstairs hall holds up to 300 standing (150 seated.) Together the café can seat up to 500 people for a standing reception. In-house security is also offered.

Customers work with staff to design the menu. While the venue's kitchen doesn't offer kosher meals, clients can hire their own caterer.

The Hard Rock Cafe also hosts corporate events and parties.

"It's a more relaxed environment for corporate events, as opposed to banquet halls," DeOliveira said. "Banquet halls offer no character. Our private lounge is above ground and has floor to ceiling windows. You get a great view of downtown."

Rock memorabilia hangs on the walls.



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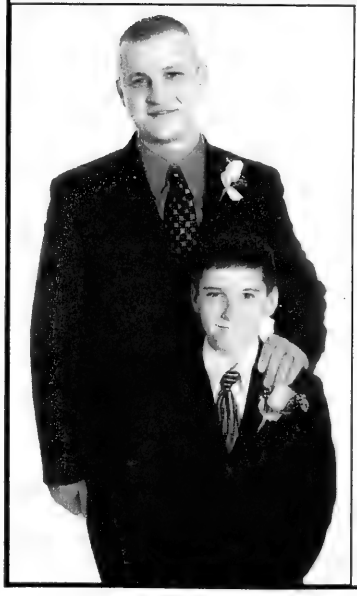

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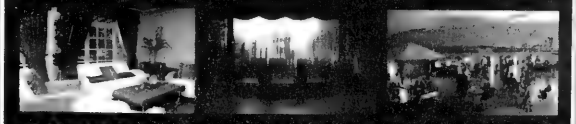

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Activity venues will help you plan your simchah

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

David Leese, of Loots fame (416-787-5668), can hardly contain his excitement when he talks about his latest entertainment venture.

He is about to launch Loots Factory Lounge (34 Futurity Gate) in Thornhill, Ont., a nightclub-style venue ideally suited to bar and bat mitzvah parties, sweet sixteens and corporate functions.

The lounge, which opens in September, is located near Dufferin and Steeles. "It's very accessible," Leese says. "It's just a short trip up the Allen [Expressway]. There's also lots of parking."

Loots is taking over a furniture factory and fashioning it into [a space reminiscent of] Andy Warhol's Factory Lounge in New York City, he explains. "You don't need to do decorating. We've built out the lounge in classic South Beach Art Deco style. We have beautiful leather couches. It's a place to relax and enjoy the night

"It's a very groovy, very cool, 'loungy' night club concept. It's a more upscale version of what we've done at the Loots Lounge, our venue at Bayview and Eglinton (1669 Bayview Ave.), but the Factory Lounge is still very affordable.

The new venue is 5,000 square feet and can hold up to 260 people seated for dinner, he says. "We offer an all-inclusive package."

The packages give you a choice of several catering services, including kosher ones, he says.

"We'll do centrepieces if people want. It's a one-stop shop We have a package for every budget."

Leese says he wants the hosts to feel like guests at their own party. "We produce the entire evening. We've made it very easy for mom and dad. You show up and enjoy the evening. We offer a party co-ordinator for each event. We do all the co-ordination of professional services – the DJ services, security, all the staffing. We'll also provide the prizes and giveaways."

He adds that guests will also have complete use of the games area, which includes Guitar Hero and Dance Revolution stations, as well as billiards.

Leese and his wife, Teri, first ventured into the party business in 1992, when they opened Loots (896 Eglinton Ave. W.), a party favour store. They diversified into entertainment for tweens and teens when they started Club Loots at the Eglinton location and later Loots Lounge on Bayview Avenue.

These venues are ideally suited to birthday parties and kids' bar and bat mitzvah parties, he explains.

"We offer great birthday party packages. We're now building on the tremendous success we've had at Loots Lounge on Bayview with our newest venue.

"We've always built in the concept of economy to offer our clients real value. We're bringing that concept of entertainment and value to the new Loots Factory Lounge."

For more information, visit the website at loots@rogers.com.

Another party venue revving up excitement for all age groups is the 401 Mini-Indy (416-614-6789), an indoor go-kart track located at 37A Stoffel Rd., near Dixon Road and Highway 401 (www.mini-indy.com).

Michelle McMullen, director of events, says the setting is ideally suited to all kinds of parties, from birthday parties and bar and bat mitzvahs to showers and corporate events. The 2,000-square-foot Racers Club Lounge has a viewing area of the go-kart track.

"We can comfortably seat 80 to 100 people for lunch or dinner. We have a caterer we've been using for 11 years, and he's fabulous. For special dietary needs, like kosher cuisine, people can use their own caterer. We provide the tables and linens and disposable dishes and utensils, but if people want to upgrade, we can get the rentals. We've also done ice sculptures, chocolate fountains – whatever's out there, we can bring in."

McMullen adds that for large corporate or private parties, the facility is closed to outsiders.

Great ideas for bar mitzvahs

The track is one-eighth of a mile long and there are different cars available, depending on the age of the driver: basically two types of cars – junior karts, and pro-karts for drivers 18 years or older or 16-year-olds with driver's licences.

Children from five to nine years old can ride with an adult in a double junior kart driven by the adult. "It has two steering wheels," McMullen says. "The kids love it."

To drive a junior kart on one's own, the child must be at least 10 and should be at least 54 inches tall, she says. "If you're not tall enough, you can't reach the gas or brake pedals."

The place is well-suited to birthday parties, McMullen says, noting that birthday packages for a minimum of six kids aged 10 to 15 start at $19.95. For that price, the children get two 15-lap races in junior karts as well as four arcade tokens.

"We have a huge arcade . We have 20 different video games – air hockey, basketball games, driving and shooting games. We have them all."

There are snack machines on the premises and the track will order pizza and pop for patrons.

People can bring their own birthday cakes, however, and as with the larger parties, special food arrangements can be made for kosher birthday parties, McMullen says.

For driving enthusiasts, she recommends the Go-Kart Sports Camp at Centennial Park at the Mini-Indy outdoor track in Etobicoke (416-898-6789).

She says go-karting is also a popular activity for corporations. "It's great for team building events."

There are various packages that offer good value for participants, she says, noting helmets and race suits are provided for adult drivers at no extra charge.

Junior drivers, aged 10 to 15, pay $10 for eight laps or $15 for 20 laps; with a $5 membership, it costs $20 for 20 laps for the pro-karts. "For a party of eight adults, there's a special – $35 for 60 laps. It's an awesome deal."

Another activity venue advertising in this supplement is Nascar, 416-669-7370.

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By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

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To help ensure your event fits with your vision, Toscana has a dedicated team of experienced conference and social planning co-ordinators that can make your dreams a reality.

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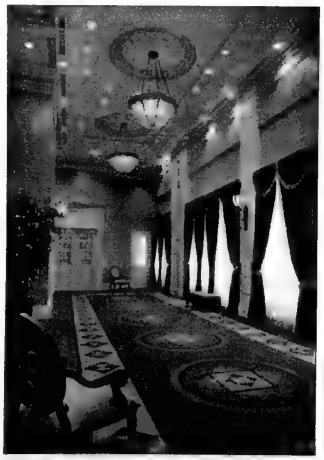
Complimentary parking and local calls are also available.

Toscana's services are competitively priced, and as part of the Hilton chain, there are also strict standards that its food and beverages must meet, Mahoney added.

For more information about the Toscana Banquet and Conference Centre, call 905-660-5200 or visit www.toscanabanquethall.ca.



The foyer of the Toscana Banquet Centre

Sole Power's entertainment is cutting edge

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

Sole Power is often looked upon by the industry as a leader.

There are many entertainment providers that promise to make your event the party of the century, but finding the perfect one can be tricky.

You want your function to have engaging music, vibrant special effects and an attractive setup that sets it apart from the parties you've attended and forgotten.

Sole Power Productions (www.solepowerproductions.com or call 416-663-7653) is Toronto's go-to entertainment outlet, and it will make your occasion the one to remember with its lively staff and up-to-date party features.

"Sole Power is often looked upon by peers and the industry as a leader in terms of new concepts and taking the standard out of the box," says Abby Tobias, founder of Sole Power Productions.

"I recognize that some competitors make similar claims about their services, but I think we're looked at by the entertainment industry as a team that's constantly pushing envelope as to what's the next product or service in entertainment."

Tobias, an MC, event planner, DJ, performer and producer, launched the entertainment group in 2003 when making the decision to form his own endeavour that would allow him to DJ, plan events and manage artists under the same roof. He's always been drawn to the entertainment world because it's continuously evolving and allows him to channel his creative energy.

"I like that this business is choreographed, but every night it's something different. It's not like working on Broadway and doing the same show and singing the same songs for eight months straight. Every show we produce is unique and they require the same entertainment value, but they're always different and fresh," he says. "Every event is unique to what the customer wants and I'm drawn to that."

With only five years in the industry, Sole Power's resumé is undoubtedly impressive and boasts events at the MuchMusic Awards, Toronto Fashion Week, The Grey Cup and the Toronto International Film Festival.

In addition to its reputation with A-listers, Sole Power caters to 300 Jewish events annually

"When it comes to Jewish events, we stay very entertainment focused," says Tobias.

One key requirement of an entertainment group is that its staff is energetic and charming, and gets bubbie and zaide dancing to the Macarena. Tobias takes great pride in his team of more than 100 people because they're friendly and approachable.

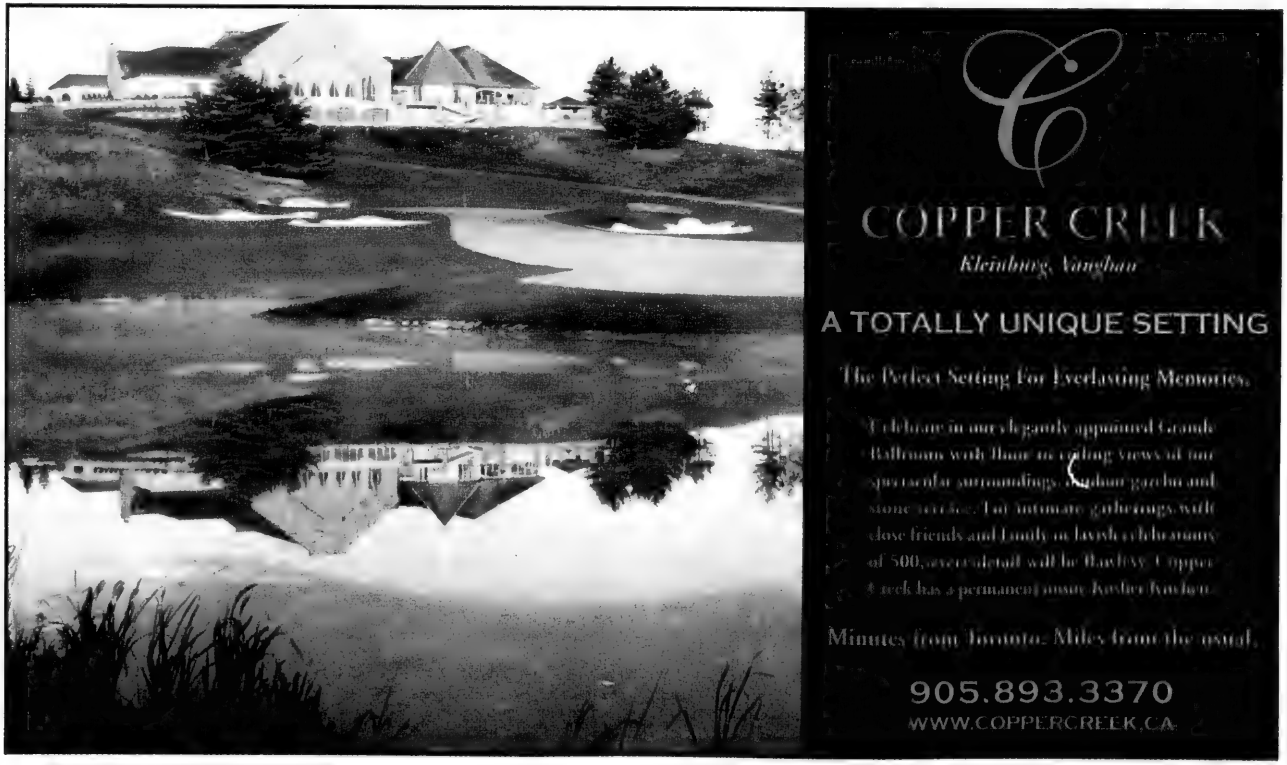
"A catch phrase I always use is 'Good people first, good performers second.' I can take a good performer and make them a great performer, but I can't make a decent person a great person," he says. "I always get compliments about how nice the people are on my team. They're easy to work with, friendly and genuine, and my first priority is hiring good people."

Your final decision to which entertainment group suits your needs best is based on how well its features lineup with your desires, and another impressive quality about Sole Power is that it's not pushy or aggressive with clients.

"All production companies do great work, and it's all about finding the company that best suits your personal taste. When clients shop around, they may hire my competitors and they'll do terrific work. In the end, it's all about my personal style meshing well with the client's philosophy and taste," says Tobias.

Sole Power caters to 300 Jewish events annually, in addition to top events.

"Everyone is doing creative things in this business. I've never been overly concerned with my competitors. I'm not aware of what they're offering or what their staff look like. We do our own thing and do it based on customer satisfaction and feedback, and take it from there."



A different kind of bar/bat mitzvah

By MICHELE ALPERIN
Special to The CJN

Some things never change. Or do they? Bar and bat mitzvah parties overwhelmingly follow a recipe that everyone assumes is written in stone, says Gail Greenberg, creator of mitzvahchic.com. The only room for creativity, people think, is to have a unique theme.

So why are people stuck? Greenberg attributes people's unwillingness to change to pressure — unspoken or not — from peers and parents.

"For the most part people are afraid of doing something different," she said. It's either fear that friends will think badly of them if they shirk their proper role or worry that grandparents don't want to be embarrassed in front of their friends by any crazy ideas.

And yet a few adventuresome families are breaking with the "chopped-liver sculpture party" and its accoutrements of loud music, DJ, dancers, candlelighting (invented by a caterer, by the way) and an array of desserts.

Sometimes families are pressed to try something different because a formal party does not make sense for their child.

Low-key alternatives

Walter Spiegel, whose wife, Sharon, planned their son Jeremy's bar mitzvah at his summer camp, said Jeremy was not particularly mature at 13 and had no interest in a formal party. But since the family loved to camp, the weekend with guests in cabins, the service in an outdoor chapel (until it rained) and a casual party with country line dancing and a hayride was very comfortable for him.

The biggest downside of the camp experience was the huge amount of planning required, as Jeremy's parents gave up the synagogue infrastructure.

But as has been reported by many families who try something a little different, the Spiegels' friends still tell them it was the best bar mitzvah they ever went to.

Others replace the typical bar mitzvah party with low-key alternatives, either a kiddush luncheon for the congregation or an informal meal at home, plus a separate kids' party tailored to what kids like to do – not necessarily dancing and party games.

Leslie Belay said that probably 90 per cent of families in her synagogue celebrate without the typical fanfare. She attributed their willingness to avoid a lavish party to her rabbi's stand for meaning and against ostentation.

After the renovation of the social hall, Rabbi Barbara Penzner of Temple Hillel B'nai Torah in West Roxbury, Mass., laid the groundwork for the lower-key celebrations typical at her synagogue. As Belay remembered it, Penzner suggested that celebrations maintain the ruach, or spirit, of the congregation – keeping down the expense and inviting fellow congregants to a party that takes place right after the service. As a result, observed Belay, "nobody is feeling pressured to spend up. The pressure is to celebrate authentically without being ostentatious."

Bar mitzvah party formula

In most places, though, the bar mitzvah party formula remains an immovable fortress, evolving little, and usually more focused on the hosts than on the guests, who are usually parked at big tables, making awkward chitchat with people they don't know.

Karen Echeverria, who admitted that the bat mitzvah she planned for her twin daughters was "out of the box to the expensive side," kept her guests' experience front and centre.

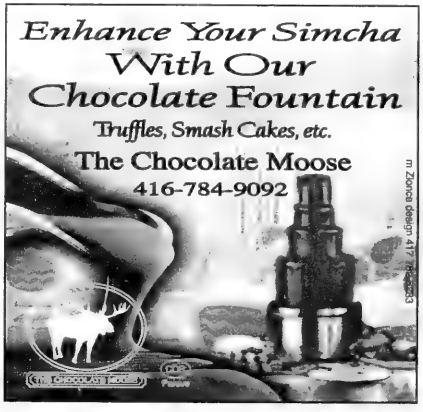
"Most successful parties," she said, "are where the guests have a great time, not the hosts."

Echeverria was determined to serve the mixed needs of her expected guests: elderly relatives who would not want to stay up too late; kids who needed to be entertained; Orthodox relatives who would have to come late to the June shindig; and friends who would prefer quiet conversation to loud music.

She used a model she had learned from cruise ships, where people criss-crossed a central lobby and visited surrounding rooms, each with a different flavour and interesting activities. She took over a Jewish country club and created four separate venues. One room had lots of couches and a jazz band; another held a casino with games and a magician; a third was set up as a nightclub room with platform seating; and the last offered virtual reality games that involved kids creating videos of themselves playing electronic sports.

In Greenberg's book *Mitzvah Chic: How to Host a Meaningful, Fun, Drop-Dead Gorgeous Bar or Bat Mitzvah*, she wrote that she would like to see more people throw out the formula and experiment fearlessly. For those worried about what their friends might think, Greenberg suggested that a little creativity can go a long way.

"I've always assumed, in my life," she said, "that you get a better reaction when you surprise people in a pleasant way."



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Bellvue Manor welcomes Edmund Duarte, who has been working in Kosher catering and serving the Jewish community for six years.

Israeli Source offers affordable fine Judaica

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

Whether it's an elegant pair of candle holders for Shabbat, a sparkling set of Kiddush cups, or a mezuzah to adorn the entrance of your new home, Israeli Source strives to fulfil your every Judaica need.

Established in February 2006 by husband-and-wife team Chuck and Barbara Elnekave, Israeli Source offers high-quality Judaica at affordable prices.

With all of the challenges involved in maintaining a Jewish home, the Elnekaves sought to alleviate some of the pressure by providing good products without the financial burden.

The couple's passion for Jewish books and gifts, combined with invaluable experience in the Jewish wholesale and retail food markets, naturally evolved into Israeli Source, which they call "the ultimate Jewish shopping experience."

Israeli Source boasts 4,000-sq.-ft. of diverse Jewish products.

Located just north of Yonge Street and Steeles Avenue at 60 Doncaster Ave., the Thornhill store boasts 4,000 square feet of diverse Jewish products.

Chuck describes his business as "more of a self-serve store" and cites the personal shopping experience as a primary motivation for clients to keep coming back.

"Instead of having one of each item on display, you shop in our warehouse," Elnekave says.

This "active warehouse style" allows shoppers to access an enormous range of products made by Israeli artists and companies. It also dramatically cuts prices and provides an opportunity to purchase affordable, authentic Judaica.

But that's not to say that Israeli Source doesn't have knowledgeable staff. The couple describes their employees as top-notch, and they take measures to ensure they are qualified to contribute to the vision of the company.

"Anyone who wants to continue our cultural tradition needs a place to find Judaica," Chuck says of the importance of his products. "For the Jewish community, [the store] plays a very valuable role."

To the Elnekaves' own surprise, table cloths adorned with Jewish images have proven to be the store's most popular item. Stain resistant and esthetically appealing, they have been purchased primarily as housewarming gifts for newly engaged couples, and for personal use.

With the exception of English books and electronics, as well as a few other items, Israeli Source purchases the majority of its products directly from Israel.

During biannual sourcing trips to the Jewish state, the Elnekaves meet with suppliers and artists to personally select new and unique Judaica for their shelves.

As Israeli Source grows in popularity, their focus has been shifting increasingly more to hand-made, one-of-a-kind items.

Chuck says unique Jewish pieces sold at reasonable prices are in very high demand in the community. "We want to fulfil that need," he says.

The family business also provides toys and interactive products, ranging from the games Aleph Bet Bingo and Kosherland to paint-your-own dreidel sets.

Adults can browse for cookbooks and other Jewish literature for themselves, as well as for stories for their young children.

With its myriad of products, diversity of pieces, range of pricing and high-quality staff, Israeli Source truly is the source for Jewish living in Toronto.

For more information, visit www.israelisource.com, or call 905-482-2025.

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Hanging out with teen boys

By JEANNETTE FRIEDMAN
Special to The CJN

Teenage boys have ways of hanging out, so, the best thing to do is be ready when they show up at your house in bunches, and set some ground rules.

Pizza boxes and other take-out packaging goes in the trash, soda cans and bottles get recycled, paper goods get dumped, and if dishes and glassware are involved, the kids have to wash up after themselves. After all, if they are old enough to make a mess, they are old enough to clean up after themselves, even if you are lucky enough to have your own housekeeper.

A word of advice: while teens think they are adults, their parties require adult supervision. You know there's trouble when things get too quiet, so ears and eyes need to be on the alert at all times, because sometimes teens are worse than toddlers.

Fun and games

For some reason, boys love movie marathons, so for a special occasion you can pile a group in the van and catch the flicks at a local movie house, where parties can be arranged. Your home is spared from wear and tear, and cleaning up becomes someone else's job.

But if that's not in your budget, be prepared for teen sprawl. Stock the family room with extra floor pillows, a huge TV set (if possible) and plenty of action DVDs to keep them busy, from dawn to dusk. There are a plethora of "film festivals" you can arrange: *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Die Hard*, Sergio Leone spaghetti Westerns, *Harry Potter* or *Mission Impossible*, to name a few.

Pool parties require supervision

And, those mouths need to be fed. If you can, stay away from feeding them sugar, which will make them hyper. Ultimately, however, you may have to cave into a certain amount of junk food, such as popcorn or pop.

If the party isn't planned, be prepared for the spontaneous. You never know when your sons will come home with 15 kids after playing tackle football at the local schoolyard, or going ice skating at the rink. They will be looking for pizza or chicken fingers to order from local restaurants. If it's left up to you, entice the teens with soup and bowls of chips, or pretzels and crackers. If it's cold enough, leave the sodas on the back porch and let the great outdoors be your fridge.

Better yet, let the boys hang outdoors. There's a teen outdoor party for every season.

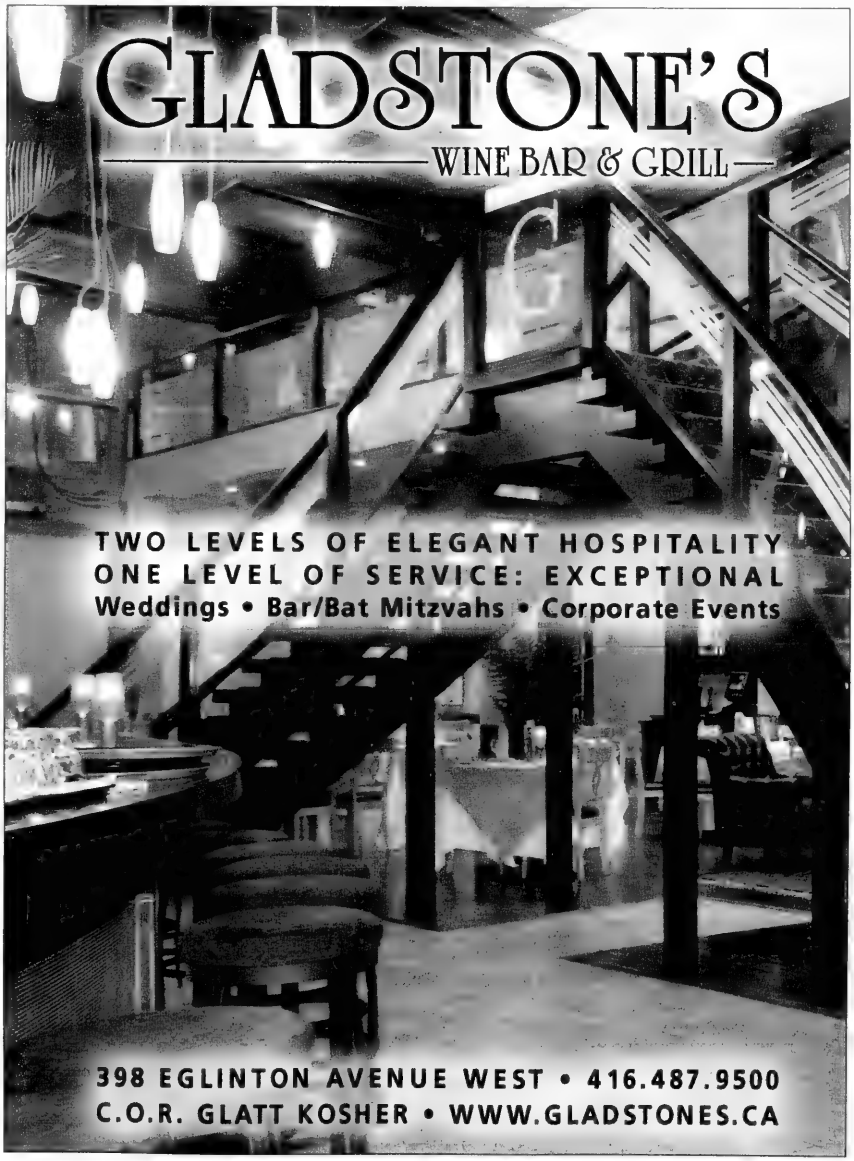
Summer pool parties are fun, but they do require adult supervision. The boys will be sure to create their own amusements, but you can add to the fun by providing toys for pool volleyball or basketball or any number of games. Your pool store should carry age-appropriate accessories.

In the fall, take your van or SUV, a portable grill and show the boys how to create a tailgate feast in your own backyard or driveway. Provide meat, buns and all the trimmings to fill their bellies. Keep an eye on their shenanigans and let them train to be the Food Network's next grilling geniuses. All the while, they can be watching the game on a portable TV, plugged into the vehicle's cigarette lighter. They can make believe they are at the stadium, and you have them under your watchful eye.

Winter is a snap. With snowfall, the sleds come out, as do the skis and skates. If you want to keep the kids on the premises, challenge them to build a real snow fort, have a real snowball fight, and build a fire in a safe pit, where they can toast their own marshmallows on twigs from trees in your yard. Keep an extra supply of hats, gloves and warm socks available in case of "emergency" losses. Have the hot cocoa and cookies ready when they come indoors to warm up, and follow up with a hearty, thick, winter soup.

Spring is baseball season, so taking the boys out to the ballgame is always a treat. Find out if the local team has a hat or glove day – there's always something geared to kids and teens – and you can co-ordinate your event accordingly. The traditional menu: roasted peanuts in their shells, caramel-coated popcorn, hot dogs and ice pops for dessert. Stadium too expensive? Set your boys up in front of a flatscreen TV and tell them to pretend it's a skybox.

Above all, be prepared when the boys show up. Whenever they bring over their friends, they will be hungry and eat whatever isn't nailed down. Stock every nosh you can think of in your pantry, from chips, nuts and sweets to healthy treats. Be sure to have lots on hand, because growing boys are like vacuum cleaners who will make a clean sweep of your kitchen pantry.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B'nai mitzvah projects embrace tikkun olam, express individuality

By ELLIE GROSSMAN
Special to The CJN

Anyone who thinks that teens today are lazy and self-centred hasn't met a typical 13-year-old in serious preparation for a bar or bat mitzvah.

After all, b'nai mitzvah students are expected to memorize their Torah portion, chant Hebrew prayers, and put up with their highly emotional mothers who have obsessed for a whole year over everything from the guest list to the dessert table. As if it's not enough responsibility to lead a Shabbat morning service, the prerequisite into Jewish adulthood also includes repairing the world in their spare time.

Eager to be role models

Actually, with a keen awareness of social justice and a myriad of skills and interests, today's young Jewish people are eager to be role models to their peers and really make a difference in their communities and world.

Dana Demsky, for example, of Congregation Shaare Emeth in St. Louis, combined her artistic abilities and love for animals to raise more than $1,000 to help a local animal rescue group called Wildlife Center of Missouri.

"I love to draw, and I knew I wanted to help animals in some way," said Dana, who sold stationery she made out of black-and-white sketches of an elephant, zebra, baby fox, panda and cougar. "I wanted the money to go to a local place like the Wildlife Center of Missouri, because they take in hurt animals, make them better, and release them back to their original home."

Clearly, congregations nationwide have witnessed a trend in tikkun olam projects that are as unique as the students themselves.

"I would encourage bar and bat mitzvah students to do a social action project that really means something special to them, because it makes their mitzvah more fun and worthwhile," said middle-school guitarist Ben Barzilai, who continues to use his passion for music to help kids with disabilities.

Even though his March 2007 bar mitzvah at Congregation Kol Ami, in White Plains, N.Y., has come and gone, Ben volunteers most Saturday afternoons at a non-profit music therapy program called Heartsong, at which playing percussion instruments allow non-verbal children to express themselves, improve their self-esteem and make new friendships.

To say the least, mitzvah projects that involve kids helping kids are a powerful experience, and it's hard to say who benefits the most, the giver or the receiver. Another example is Ethan Kempner, whose passion for magic provided more than entertainment to a Westchester County residential home for kids with special needs.

"Ethan actually taught the kids how to do magic and even gave them materials to do their own tricks," said Laura Kempner, who watched her son practise his illusions for several months until they were perfect. "When Ethan saw their smiles and faces light up, it was very rewarding to know that he made that impact on other children."

To put a smile on another child's face was the goal of Skylar Elis, whose candy jar mitzvah project raised more than $500 to pay for two surgeries that repaired the cleft lip and palate of a child in Russia and another patient in Central America. Through a global resource organization called Operation Smile, children with facial deformities are able to get free reconstructive operations that change their lives.

Ending hunger and poverty

"Even though I don't know these kids personally, I still feel good that I helped them," said Skylar, who filled recycled jars with colourful candies and sold them at different events at Temple Beth Torah, in Ventura, Calif.

"These children are just as deserving as the next person for plastic surgery, and to know that they got help from me makes me feel good," she said.

In the 10 years that Rabbi Lisa Hochberg-Miller has been a rabbi at the 380-family member Temple Beth Torah, she has noticed an evolution in mitzvah projects.

"Some of the most meaningful mitzvah projects are about helping people help themselves," she said.

For instance, temple member and equestrian Jeff Kadansky collected money for Heifer International, a non-profit organization whose goal is to help end world hunger and poverty through self-reliance and sustainability.

The money that Jeff raised, such as $120 for a sheep in Africa and $150 for a llama in Asia, helped poor villagers earn their own livelihoods and produce their own food.

"Most projects are local, but I find that with the Internet, kids will browse around until they find something they think they can do," Rabbi Hochberg-Miller said. "Plus, the national and international news influences some students, too."

In fact, Elisheva Hochberg-Miller, the rabbi's daughter, was one of many Jewish people who responded to victims of Hurricane Katrina, which happened around the time of her bat mitzvah.

"I wanted to specifically help the Jewish community in New Orleans, where people had to postpone their bar and bat mitzvahs until their temple was rebuilt. Besides, the families had to use their money to rebuild their own homes," she said.

Elisheva raised more than $4,000 through an adopt-a-b'nai-mitzvah-student program she found on the Internet. From Hurricane Katrina to the devastating southern California wildfires, natural disasters and other current world events represent opportunities for bar and bat mitzvah students to help rebuild lives, one person at a time.

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Toronto's Majestic Edwardian Castle Steeped in History and Romance
Casa Loma is the perfect setting for your simcha. From wedding ceremonies and receptions to bar/bat mitzvahs, Casa Loma will bring your dream event to life. In 2008, catering will be provided by Liberty Entertainment Group, who will bring to your event the signature culinary excitement and tastes of their other landmark venues.
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catering@casaloma.org
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Casa Loma is owned by the City of Toronto and has been operated by the Kiwanis Club of Casa Loma since 1937.

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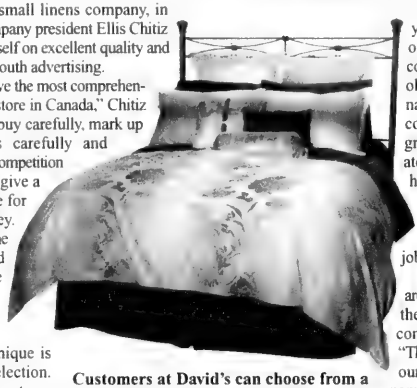
Registries make it easier to find the perfect gift

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

From delicious food to head-bopping music, there's a lot to get excited over at a party. But nothing beats getting that perfect gift. In Toronto, it's never difficult to find a place to spend your money, but few registries offer good quality at reasonable prices.

At Deblins (416-782-2910, www.deblins.com), located at 39 Orfus Rd., 2575 Dundas St. W. and 7979 Weston Rd., you get just that. Deblins evolved from Debby's Linens, a small linens company, in 1977. Company president Ellis Chitiz prides himself on excellent quality and word-of-mouth advertising.

"We have the most comprehensive linen store in Canada," Chitiz said. "We buy carefully, mark up the prices carefully and check the competition so we can give a good value for your money. People come back and say, 'I love it.'"



Customers at David's can choose from a wide selection of quality products.

What makes Deblins unique is its wide selection. While the stores carry products made in the United States and Canada, Chitiz also buys high-end linens internationally from countries including Israel, Portugal, Turkey and China.

"We literally shop the world," he said. "The selection is good, it's stuff you can't get anywhere else. Most [companies] buy everything from China. We make sure we have a broad selection."

Deblins carries linen and related accessories for every part of the home, from imported towels and a large selection of high-end tablecloths to bathroom scales and bedside benches. Duvets, pillows and sheets are the most popular items for wedding registries, Chitiz said.

He chooses products with the best possible quality and value by attending various trade shows, and he emphasized the importance of knowing his customers.

"We cover the whole gamut for younger and older demographics," he said.

Chitiz said younger customers often pick vibrant coloured linens while older clients opt for natural hues. Of course, both demographics can appreciate excellent service, he says, and he hires employees based on their personality and passion for the job.

"Our salespeople are knowledgeable and they don't work on commission," he said. "The customers ask for our employees by name. They love our servers."

David's Fine Linens (416-590-7311, www.davidsfinelinens.com) is another store filled with quality products from the finest European companies.

The store at 2901 Bayview Village offers products from all over Europe. Owner David Saini personally chooses the products to import and sell.

Deblins has a wide selection of linens.

"I look at the history of the company," he said, adding that some lines have been around for 200 years. "[I also look at] their track record and whether they're known worldwide."

After 30 years in the business, Saini is a pro at picking the best quality linens.

"You know the quality by touching and feeling. You can feel the detail in the linen."

Opened 10 years ago, David's carries such brands as Frette, a high-end line used by Italian royalty and celebrities and St. Geneve, a line known for its luxury bedding.

At David's Fine Linens, customers can choose from a wide selection of bedding, sheets, towels and other quality products.

"We carry the finest linens in the country," Saini said.

Saini recently renovated the store to add 1,000 square feet.

"It's much better," he said. "There's more room so [customers] can shop comfortably."

To ensure quality service, he hires interior designers to help customers with their linen selections.

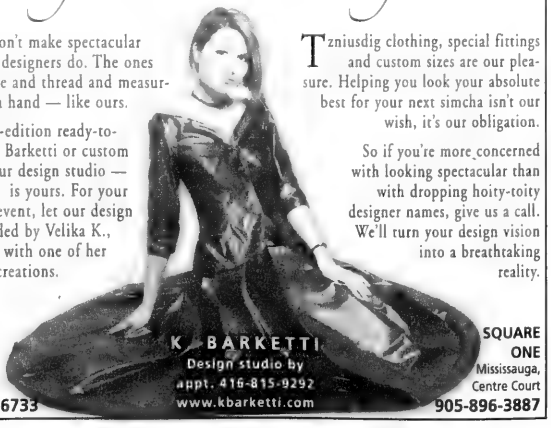
"We carry only high-end linens. Not everyone can put it together," he said.

The secret to the store's success, Saini said, is its selection.

"[Customers get] different products they can't find anywhere else," he said. "Other places carry stuff from China – 95 per cent of the products we have are from Europe."

Most importantly, customers come back for the quality, Saini said. "Our quality sets us apart."

The designer behind the designer dress



Labels don't make spectacular looks...designers do. The ones with needle and thread and measuring tape in hand — like ours.

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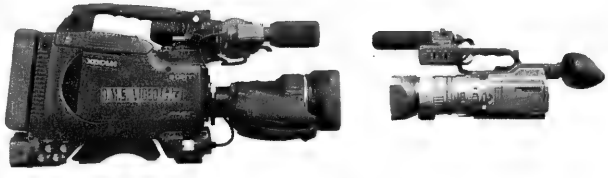

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Enjoy modern convenience in fairy-tale settings

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Toronto is brimming with venues and banquet halls of all shapes and sizes, but nothing beats having your simchah in a real-life castle.

Every guest is made to feel like royalty at Toronto's 94-year-old castle, Casa Loma, (416-923-1171, www.casaloma.org), built in 1914 by Sir Henry Pellatt, a wealthy Canadian businessman and military officer. Under the architectural direction of E.J. Lennox, Pellatt took elements from Norman, Gothic and Romanesque architectural styles to create a castle complete with secret passages and spacious gardens. The project took three years and 300 men to complete and was only owned by Pellatt for 10 years before financial problems caused him to sell the estate.

CASA LOMA

- ☐ Fully Kosher Facility
- ☐ Separate Kosher Kitchen Available
- ☐ Kosher Event Catering Available
- ☑ Capacity up to 100 People
- ☑ 100-300 Person Capacity
- ☑ Over 300 Person Capacity
- ☑ Wheelchair Accessible

"It's a real piece of history," said Lou Seiler, the director of marketing at Casa Loma.

In 1926, Casa Loma started hosting its first events.

"It wasn't used for wedding functions, but it became a hotel for 18 months," Seiler said. "It was well known as the place to big band dance."

Now, Casa Loma hosts weddings, corporate events and social parties, including bar and bat mitzvahs. The castle offers three main-floor rooms for events: the Great Hall, which has towering bay windows that overlook the five-acre large gardens, and boasts a 60-foot oak-beamed ceiling; the Library, which has a hand-crafted plaster ceiling; and the Conservatory, where the floor and side panels are made of different kinds of marble. Together, the rooms hold up to 1,200 people for a buffet dinner and 300 for a sit-down event.

Casa Loma is an especially popular venue for weddings, Seiler said. "With the quality of the interiors, the décor, the wood panelling and the upscale environment, it's the ultimate fairy tale wedding."

Casa Loma hosts one event per evening to ensure privacy and uses Liberty Entertainment as its exclusive caterer.

The Estates of Sunnybrook, (416-487-3841, www.estatesofsunnybrook.com,) offers another unique venue for any party. The estates, located at 2075 Bayview Ave., are made up of several houses teeming with history.

"Our location sets us apart," assistant managing director Lynn Foster said. "With 42 acres of land and the historic nature of the buildings, there's an ambiance you couldn't get from other [venues.]"

THE ESTATES OF SUNNYBROOK

- ☐ Fully Kosher Facility
- ☐ Separate Kosher Kitchen Available
- ☐ Kosher Event Catering Available
- ☑ Capacity up to 100 People
- ☑ 100-300 Person Capacity
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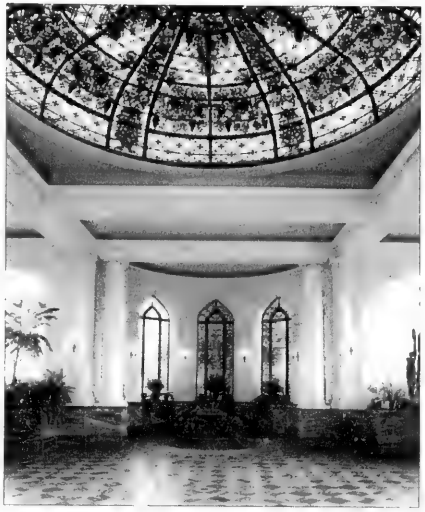
The McLean House, a Georgian-style mansion, was built in 1928 for James Stanley McLean, the founder of Canada Packers. In 1966, the property was sold to the University of Toronto and was converted into a clinical facility by Sunnybrook Hospital. The house was later turned into a designer show house before being used for events. It currently holds up to 120 guests.

Ten years ago, the Vaughan Estate joined McLean House as an Estate of Sunnybrook. Built in 1931, the Elizabethan-style house was designed for John James Vaughan, then vice-president of the T. Eaton Company. After Vaughan's death, his house was sold to Sunnybrook and was restored in 1991. Guests can now use the Vaughan Estate's courtyard ballroom, which holds up to 175 people, and main ballroom, which holds 200 guests, along with the Estates' third venue, the Coach House, which can hold up to 60 people.

The Estates of Sunnybrook hosts weddings, social parties and corporate events.

"We're a full-service [venue]. We offer catering, beverages and staff," Foster said. "We've got experience [and can] make sure the event is successful. The staff takes a great deal of pride in where they work."



The Casa Loma conservatory

Some of the staff have been working at Sunnybrook for more than 10 years and all are committed to excellent service.

"You can ask any of the staff and get what you need. A waiter won't say, 'This is not my job,'" Foster said.

In addition to preparing for a very special event, clients are helping fuel scientific research when booking at the Estates of Sunnybrook. The venues are owned by the Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre and all profits go toward medical research.

Other venues advertising in this supplement are: Baycrest Hospitality Services, 416-785-2500; Bellvue Manor, 905-761-7288; Copper Creek Golf Club, 905-893-3370; Toscana Banquet & Conference Centre, 905-660-5200; On The Park Events & Catering, 416-510-2002; The Fish House, 905-948-1982; Gladstone's 416-487-9500; The Hard Rock Cafe/Club 279, 416-362-3636; Hudson's Bay Catering/Arcadian Court, 416-861-6138; Le Cantlie Suites, 514-844-3951; L'Echaim Caterers, 416-650-5440; Liberty Group, 416-542-3789; Palais Royale Ballroom, 416-533-3553; Park Hyatt Toronto, 416-925-1234; By Peter and Pauls.com, 416-410-0677; Pickle Barrel, 416-493-4333; Richmond Hill Country Club, 905-731-2800; Scaramouche Restaurant/Pasta Bar, 416-961-8011; Solepower Productions (6 Degrees), 416-633-7653; St. Andrew's Club & Conference Centre, 1-800-267-7539 or 416-366-4228; Toronto Marriott Downtown Eaton Centre, 416-597-9200.

The Vaughan Estate, part of The Estates of Sunnybrook.

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Wine from around the world and gift baskets

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Two Toronto businesses, Mazel Wines and Baskets n' Stuf, can help you make sure that all the "loose ends" of your event are taken care of in a way that's 100 per cent kosher – and delicious.

Mazel Wines

☑ Kosher
☐ Non-Kosher

As an agent to the LCBO in business for nearly three decades, Mazel Wines (416-631-8071) can help arrange the finest kosher wines for any event. Clients actually purchase wine directly from the LCBO, explains Mazel's Annie Forman. Mazel simply helps you narrow down the choices, place the order, and then delivers the wine directly to your venue.

"We give complete service with integrity and honesty," says Forman. When clients come in, "we discuss the menu, how many people will attend." Then, "we go through with them the quantities of the liquor, and we can purchase it at the LCBO for them." And since most events require an LCBO Special Occasion Permit, Mazel can also help fill out and file the required paperwork to make sure everything goes smoothly.

Mazel can recommend choice of wine

"Our event co-ordinators sit down with the customer, find out their needs, figure out the logistics… we do everything for them."

Mazel's knowledgeable staff can also recommend specific wines to accompany any menu or theme. Many are of excellent calibre, and, although Israeli wines are popular, these days you can find kosher vintages from every corner of the globe, like Don Alfonso from Chile and Altoona Hills from Australia. Pricing is reasonable, too: both labels offer several varieties for under $10.

In fine wines, new listings include Goose Bay Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand for around $18 and, from Baron Herzog – "the innovators in high-class kosher wine" – a new Cabernet Jeunesse for under $15. "There are a lot of kosher products listed at the LCBO," says Forman.

Before being listed as a kosher wine, all products must be cleared by the COR, so consumers are assured of meeting the highest kosher standards. And with today's range of offerings available through Mazel Wines, it's certainly no longer true that kosher means compromising taste or value.

When it comes to kosher gift baskets, treats and gifts, Nili Dzaldov of Baskets n' Stuf (416-250-9116) says hosts often realize at the last minute that they'd like to offer a gift to a special person or that they want to offer a unique basket to welcome their guests.

"It's a small store, but we have a lot of different things," Dzaldov says. "My idea was to open a nice, elegant, kosher store."

Baskets n' Stuf caters to almost every taste and budget, offering Maxwell Williams bone china; Fitz and Floyd products; one-of-a-kind hand-blown fusion glass plates and humorous Jewish-themed plates. For kids, there are even WebKinz stuffed animals, which are popular as favours.

Baskets n' Stuf

☑ Kosher
☐ Non-Kosher

Dzaldov handcrafts mosaic-framed mirrors in the store, each one unique. Some are available ready-made; others can be special-ordered. The mirrors can serve as a base for a gift basket, which then becomes a memento lasting years after the goodies are gone.

For any occasion, Dzaldov says a gift basket or platter is more special with a giftware item, such as a "salad" theme she prepared for one company, which included oil, vinegar and other related treats right in a salad bowl.

A wide range of nosh to chose from

Baskets n' Stuf will deliver welcome baskets to out-of-town guests' hotel rooms.

There's a wide range of nosh to choose from: candy, nuts, chocolate, dried or fresh fruit, or crackers with jam. Many hosts request a water bottle or an insulated lunch bag.

With enough notice, anything can be customized, such as one welcome basket for a Canada Day wedding, which was arranged on a Canada-flag tray and included other themed items, plus a flag.

Most edibles are prepared fresh on-site, including fresh fruit baskets; Passover "matzah munch"; and dried fruit baskets, all under COR. From Finesse Chocolates in Montreal comes a chocolate basket full of chocolates and a Rosh Hashanah chocolate cornucopia, which make delicious centrepieces.

In a high-tech world, Baskets n' Stuf is in the old-fashioned business of customer service: even the bows and ribbons are cut by hand. "We don't have a website," Dzaldov explains, because people love knowing they can just call or drop in at the store's Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue location. "They know they will get personal attention that way."

Other specialty food places advertising in this supplement are: Chocolate Charm, 416-787-4256; The Chocolate Moose, 416-784-9092; Cupcakes by Dawn, 905-881-4432; The Candyman, 416-789-7173; Fortant Wine From France.

www.cjnews.com The Canadian Jewish news

Celebrate your bar or bat mitzvah in Israel

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

Bar and bat mitzvah family trips to Israel are great for introducing your children to their Jewish heritage and the Israeli culture. Having your child's bar or bat mitzvah on Masada is an experience that will bring your family closer together while solidifying everyone's connection with Judaism and the Holy Land.

Rather than spending thousands of dollars on a one-night affair, splurge on a two-week getaway to Israel and forge memories that you and your children will remember for a lifetime.

Peerless Travel and Cruises, one of the largest Jewish travel agencies in North America, has flown thousands of families to Israel with its all-inclusive Israel Family Tours. President Ehud Telem says his team is one of the few to introduce their clients to new places and attractions in Israel, even if they've already visited. They also cover the key sites for newcomers.

"We visit an army base and kids can climb on the tanks. We do archeological digs, target shooting at a shooting range… and show the family the beautiful corners of Israel, the people, the size and the culture," he says. "We visit all the major sites and places that must be visited and because it's a family event, we try to do everything hands-on to make the kids happy. If the kids are happy, the family is happy."

Peerless Travel and Cruises recognizes that all its clients – adults and children – want to get the most out of their vacation. It promises that all its destinations will appeal to adults and entertain the kids. Each tour group is assigned a guide who specializes in working with families of all ages to guarantee everyone has fun.

In addition, Peerless Travel and Cruises makes it easy for you to customize your tour, whether it's by flying with Air Miles points, extending your stay in Jerusalem or switching your excursion dates.

Some families are turned off by the notion of travelling in a group, but Telem promises touring with other families will make everyone happy.

"Imagine going only with your family for two weeks with a private guide. The kids will get bored," he says. "The advantage of being with group is that the kids meet new kids and make friends, and they can enjoy the trip. The same goes with the parents. Generally, they come from the same background and are professionals or businesspeople, and they find a commonality and make a lot of friends. The most important thing is that people interact with each other."

Peerless Travel makes it easy for you to extend your stay in Jerusalem.

Israel Family Tours has earned a positive reputation for itself since it began 11 years ago, because of its innovative itinerary, friendly staff and flexibility.

"If you compare apples to apples, we never cut corners," he says. "People are captured by the vacation, and for two weeks, they forget about their home life and are totally wrapped up in the tour."

For more information on how to book with Peerless Travel and Cruises' Israel Family Tours, call 905-886-5610 or visit israelfamilytours.com.

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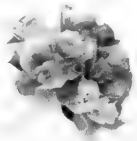

Traditions in flux: personalizing that very special day

By JEANNETTE FRIEDMAN
Special to The CJN

Tradition! It seems to be set in stone, particularly at Jewish weddings – except, of course, in this post-denominational age, when tradition is in flux.

Even 18-year-old brides don't want their mothers and mothers-in-law hijacking their weddings, and grooms have something to say as well. Couples want to romanticize that special day with their own personalities and expressions of love.

From commitment statements under the chupah to special party favours, decorations and books, couples are personalizing their wedding days by doing something special – from creating new fun family traditions or reciting commitment statements they wrote themselves.

The ketubah, though it may be beautifully hand-crafted—with a hearts-and-flowers theme, the Zodiac or the Twelve Tribes of Israel – is hardly a romantic document. It's a binding contract about what happens when there is a divorce or the husband dies! Where's the romance in that?

"Blasphemy!" you cry? Not.

There's always room for something new, as long as it doesn't abrogate Jewish law, says Rabbi Shmuel Goldin of Englewood, N.J., a nationally known modern Orthodox rabbi and author.

"Speaking to each other and making a verbal commitment under the chupah is not forbidden, as long as it happens at the 'correct' point in the ceremony," he says. "I'm not sure I would couch that as a 'vow,' but certainly a couple is permitted to express their mutual love and respect under the chupah."

He suggests that the couple speak before the breaking of the glass.

Reform, Reconstructionist and Renewal couples have been reciting poetry and expressing their "vows" since it became cool in the late 1960s and early '70s. Sometimes, each chooses a favourite reading, whether religious or secular, or, if they feel up to the challenge, they will compose their own thoughts and feelings, sometimes as a poem.

Others may choose a prayer. Still others may create a "duet" of sorts – a responsive reading, or something funny and poignant, describing a special moment that spoke to each of their hearts.

There are as many ways to express and personalize that loving commitment on your wedding day as there are brides and grooms. Some couples give out toys, while others give out jelly beans. Some get their friends to do outrageous "shtick" on the dance floor, with costumes, candles and glitter. Some order wedding cakes to resemble shtetls in eastern Europe or choose a theme they both love.

One couple, both Conservative Jews, unbeknownst to the other, prepared individually for their aufruf ceremony (it takes place in the synagogue on the Shabbat before the wedding). The groom had never read Hebrew or had an aliyah before, and his bride, who read the Torah portion, was amazed when her groom showed his deep commitment and love for her by sharing the bimah with her and reading the Haftorah.

At some Orthodox weddings, the couples prepare lists of people who need their prayers, and give each guest a specially imprinted edition of Psalms as a souvenir of their day.

Some couples create little booklets, often stapled in the centre and bound with a ribbon, to give to guests at the ceremony. The booklets may contain descriptions of who's who in the bridal party; letters from the bride to the groom and groom to bride; favourite prayers and poems; and songs and notes of good wishes from friends. Often they contain an explanation of the different parts of the ceremony. (This last one is important if some of the guests are not Jewish.)

These booklets can also tell the story of how the couple met, how he (or she) proposed, and how they intend to live happily ever after. Now that's personal!

Caterers offer original dishes

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

From tasty appetizers to sumptuous desserts, a party is not a party without the food. And in a city like Toronto, it's never hard to please your taste buds.

J. Catering

☐ Kosher
☑ Non-Kosher

At J. Catering, (647-292-3953; www.jcatering.ca), it's all about the customer. The owner, Josh Okarofsky, works with clients to create unique menus for each event.

"I pride myself on my ability to work with customers," Okarofsky said. "I really try to find out what it is they want and [build] a relationship [with them]. I have to gain their trust."

His company caters everything from bar/bat mitzvahs and cocktail parties to barbecues and corporate events. While the company is a one-man operation, Okarofsky has an extensive network of freelancers.

It's J. Catering's customer service that sets the company apart.

"I work with people to make memorable events and take away the stress. I have professional staff. I develop the menu, and I take care of details such as glassware, dishes, plates and floral arrangements," he said.

Okarofsky also offers original and delicious menus.

"I'm really passionate about food," he said. "I'm a food enthusiast aside from a chef."

According to Okarofsky, experience is essential when creating a new dish.

"You generally have to know what works together. Sometimes you have to take a chance and try something different," he said.

When cooking for children, Okarofsky says that simplicity is key.

"[Kids like] mini-hamburgers or grilled cheese. It [has to be] fun, comfortable and easy to eat," he said. "But some of the items you think of for kids appeal to adults. I can elevate a hamburger with caramelized onions and put a sophisticated touch to it."

In the end, Okarofsky's goal is simple.

"I really try to make great food," he said.

At The Secret Chefs, (416-277-2889), customers will find creative dishes and innovative menus. While the company is just three months old, the owner, Cory Marks, has worked in the food industry for 20 years.

The Secret Chefs

☐ Kosher
☑ Non-Kosher

After chef school, Marks started a catering company, but then moved on. Since then, he's worked at restaurants, hotels and, until recently, was a food and beverage manager at a golf course.

"I've worked in all aspects of the industry. I just decided that catering was something I loved. In catering, [I] have the opportunity to be creative, it's exciting," he said.

While The Secret Chefs hosts house parties and is planning to host weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs, Marks also offers personalized and catered meals for dinner any night of the week.

After 20 years in the business, Marks has learned the secret to success.

"You have to be organized and you have to be creative. Customers get bored. I'm constantly researching, travelling, seeing what's out there," he said.

Cory Marks of The Secret Chefs

The Secret Chefs has more than 100 menus for customers to choose from and Marks is always working on more. His menus span many cultures, including Jewish, Chinese, Japanese and Italian.

Marks is all about variety. At events, he likes to create different stations and tasting plates to offer clients a little bit of everything.

"We cater to customers' needs," he said. "It's not the same drab [food.]"

Marks creates most of his recipes at his house through trial and error. His signature dish is his lemon pepper halibut with "jump-fried" Israeli couscous and sautéed rapini.

Josh Okarofsky of J.Catering

"[It's about] making sure you listen to what [customers] want," he said.

Other caterers advertising in this supplement are: Ely's Fine Foods, 416-782-3231; Lesley's Party Sandwiches & Catering, 905-660-0551; Rose Reisman Catering/Pickle Barrel, 416-467-7758; Urban Fare Catering, 416-532-1010.

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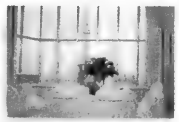

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Hair salons make you look great for the big day

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

There's nothing better than getting pampered at a salon and spa before a big event. From smoothing down unruly curls to pumping up limp strands, the right salon will make bad hair days a thing of the past.

Salon Matte, located on Bathurst Street just north of Wilson Avenue, can make getting ready a breeze. The salon offers manicures, pedicures facials and waxing along with a wide range of hair services, including colour treatment, cuts, hair extensions and wig care.

The salon, owned by Matthew Odisho, opened in 2000 and has continued to flourish. It's still attracting new customers while retaining regulars.

"The amount of clients has increased. [We] just keep getting better and better," Odisho said.

The key to great hair and a constant stream of customers is consistency, he said. While hairstyles change, he works hard to ensure that the quality of his salon doesn't.

"You can't do a bad job one day and a good job the next," he said.

In order to keep the quality of each cut consistent, Odisho teaches all his employees his techniques.

The key to Odisho's hairstyles is simple.

"We try to make hair look as natural as possible while making it stylish," he said.

Beyond consistency, Odisho also emphasized the importance of knowing the market.

"We have the best products. We know which [products] are high quality," he said.

Salon Matte uses high-end products and brand names such as Kerastase Paris, a line of high-quality hair serums and shampoos.

Odisho's salon offers bridal packages and other specials, depending on the size of the party. To make an appointment, call 416-398-5228.

For more pampering and current styles, a harried guest could also turn to Hair After.

Located at 644 Finch Ave. E., Hair After is a full-service salon and spa that offers a wide range of hair and esthetic services, including manicures, pedicures, wig care and makeup.

"It's a one-stop-shop," said owner John Colombo. "We do everything under the roof."

Colombo's family has been cutting and styling hair for three generations and his son, Gionpaolo, also works with him to create new, cutting-edge styles.

"The salon was started in 1971," says Colombo. "We've had people who've been coming back to us for 35 years."

Colombo, who was born in Italy, has more than just experience and formal training under his belt. He's also won awards. Hair After is the winner of such national and international hairstyling competitions as the Combined Hairstyling World Championships and the Mirror Award. Colombo has also been a finalist in the North American Hair Awards and, along with his son, he continues to take part in international competitions.

Hair After offers a wide range of hair and esthetic services including wig care and makeup.

Salon Matte tries to make hair look as natural as possible.

Colombo credits his success to his consistent quality and his ability to create current styles year after year.

"Customers come back for the consistency. We're always on the edge," he said.

Colombo and his son keep their edge by attending national hair shows and constantly retraining staff.

"Education is key," Colombo said. "We train our staff on a weekly basis and have in-house teaching to keep us ahead."

The new style this year, according to Colombo, is "rockmantic," a mixture of elements from both the rock and romantic eras. The look can include bold, vibrant colours combined with soft, romantic hair styles, or vice versa.

Colombo's secret is the attention he gives to each customer.

"The key of any trend is suitability. It's very important. If someone has curly hair we can't do a straight style. Instead, we'll do lots of curls," he said.

Colombo is very precise when it comes to hair.

"I go by face shapes. We have drawings of face shapes [in the salon.] First we determine the face shape, and then we'll suit the hairstyle for the face."

Hair After offers full-service party and wedding packages that include hair and makeup, as well as other services such as acrylic or gel nails.

In the end, Colombo says it's all about the passion.

"We do it because we love hair," he said.

To make an appointment, call 416-221-6658.

Other estheticians advertising in this supplement are Domenico & Drea, 416-558-4430; Estee Levine and Associates, 905-417-8433, and Andrea Goldlust, makeup artist, 416-688-1373.

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Charitable event planning requires hard work and attention

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to the CJN

The new social hall at Congregation Darchei Noam was all decked for a recent afternoon fundraiser organized by Kolel: The Adult Centre for Jewish Learning.

Bright pink floral centrepieces and tall wine glasses with gazpacho at every setting added to the elegance of the luncheon for 120 people.

It was no surprise that this event, which featured speeches and a discussion about the agenda for Jewish women in the 21st century, drew a predominantly female crowd.

The keynote speaker, American feminist, journalist and social activist Letty Cottin Pogrebin, founding editor of *Ms. Magazine* made an impassioned presentation. She was also joined on the dais by Sarah Fulford, the new editor of *Toronto Life* magazine, and Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, rabbinical director of Kolel and the event moderator.

The surprise presentation marking Rabbi Goldstein's 25th anniversary in the rabbinate went according to plan, says Esther Schlesinger, events manager for Kolel. "If an event goes off without a hitch, it means that I have done my job properly."

She says a lot of groundwork goes into planning a major fundraiser, from the selection of a theme and negotiating contracts with speakers, caterers and venue to the marketing and the logistics of the actual event.

Schlesinger gave a breakdown of all the underlying organizational work for this fundraiser, which was held in mid- May.

She says she, Rabbi Goldstein and Kolel program co-ordinator Tracy Starr began thinking about the event and speaker six months ago.

"We sat and brainstormed about what topics would be of interest to the Jewish community. They were looking for a speaker who was a Jewish feminist who hadn't been in Toronto for awhile."

Once they settled on Pogrebin, they began negotiating a contract with her agent . They also approached Fulford, a longtime Kolel student.

"We liked the juxtaposition of a younger editor. We could establish a date for the event once we had a commitment from Letty," Schlesinger said.

"We liked the idea of a luncheon. Our guests could come and enjoy a lecture in a beautiful setting."

She says when the date was set, she had to start negotiating with caterers and find a venue. "I had to have them send me menus that would best serve our needs. You deal with the things back and forth.

"You have to do a site visit, for venue consideration as you're negotiating the space."

She says all costs, including rental, have to be formalized once the menu is selected.

Schlesinger says she needed to recruit volunteers to mail invitations and act as assistants on the day of the event. "We needed help for registration, book signings and the raffle. We had six volunteers, along with two staff people."

She was in charge of publicity, which encompassed the production and distribution of flyers. She also had to find sponsors to offset the cost of the food and speakers.

She says the event was an opportunity to build ties with Kolel students and supporters, and to advise them of other events, such as an upcoming female cantorial concert on Nov. 19. "It's a way to create lasting relationships in the community."

Hadassah event planners from left are Karen Adler, Jeannie Sklar, Robyn Greenspan, Maureen Tartick

She says a lot of administration work goes into organizing this kind of community event. "The budget had to be developed and reconciled. My background is in corporate event planning." But it can be done, Schlesinger says, noting the success of the annual volunteer-run Toronto Hadassah-WIZO Bazaar. "It's been a city-wide phenomenon for decades."

The bazaar has become an institution, as has another Hadassah fundraiser.

At Our Table, a private-home dinner party for women organized by the Toronto Hadassah-WIZO Tzedakah Chapter, marked its fifth anniversary this week. This year's goal was to raise $100,000, says event co-chair Robyn Greenspan. "We're so excited. In the five years that it has existed, a total contribution of more than $300,000 has gone to youth aliyah projects in Israel."

She and co-chair Jeannie Sklar both say the event has become a full-time job for the two of them, but they are quick to add that it's very much a labour of love.

"I do it as a way of giving back to the community," Greenspan says. "I do what I can to contribute. It's my pleasure and my responsibility."

Sklar says that making such a contribution to Israel is very gratifying. "The need in Israel is so great. It's extremely motivating and fulfilling to raise money for those need."

But she adds that there is also the gratification of seeing an idea that germinated from a discussion around a kitchen table grow to an event that has nearly tripled in scope.

Greenspan says that in the first year, there were 100 people and the dinner raised $30,000. This year, some 250 people were expected to gather at the home of Alexandra Azouri and the fundraising goal was $100,000.

She attributes the success of the event to their hardworking planning committee. "It's a team effort. Everyone in our [Hadassah] chapter does what they can, but we have key players. Their efforts and their contributions have been remarkable. "

Both women stress that everything at the event – from food and flowers to invitations and entertainment – is donated.

"It's 100 per cent donations. Everything you see," says Sklar. "Even our members bake. The only thing we pay for are the rentals and the serving staff."

The whole experience is so gratifying that it gives the two women the incentive to start working on the next event right away, Sklar says.

"We're so energized by all the support. It's such a feel good night."

Dorit Elbaz and Israeli television host Gila Yefet also talk about the personal gratification they get from their volunteerism.

A year ago the two Israeli women founded Mifgashim, or Gatherings, an organization that holds fundraisers to connect Israelis to Jewish non-profit social organizations.

"We wanted to hold events, but we didn't know which direction we were going in," Elbaz says. "The reason we started Mifgashim was to bridge the gap between the Israeli and [general] Jewish communities."

The women have teamed up with Benny Shofer, owner of the Hava Nagila night club in Thornhill (1118 Centre St.), to hold parties on behalf of different community organizations.

"It's all about people getting together. They're doing something for the community and having fun," Elbaz says.

Shofer takes care of the food and entertainment, Yefet says. "He has been so supportive and generous."

Their first event a year ago was in support of Israel Beats the Street, an organization that brings troubled Jewish teens to Israel. Last fall, they held an event on behalf a women's shelter run by Jewish Women International, and on June 5, their party at Hava Nagila will raise money and awareness for the One Family Fund, an organization that helps Israeli victims of terrorism.

Both Elbaz and Yefet have day jobs, and so they're up very late many nights planning these events. "It's such an enriching experience. Sometimes we're talking until 1 o'clock in the morning," Elbaz says.

"But there's so much passion when you do something you love and you believe in it. It's no longer work."

For more information about the One Family Fund party call 416-843-6248.

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Notes for a bar/bat mitzvah guide

By TED ROBERTS
Special to The CJN

Bar/bat mitzvah audiences are no longer what they used to be. No more the simple Saturday morning minyan – a tight cluster of worshippers – who halfway through the service are thinking of the pickled herring and egg salad to follow.

Today, in many synagogues the ceremony has all the excitement of a college basketball game followed by a groaning banquet table.

It is an interfaith moment, so to speak: a wonderful opportunity to display our theological wares. Today, by the time the frenzied parents have satisfied their social obligations, they've included, beside relatives, co-workers, the child's friends, and mixed family members, some of whom typically worship on Sunday, not Saturday.

Given the condition of Judaism in 2007, a bar/bat mitzvah is an ecumenical stew. It's not only the non-Jews who wonder about the significance and meaning of the ceremony, but even some of our fellow Israelites stare with wonder and, sometimes, awe.

That's why a booklet of origins, explanations and exegesis is useful. Not only does it highlight the mechanics of the ceremony, but with a touch of subtlety, as well as modesty, it allows us to point out the contributions of Judaism to the overwhelming Christian culture in which we live: a contribution unknown to most of our fellow Jews as well as their non-Jewish friends.

From the world of entertainment to Nobel Prize winners for physics. From Hollywood to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, disproportionately you find Jews. It is one of history's puzzling enigmas – there are more Brazilians than Jews, but Brazilians rarely make the headlines. Though the bar/bat mitzvah booklet cannot explain this mystery, it can, via a description of the ceremony and history, educate and advertise the joys of Judaism, an opportunity we shouldn't miss. It helps to remind the world that for better or worse, politically correct or not, God has chosen us to carry the light out of Zion.

The booklet should go something like this:

Introduction

The ceremony that we will witness today marks the passage of a Jewish girl or boy from childhood into adulthood. From this day on, he/she is ethically, morally responsible for his/her behaviour, literally, a son or daughter of the commandments. Contrary to the common wisdom, our Bible is jammed with 603 commandments in addition to the familiar 10. The youth undertakes a heavy obligation: these commandments, dealing with every aspect of behaviour from the sexual to the supper table, make the point that Judaism is a creed of deeds. Deeds, more important than faith, more important even than prayer.

We realize that some of our friends, both Jewish and Christian, may never have attended a bar/bat mitzvah ceremony. Therefore, we offer this guide to the morning's activities. It's full of tradition and still the foundation of our Judeo-Christian culture.

Nothing the bar mitzvah student has accomplished so far has demanded so much hard work and dedication.

History

Nothing the bar/bat mitzvah student has accomplished so far in his/her 13 years of life has demanded the hard work and dedication this task has required – unless his/her name was Amadeus Wolfgang Mozart, who gave up soccer for symphonies at four years of age. It's stressful; it's heavy neural traffic for a child.

Stress is everywhere. Mama is worried, too, about:

- the child's performance;
- the caterer's performance; and
- whether Aunt Hannah will bring her six married daughters – with kids – who delight in pillaging a kiddush table.

Pop goes around muttering, "I'll bet even Elijah never had a bar mitzvah like this."

And he's right. There's no record whatsoever of Elijah's folks laying out appetizers and delicacies for a flock of friends and relatives. Nowhere in our entire Bible, nor in the rabbinic literature, is there a commandment to mortgage the family home for an evening of food and drink.

The service

The bar/bat mitzvah ceremony usually takes place within the setting of the normal Saturday morning Shabbat service, which consists of traditional prayers that go back centuries. The highlight of the Saturday ceremony – the highlight of every service at which the Torah, the Five Books of Moses, is read – is the removal of the sacred scroll from its draped alcove.

The Torah is carried by the rabbi or a congregation member around the aisles of the synagogue as the worshippers sing a joyful song of praise and thanksgiving. Congregants crowd around "The Law" to kiss it, to touch it with their prayer shawls or their prayer books. This exuberant procession is also a sign that the bar mitzvahee, who has thus far been in the wings, is ready for the spotlight.

After the appropriate blessings, the honoree will read directly from the Torah scroll. Not a simple task even to a student of Hebrew – because the ancient lettering has no vowels.

Besides the Torah chanting, the child – after a blessing – sings a passage from the Haftorah, the prophetic section of the Bible. The Haftarah is the home of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Micah, Amos and company, who spoke for justice and care for the downtrodden before it was politically popular. After all, it was an era where swords beat love at every encounter.

The bar/bat mitzvah child follows his/her Haftorah performance with yet another tuneful blessing. The challenge of the day, you see, is musical as well as scholarly.

Then finally, after deciphering and reciting passages from a 3,500-year-old language and delivering the equivalent of three arias from the opera *Il Trovatore*, you'd think our young student could take a bow. Not yet.

He/she must, finally, present an exegesis on the Torah and Haftorah he/she has just chanted.

When he/she completes this final task, there's no applause, but everybody grins and relaxes. Once the bar/bat mitzvah child finishes his/her speech, the normal services are resumed.

Our blessing

Luckily, we live in the free world. We don't have to whisper our Haftorah. We don't need a sentry by the synagogue door on the lookout for the mob and the hoodlums. The bar mitzvah boys who preceded this one in Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia and other dark times studied in stealth and recited their lessons in fear. But our honoree can shout to the heavens.

Our Passover Haggadah tells us: "Now we are slaves in Egypt, next year may we be free men." Well, today we are free – free to sing the Torah and Haftorah with passion, like David, the sweet singer of Israel. Dimly surrounding our honoree are the less fortunate children of other lands and other times. He/she sings for them, too.

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Bar mitzvah trekking to Israel

By RENA GODFREY
Special to The CJN

It's always been my dream to have one of my children's bar or bat mitzvahs in Israel. After going through the whole prep and plan for my other two kids, I thought I'd spice it up a bit for my youngest, Sam, and throw Israel into the mix.

Since my previous simchahs were orchestrated without any major glitches, I figured I was now a pro and up for the challenge. Although planning our trek to Israel has had its moments, I can almost taste and smell the delicious experiences that await us.

Sam also dreamed of chanting his Torah portion in the spiritual city of Jerusalem. When we first announced more than a year ago that we would be having his bar mitzvah in Israel this July, the news elicited unexpected reactions.

I was so excited about our plan to have this momentous event in Jerusalem that I naively ignored the potential snags: cottage season, camp commitments, summer jobs, summer heat and, of course, the financial cost of such a venture.

Sam and his mother Rena Godfrey

After I got over the initial shock that not all of our family and friends were going to drop their long-awaited summer plans to join us, I calmed down. I became appreciative of those who would join us, and understanding of those who couldn't, and I began to focus on the task at hand.

I really didn't know what to expect, or what to do, but soon I realized that I needed to approach this planning process with patience, faith and a sense of humour. Number one on the "must do list," other than choosing a date, was finding a rabbi. After asking just about everyone I knew, who in turn asked everyone they knew, Rabbi Howard Markose's name kept coming up.

Rabbi Markose served as assistant rabbi at Adath Israel Congregation from 1984 to 1988 and rabbi of Shaar Shalom Congregation from 1988 to 1994, when he decided to make aliyah with his wife, Judy, and their three boys.

Having had the pleasure and privilege to meet Rabbi Markose in person last fall, I learned that not only does Rabbi Markose officiate at bar mitzvah services, he has been director of education for the Young Judaea Year Course for the past seven years, and on top of that, he is a super nice guy.

Continued on page B46

Video lets you relive your simchah

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

Employing a videographer to document your simchah, whether it be a wedding, a bar or bat mitzvah, or an anniversary is a priceless investment for the future.

"After people make momentous simchahs, everything is gone and having been so caught up in the moment they forget half the evening," says Lisa Feinstein of Lisa Productions (905-764-1033).

"Video lets you relive the entire simchah, and you can't put a price on that," says Abe Salzman of Video Affairs (905-889-0909). He describes his task at a simchah as capturing all the details and emotions within a special event in order to create a lasting memory for those involved.

Feinstein stresses that she avoids being intrusive when she's on a job.

Both Feinstein and Salzman say keeping lighting and other equipment at a simchah to a minimum is important. Feinstein mingles with guests, which she find helpful in mitigating her obtrusiveness.

Both Salzman and Feinstein have always been creative, a trait that manifests itself in their work. Technology has made available an enormous range of editing techniques, which contribute to the personalization of each video according to the vision of the client. Feinstein has had video editors working for her on a contract basis for more than 15 years.

Today's options for video enhancement are endless, ranging from minimal and cost-efficient editing to intense alterations. While the choice is always left to the client, Salzman says that trends have changed in the digital effects used in today's videography. "There are many different effects and styles. Effects should be used to enhance the video, not to show off the videographer's equipment. Therefore artistic, uncomplicated effects are used."

A videographer is generally booked one to two years ahead of time, as soon as a date for a function is determined. Feinstein meets with clients a week before the event to confirm all the details.

Salzman notes that certain clients may have additional requests, such as wishing to re-enact the history of an engaged couple, which means the videographer's work begins earlier.

Regardless, the videographer heeds the requirements of clients, in order to help them to create an eternal memory of their most joyous occasions.

Not only does this provide a documentation of the evening, but it also creates a visual image of the attendants at that age, a point that Feinstein, herself a mother of five, is sure to stress.

Two of her children, Matt and Kelsey, work with her. Both have been trained by her, and their presence is often requested by Feinstein's clients.

Salzman and Feinstein are both very experienced in their field, so much so that Salzman has had 42 of his clips aired on wedding television shows.

The two cite referrals as the most reliable source of information when selecting a videographer and emphasize the importance of ensuring that the family employs someone who is the proper fit for them.

Having worked as videographers for many years, Salzman and Feinstein have attended countless celebrations.

"Everyone is filled with such joy and happiness that it's always a pleasure to be at a simchah. Every single family and simchah is so special," says Feinstein.

Other videographers advertising in this supplement are: D.M.S. Video Productions, 905-738-5510; Redstone Pictures, 416-256-4666; Twins Photo & Video, 905-707-2385; Video Productions by Josh, 905-709-9277.

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Age brings greater meaning to bar and bat mitzvahs

By ANNE PHYLLIS PINZOW
Special to The CJN

Deborah Finger was beaming yet nervous as she read from the Torah, as if it was only possible that she, among the millions who preceded her through the centuries in this ritual, would flub the pronunciations, the trope or, God forbid, both.

Sitting in the congregation, mouthing the words of Finger's portion along with her, was her daughter, as well as her eight grandchildren. The four who had already gone through this rite of passage also mouthed the words.

"They all looked like gasping fish," she laughed in the retelling later as she sat among her family and friends, feeling a mixture of modesty and pride. "It's too much fuss."

She always was one for doing things simply, a leftover from growing up in New York during the Depression era when girls were not called to the bimah at all.

Finger, who has since passed away, was a member of a small co-ed group of congregants of Nanuet Hebrew Center in New York who made the commitment to study together once a week for two years to prepare for their b'nai mitzvah.

Leo Karpfen 83, and Donna Smith, 46, in the minyan room of the Nanuet Hebrew Center

A picture of Deborah Finger taken before her death, in the year of her bat mitzvah

Though some adhere to a tradition to wait until 13 years past 70, Deborah had been joined in her class by several younger women.

Lisa Green, 38, studied for a year with the group and then studied privately for a year. When she was eight, Lisa lost her mother. The death threw confusion into her family, and she left her Jewish studies.

At age 12, Green asked to go through the ritual, but was told she was too far behind and would have to study for four years – something she was not willing to do.

As a married adult, Green found herself reaching out more as she struggled with her inability to conceive children. Then, at a Rosh Hashanah service, reading the story of Sarah, she made the connection.

"Infertility has been around since that time and there was somebody else who shared my problem," she said.

Later, when she adopted her daughter, Green named her in honour of another woman who went to synagogue to pray for a child: Hannah, who became the mother of Samuel.

Soon after, she started what became, in effect, two sets of classes. She enjoyed those she took at the synagogue, but what became especially joyous was learning from her newly adopted daughter, who came home every week from preschool with another Jewish lesson.

"It's like a spiritual rebirth," she said, adding that she has reached a new level of comfort reconnecting and participating in the synagogue community.

The day of the b'nai mitzvah, Green said that for the first time in her life, she felt that not only was she the centre of attention, but she had the wholehearted support of so many people wanting her to do well.

"Everyone should get that at least once in their life," she said.

Another bar mitzvah boy, 83-year-old Leo Karpfen, didn't need the classes. He had gone through the ritual when he was 13 in Cluj, Romania. Leo and his father went to shul every day just before dawn and this day, Leo said, was no more remarkable than any other morning at synagogue, except that it was his birthday.

"Mine was on a Thursday. I was called up to the Torah, and given an aliyah," Leo said. "After services, my father gave everyone drinks and rolls, and that was it."

Karpfen said he wanted to have the second bar mitzvah for three things he was grateful for: "One, I survived the war without any physical damage at all. [As a child, he spent some time in a concentration camp until it was liberated. He immigrated to the United States in 1948.] The second is I have a nice family – a son, a daughter, two grandchildren – who are also reading the Torah. The third one is that I'm 83 and I'm in fairly good physical health," he said.

"That was my main purpose and I'm very happy that my whole family went along with it."

Two more things made the milestone special for Karpfen: he got to share it with another congregant, Nathan Shlanger, and there was a baby naming on the same day.

"There was the youngest congregant and the oldest one," Karpfen said. "It was unbelievable, really joyful. The temple was full, awards they gave me. One thing I asked them: please do not give me a kiddush cup."

What Karpfen did want was the rabbi's blessing, which he received.

"I felt exhilarated, and I still feel it," Karpfen said.

Rabbi Paul Kurland of Nanuet Hebrew Center on Long Island said it's a misconception that a ceremony is needed to for someone to become bar or bat mitzvah. Any girl who reaches the age of 12 or boy who reaches the age of 13 is that and remains a bat or bar mitzvah for the rest of their lives.

Lisa Green in the main sanctuary of Nanuet Hebrew Center

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PARTY PLANNER

The commitments made when signing a traditional ketubah

By MICHELLE ALPERIN
Special to The CJN

For many brides and grooms, the ketubah signing that precedes the veiled walk down the aisle has a bit of mystery about it. They may not be sure exactly what the ancient Aramaic text says, but the signing ceremony sets just the right air of solemnity as a prelude to the veiled walk down the aisle.

Some couples who do read the text carefully encounter a document that seems at least mildly chauvinist, with the husband taking an active role and the wife only consenting to become his wife. Although some couples decide to write their own egalitarian ketubah and forgo the traditional document, many decide to also have a standard ketubah.

Donna Frieze, a convert to Judaism, had an additional kosher ketubah to ensure the legality of her marriage. "Later in life," she said, "we don't know if we or our children would want to go to Israel and if there would be any question about our marriage."

Despite concerns by feminists with the male-oriented language of the ketubah, the document originally developed as an insurance policy to protect the bride if the marriage ends – either through divorce or death of the husband.

The most fundamental role of the ketubah, said Rabbi Yosef Blau, spiritual adviser at Yeshiva University, is to elucidate the responsibilities and obligations a husband accepts in a marriage.

According to Maurice Lamm's *The Jewish Way in Love and Marriage*, the ketubah specifies that the husband is setting aside 200 silver *zuzim*, called a *mohar*, that will be paid to the bride in the event of his death or a divorce.

The husband also agrees in the ketubah to support his wife with food, clothing and "other necessary benefits," which the Talmud defines as satisfactory conjugal relations.

Rabbi Jill Jacobs, a Conservative rabbi who was ordained in 2003, maintained that a ketubah can express greater mutuality and still be in consonance with Jewish law. Using as a basis for her ketubah a document created by Rabbi Gordon Tucker and posted, with commentary, at www.ritualwell.org, Rabbi Jacobs and her husband, Guy Austrian, expressed mutual responsibility for each other in their ketubah: "The groom and bride also agreed of their own free will to work for one another, to honour, support, and nurture one another, to live together as a family, and to create their home in love, companionship, peace and friendship as befits the sons and daughters of Israel."

The traditional ketubah also lists two additional transfers of property. One is the bride's dowry, or *nedunya*, of silver, gold, valuables, clothing, and household furnishings, which the groom accepts in the sum of 100 *zuzim*. The second is an additional 100 *zuzim*, called *tosefet ketubah*, which the groom provides as a wedding gift to the bride. In the Sephardi world, the *tosefet ketubah* is often a negotiated sum that is specified in the currency of the land.

The groom must secure these monetary obligations with a lien on his property: "I take upon myself and my heirs after me," reads the ketubah, "the surety of this ketubah, of the dowry, and of the additional sum, so that all this shall be paid from the best part of my property, real and personal, that I now possess or may hereafter acquire."

In the notes to Rabbi Tucker's ketubah, which Rabbi Jacobs described as "the bare minimum of what you need halachically," he claims that the only obligatory elements of the ketubah are the *mohar* and the lien it engenders. Concerning these monetary payments, added Rabbi Jacobs, "they are part of a ketubah, but it is not necessary to specify how much."

Rabbi Tucker included language to allude to both the *mohar* and the lien on property: "The groom and the bride also accepted full legal responsibility for the obligations specified here, as well as for the various property entering the marriage from their respective homes and families, and agreed that the obligations of this ketubah may be satisfied even from movable property."

The standard ketubah, despite its formulaic nature, is required for every Orthodox marriage. Because the standard ketubah does not require a husband to grant his wife a religious divorce, a *get*, Blau supported the idea of a bride and groom signing, in addition to the ketubah, a separate prenuptial agreement – also to protect the bride in case of a divorce.

Although the Orthodox community is committed to the existing ketubah document, whose language come from the Mishnah, Blau said he has no problem with a bride and a groom making additional agreements and commitments, as long as they do not controvert Jewish law.

When Rabbi Jacobs and her husband got married, they did not want to have two ketubot, but rather one ketubah that satisfied both Jewish law and their own values. "We wanted something that to our standards was halakhically acceptable," she explained, but also egalitarian.

Using Rabbi Tucker's ketubah and adding to it three additional paragraphs of a more personal nature enabled Rabbi Jacobs and her husband to have a single ketubah, something that is often not true for couples Rabbi Jacobs has married. If they have written their own ketubah, but not in a way that satisfies Jewish law, she requires them to have an additional kosher ketubah – even if it is a computer printout that will go in a safe deposit box after the ceremony.

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Photographers capture your special moment forever

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

Elliot Sylman of Sylman Photography takes both traditiional and fun photos.

While time seems to whiz by as you enjoy connecting with loved ones and ensure everything goes as planned at your simchah, photographers can help you capture each special moment forever.

Some of Toronto's finest event photography services include Sylman Photography, run by Elliot Sylman, and Platinum Studios Photography, owned by Alex Himell. Both companies have covered events such as weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs.

A lot has changed over the years in the way that photographers work.

"Everything has changed from traditional photography," said Sylman (905-889-0760; esylman@rogers.com; www.sylmanphoto.com). "Albums are now much more customized, and you can alter layouts in them.

"There is much more creativity involved, or there can be if the client chooses."

Sylman said he tries to get people to look as natural as possible and takes both traditional and fun photos, including a lot of candid shots. He has various packages that clients can choose from.

"I try to find what people want and make a package that work for them," he added.

He does not use a lot of props and aims for mainly complimentary lighting.

Sylman's fascination with photography began in his early high school years, and he took his passion to the professional level about 22 years ago. He started out in commercial photography and then began taking more and more pictures of people.

"I like having an interaction with people," said Sylman.

For the past seven years, he has also been working on a personal project that he said he truly loves and allows him to give back to his heritage. He has been photographing Holocaust survivors.

"I'm trying to get a real photo of the survivors," he said. "I try to get people's feelings in my photos, which is why I like candid shots."

Sylman, whose father was a Holocaust survivor, plans on including those photographs in a book, as well as in a gallery show. Any proceeds made from those will be donated to an organization dedicated to Holocaust education.

Himell (905-709-7754 or 416-823-1204; www.platinum-studios.com) fuses his photos with a touch of "casual elegance."

"My style is young and fresh, yet also timeless," he said. "We do a lot of fun stuff, which is great for clients' albums, but we also do some traditional photos."

When preparing for a photo shoot, Himell said he tries to come up with offbeat concepts that would work for clients who want something different.

"I like to create our own individual statements," he added.

Himell sometimes uses props such as vehicles or umbrellas, and he uses multiple lights to make a room look its best when photographing people.

Alex Himell of Platinum Studios Photography likes offbeat concepts.

With an interest in visual arts for many years, Himell earned a bachelor's degree in applied arts and photography and has been working as a professional photographer for the past 12 years.

He said he enjoys working with people. "It's always a happy environment, and there is a lot of positive energy in the industry when you're out shooting and just being involved with people," he said.

Photographers help their subjects relax so that they are not too nervous during the shoots.

"I try to have a relaxing relationship with my clients, get to know them a bit ahead of time and also photograph them before the events so that there is more of a familiarity between me and my subjects," said Sylman.

"I give them instructions and talk to them when photographing them to help take their minds off some of the stressful things that may be taking place on the day of their event and make it more of a pleasant experience."

Both Sylman Photography and Platinum Studios do touch-ups for photographs as required.

Platinum Studios fully retouches all portraits, and everything produced for albums gets hands-on attention.

"We go an extra step for retouching for our albums," said Himell. "The extra details is one of the ways that we like to separate ourselves from other companies."

Sylman and Himell recommend that people book photographers about a year in advance. Some people even book as far ahead as two years.

Himell noted several things people should keep in mind when choosing a photographer.

"Look at the assembly of the album and the way things are put together," he said. "From a technical standpoint, consider the way things are lit, whether it is outdoors or inside at a party, where you have multiple lights and there is depth to the images.

"All of the photographers know how to take great pictures, but one thing that differentiates one company from the next is how well the service is from start to finish."

Sylman emphasized that the chemistry between clients and the photographer is key.

"The most important thing is personality and how well the clients mesh with the photographer," he said. "People should meet with a few photographers to decide who they would like to work with based on their personality and style of photography."

Another photography studio advertising in this supplement is: David Amoils Photography, 905-882-6770.

Planning anything six months in advance is absurd to many Israelis

Continued from page B43

Rabbi Markose put us at ease as we discussed location options, type of service, Sam's preparation plan and the logistics of the actual bar mitzvah day. Robinson's Arch at the Davidson Centre Archeological Park in Jerusalem at 7:30 a.m. was the chosen as the place and time.

Which brings me to the big question of logistics. How would I pull off a bar mitzvah in Israel if I was physically not there? I was fortunate to be in Israel last fall and did some research on my own. I connected with an Israeli travel agency, Eshet Incoming, to assist in securing our venues, tours, tour guides, buses and hotel rooms for our guests. Having an Israeli to be your voice, eyes and ears may not be necessary, but it sure gave me peace of mind.

This didn't mean that I could just – heaven forbid – sit back and relax. I've tried my best to stay organized and on top of my schedule and needs.

Israel is still Israel, and sometimes requests are not answered immediately, but keep in mind the time difference and the more relaxed attitude that prevails there. Planning anything six months in advance is absurd to many Israelis, but they're getting better at it, and, ultimately, they want your simchah to be a success, too.

Sending regular e-mails to our guests to update them on any changes or additions to our itinerary has also helped build excitement and make everyone feel part of the adventure.

As Sam's excitement about his upcoming bar mitzvah has escalated over the past year, so has the support of family and friends from near and far.

We feel fortunate to have a group of 50 people, Jews and non-Jews, who will be attending our celebration, from Canada, the United States and Brazil. We also look forward to sharing our simchah with our Israeli family and friends.

Being in Israel is amazing in and of itself, but being able to gather in Israel for such a special time in our lives with the many people whom we love is astounding.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

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Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

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Mazel tov to Michal Bracha Feldman on her recent bat mitzvah.

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Kids parties need not be extravagant. Really

By SHARON DUKE ESTROFF
Special to The CJN

It was the wedding invitation that convinced me: We modern moms and dads had officially lost our gumballs regarding our children's birthday parties.

"Master Jacob Estroff" read the ivory parchment envelope.

It took a moment to register that the addressee was in fact Jakey, my five-year old, and the bride-to-be, Miss Sophia Rosenthal (not her real name), was Sophie, his toothless classmate.

The party lived up to its invitation. There were bridesmaids, groomsmen and a mini-groom. There was a wedding cake taller than the bride herself, and even a mini chupah!

Of course, we Jewish parents come by our penchant for parties honestly. I mean, we've barely cleared labour and delivery before we're expected to pull off a bris or baby naming for 200.

It's just that somewhere between the petting zoo, the pony rides and the moonwalk, we end up with an empty wallet, a giant headache and a birthday kid who is so overwhelmed by the hoopla that he can barely enjoy his big day.

Fortunately, it's perfectly possible to plan a kid-friendly birthday bash without compromising our values, sanity and pocketbook.

All it takes is a little panning for gold.

You know, when you take a big clump of mud and swoosh it around in a pan until a few glistening specks of gold are all that remain. Well, we're going to do the same thing here. Only instead of mud, we're going to swoosh a big, mushy mess of modern birthday party madness.

Are you swooshing yet? Do you see those overpriced invitations and F.A.O. Schwartz goody bags spilling over the sides of the pan into a bucket by your feet? But don't go peeking at those golden nuggets just yet. Not until we've spent some time looking at the slush in the bucket – the parental myths that have contributed to our current state of birthday affairs.

Myth #1: Our kid's birthday party is a direct reflection of our parental prowess.

We accomplish many amazing feats as parents, such as getting our kids out the door and to school every morning, and keeping them safe, healthy and happy. Our child's birthday party is but one little parenting accomplishment in a year of millions. It's hardly a manifestation of our parental savvy.

Myth #2: The only place they serve grocery store birthday cakes is in the parental hall of shame

Have you ever bought a magazine claiming to contain "fool-proof birthday party ideas," only to wonder, after a page-and-a-half who is really the fool for having bought the magazine in the first place? Not only is making tulip-shaped cupcakes not foolproof, it takes a degree from the World Culinary Institute! Besides, our kids couldn't care less if their cupcakes are shaped like tulips or toilets as long as they're yummy, icing-soaked and have just the right number of candles.

Myth #3: Good parents plan one of-a-kind parties for their children.

You know that sinking feeling you get upon learning that another kid is having a birthday gala at the same secret site you've booked for your own child's party – only a week earlier? The nerve, you think. I've had that inflatable jumpy place booked for a year and that parent just swooped in and stole the idea right out from under me. But the reality is that our kids love playing on inflatable jumpy stuff. They'd do it day in and day out if we'd let them. Hey, would you turn up your nose at an opportunity to go to a spa just because you did the same thing last weekend? I think not.

Myth #4: Paying through the nose for our children's birthday parties is our financial obligation – like paying for university.

Although we've been programmed to believe that we haven't done our child justice unless we spend megabucks on his birthday party, it's simply not true. In fact, one of my boys' all-time favourite parties was the time we went to the park and played baseball. I brought a cake, some juice, plastic bases and sunblock, and they were happy as hamantashen for the duration.

Myth #5: It's all supposed to go off without a hitch

For my niece's sixth birthday, my sister-in-law booked the highly acclaimed Marvin the Magnificent Magician, months – if not years – in advance. You could taste the excitement as the guests counted down the seconds until Marvin arrived. And then, they counted some more. And some more. Until it became painfully evident that Marvin the Magnificent Magician had taken his vanishing act to the next level. That's when the kids started to build Oreo towers. They went through package after package of double stuffs until they'd constructed a veritable chocolate cookie Camelot. And then, it was time to go home. "Thanks, that was fun," the children told my catatonic sister-in-law as they exited. Lesson learned? Despite a birthday party disaster, my niece turned six, the guests were happy and we had a family memory that would last years.

OK, we're finally ready to peek at the golden nuggets, at those few precious, glimmering, real reasons that we plan birthday parties for our children. They look something like this:

- A fun, memorable day spent with family and friends.
- A means of making them feel happy, proud and loved.
- A celebration of their development, uniqueness and existence.

Sharon Duke Estroff is an internationally syndicated parenting columnist and author of Can I Have a Cell Phone for Hanukkah: the Essential Scoop on Raising Modern Jewish Kids.

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PARTY PLANNER

Outside Bellagio, a boutique-style venue.

ByPeterandPauls.com can do it all

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

To add a little twist to your shindig, turn to byPeterandPauls.com, (416-410-0677 or 905-326-2000), your one-stop-shop for events.

It offers everything from catering and entertainment to gift baskets, bridal accessories, advertising design, and video and photo services.

"We have everything," said global communications director Nelson Antunes. "We have an umbrella of services that are easily accessible and a team of individuals that can accommodate anything."

Peter and Paul's hosts weddings, bar and bat mitzvahs, corporate functions, fundraisers and other social events at three separate venues with three different styles.

Paramount, located just 15 minutes from Pearson Airport, is a trendy, spacious hall that can fit up to 1,650 guests.

Bellagio, located at 8540 Jane St., is a smaller, boutique-style venue with three European-style rooms.

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"Bellagio is more of an intimate setting. It's private and exclusive," Antunes said.

The Manor, Paul and Peter's third location, is set in the middle of the Carrying Place Golf and Country Club's lush green lawns. Overlooking a lake, it is the perfect setting for an outdoor or indoor wedding.

ByPeterandPauls.com has been around for 26 years. In that time, it has expanded its catering services to include a wide range of national and international menus, including kosher meals.

"The caterers are open to every ethnic community. Indian, Asian, Jewish – we do it all here," Antunes said.

Peter and Paul's has also been actively giving back to the community. They host an annual golf tournament for the Hospital for Sick Children and have raised more than $780,000 so far for Sick Kids.

The company is also going green this summer with plans to have its own Earth Day this June to help clean up the community.

"Everyone's an apple, we're an orange," Antunes said. "We're very unique, we go over and above."

The Paramount is located just 15 minutes from Pearson International.

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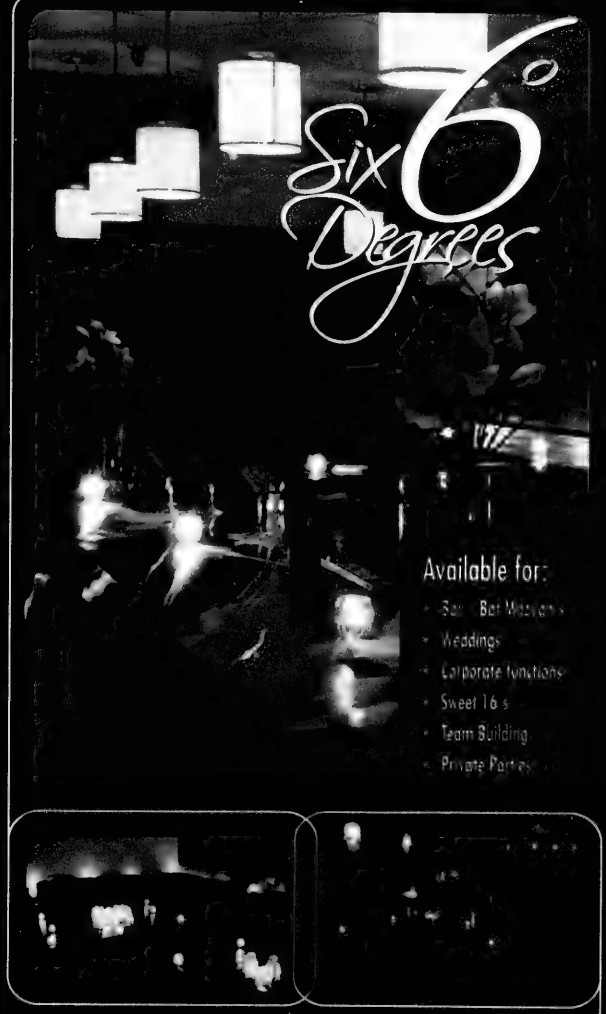

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Liberty Grand is a popular venue for upscale events

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

For a venue that makes a regal impression, consider the lavish Liberty Grand Entertainment Complex for your simchah.

Erected in 1926, the historic 100,000-square-foot estate has been playing host to a wide array of events for more than 10 years. At the lakefront in downtown Toronto, the Liberty Grand exudes magnificence and luxury. It's become a popular location for upscale events and functions.

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The Liberty Grand (www.libertygrand.com or 416-542-3789) encompasses three spectacular banquet rooms, one transformable, multi-faceted space and a beautiful courtyard. The complex meets all interior standards on account of its various looks, including a classic ambience with sparkling chandeliers and stately ceilings, and a contemporary space with flashy lighting and sound capabilities.

When booking your event, the Liberty Grand offers a complimentary events coordinator who will hold your hand every step of the way to help you arrange the perfect décor, menu and lighting for your wedding, bar or bat mitzvah, anniversary or other function. Although the Liberty Grand doesn't have a kosher kitchen, the venue does accommodate those who require a kosher menu or specific diet.

Liberty Grand exudes magnificence.

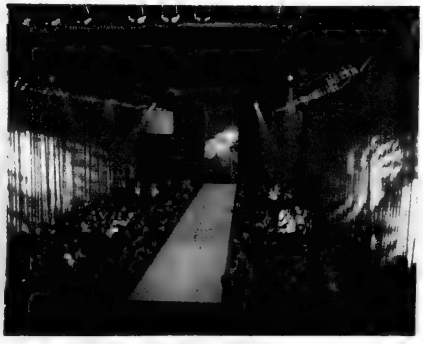
"All our catering is done in-house with the exception of kosher catering, but clients are permitted to bring in outside kosher caterers for their occasion," says Robert Rosset, director of sales and catering for the Liberty Grand. "However, we do offer kosher catering where the food is prepared at an off-premise catering company."

There's no event too small or too large for the Liberty Grand, which is wheelchair accessible and can accommodate parties from 100 guests to 3,000. Its staff are committed to delivering high-quality service and hospitality for every occasion.

Flexibility is key with every decision made for your party, and the Liberty Grand will bend over backward to ensure all your desires – which can change frequently – are sufficiently met.

"Our facilities are built for multi-use and function, and they're not restrictive in how people can use the building," says Rosset. "We have a lot of room for great growth potential, and if events start off small, there's enough space to expand and grow larger."

The Artifacts Room is often used for bar or bat mitzvahs because it's easily transformable and holds sufficient amenities for projecting acute audio and lighting. The room has successfully hosted parties for the 2001 Toronto International Film Festival, Toronto Fashion Week's Fall/Winter 2001 and Spring/Summer 2002 and the Leaf Fund Annual Casino Night Fundraisers.



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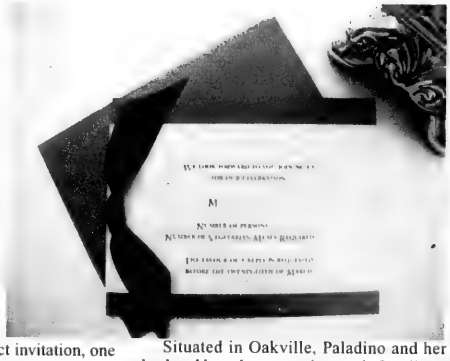
PARTY PLANNER

Invitations get simchahs off to a great start

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN



Your guests would be lost without those custom invitations you sent out in the mail months before your celebration, and you can find the perfect card that reflects your occasion at Design Oriented, a Thornhill-based business that specializes in full-colour, custom-designed invitations.

For more than 20 years, Felice and Steven Waldman have been working with clients to achieve the perfect invitation, one that incorporates and crystallizes the theme or colour scheme of clients' simchahs.

"If someone has a specific flower they're using at their party, or they want polka dots, plaids or other colour choices, we can design something more appropriate for that event," Felice says.

"We have approximately 20 standard designs, and then the client can choose one and make a variation of them. It's custom designing an invitation for their needs."

Nothing gets partygoers more excited than an eye-catching invitation that foreshadows the memorable night ahead, and Design Oriented encourages clients to sit down and share ideas and concepts in order to create the perfect invitation artwork and layout.

"[Designing an invitation] is a great way to start [planning an affair], because it's the first thing clients receive for the event, and they can customise their occasion right from the beginning," Felice says.

Laura Paladino is also a wonderful choice when considering custom place settings, menus, invitations and event programs for your special day.

Situated in Oakville, Paladino and her husband have been creating cards for clients in Canada and the United States from their art studio since 2001.

Paladino, a former interior designer, is proud that her cards are original and adventurous, and she pushes clients to step outside the box to craft something that will stand out.

"When clients come out with original pieces, it really makes a difference for guests when they see the invitation, and it says a lot about the occasion," she says.

It seems impossible to find enough time in the day to do everything for your upcoming event, and Paladino takes that into consideration with an easy-to-navigate website that showcases invitation templates and designs. Clients can save time by ordering samples, find pricing information and getting ideas from the website.

Paladino emphasizes that her business is very client-oriented from start to finish, whether you're ordering online or in person.

"We always ask for as much information about the event and the client's personal style when starting out. Then we sit down and go through different samples of cards, ribbon samples and any other materials that they might need, and we take it from there," she says.

"The client is very involved from start to finish, and we go back and forth through e-mail with PDF files to makes sure the client is happy."

For more information on Design Oriented, call 905-764-0772 or visit its new website at www.designoriented.ca. To contact Laura Paladino, go to www.laurapaladino.com, or call 905-469-9520 or 1-866-265-0633. **Samples on this page by Laura Paladino.**

Another invitation place advertising in this supplement is: Barbara Mortfield Invitations, 416-590-0515.

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Strategies for dealing with difficult relatives

By TOBY KLEIN GREENWALD
Special to The CJN

Once there was a bride who was upset because her sister-in-law didn't congratulate her at her wedding. When she confronted her on the issue, the sister-in-law said, "Really? I didn't even notice."

Not an auspicious beginning, and the bitterness remained in the bride's heart for decades.

There are three kinds of difficult relatives, or difficult situations, that one may encounter when preparing for a wedding.

The first is a relative who makes unreasonable demands or who interferes in other unwelcome ways.

The second kind of difficult relative may exist as a result of divorce or remarriage.

The third is a difficult in-law situation.

Accepting a new member of the family, or becoming one, can be wonderful, or it can be as difficult as grafting a cactus shoot onto a water lily. Both sides have to be open-minded, open-hearted and (when feasible) open-fisted in order for the transition to go smoothly. At the very least, one has to choose her battles.

Rule one: Be firm but always polite. Always.

Remember the wise words of author and Presbyterian minister, Carl Buechner, "They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel." When you've made a decision that you know someone won't like, tell them about it graciously. Disarm them with your kindness.

Rule two: Know thyself. Be aware of your own sensitivities.

Don't do something just to make someone else happy if it will make you miserable. If you detest pink with all your heart, don't agree to that colour scheme because your grandmother loves it. Buy her a pink corsage to wear at the wedding. Present it with a giant hug and kiss.

Rule Three: Keep your eye on the ball. Remember what's important.

No one will remember (or care) how many varieties of olives you served or whether the napkins were cream-coloured or white. What your guests will remember from your wedding is that there was joy between the couple and among the guests. If they choose to remember something less important, remind yourself (as often as necessary) that the flaw is with them, not you.

Difficult People: Close to Home

If your mom or dad don't want to take out a third mortgage on the house to pay for your wedding, they're not being difficult. They're being sane. The "work" you have to do is not on their willingness to part with their money, but on your own expectations.

Or the opposite could be true: the bride and groom want a small affair, and their parents feel that they "owe" invitations to many more guests. Suggest that your parents have an elegant, by-invitation-only kiddush or a sheva brachah meal to which they invite those extra guests, writing on the invitation, "The young couple has asked for a small wedding, but you are dear to our hearts and we'd like you to join us at…"

Leah Shifrin Averick, an expert on family and in-law relations, puts the question succinctly in her book, *Don't Call me Mom*. She writes, "But if you turn to parents for financial assistance, be prepared to compromise some of your wishes." In her suggestions to the parents, she writes: "Remember that it is your child's and future adult child-in-law's marriage celebration, as well as yours… Also, do not forget to consider the wishes and needs of the other set of parents."

What about your rebellious siblings, who want to come in torn jeans or in a tight, short strapless dress (to a religious wedding)? Or the vegetarian cousin? Or your aunt, a mediocre flower arranger who will feel hurt forever if you don't employ her?

Grit your teeth about your siblings – remember they are no reflection on you – and have a stock of attractive shawls available. Order takeout for the veggie. Let your aunt prepare Grandma's pink corsage.

Difficult People: Divorce or Other Sticky Issues

If a bride's and/or groom's parents had an ugly divorce, who will walk the bride and groom to the chupah? In Israel, and in chassidic circles, this is often solved by following the old Jerusalem custom of the mothers escorting the bride and the fathers escorting the groom.

What if the bride or groom suffered emotional or physical abuse at the hands of one of the parents, or abandonment? To what extent does a child "owe" a wedding invitation to such a father or mother if they come out of the woodwork for the wedding?

The ultimate decision should be his or her own, but the decision should be made in advance. No one should be expected to relive pain on their wedding day, but allowing the unwanted parent to show up and embarrass the bride or groom at the event is classless and cruel.

Go out of your way to treat step-parents and step-siblings with extra affection and attention. Include them in the planning stage, and remember to introduce them around at the wedding.

Difficult People: How to Keep In-Laws from Becoming Out-Laws

Averick says in an e-mail interview, "As much as some things change, some things never do, especially under the in-law sun… [There is] a Tunisian folk saying: 'I wish my daughter-in-law the heat of the summer sun and I wish my daughter the heat of the winter sun.'"

Break the chain. Visualize your new in-laws as your own. Be kind to all. Think out of the box. Keep your focus on what it important and get on with your life with your loving spouse.

Mazal tov!

Toby Klein Greenwald is the mother of six, mother-in-law of three, and editor-in-chief of WholeFamily.com.

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Ayurvedic Centre's treatments heal 'body, mind and soul'

Spa Life

By KATHRYN KATES

Begum Teja realized her dream by opening up Elemental Embrace Wellness Spa Retreat in Brighton, Ont., 5½ years ago.

It is by no means a luxury spa. Instead the 20,000-square-foot Northumberland County Ayurvedic Centre, built on 30 acres, is a comfortable, simply designed retreat that caters to healing and wellness under den mother Teja, along with her friendly staff.

The Ugandan-born owner is a hands-on spa director; she's also an esthetician, Ayurvedic practitioner, colonic therapist and reiki master.

"We are an Ayurvedic place but in a western atmosphere – east and west meet here. Ayurveda, from India, is 5,000 years old. It is about healing of body, mind and soul. Our main packages are for detox and distress," says Teja.

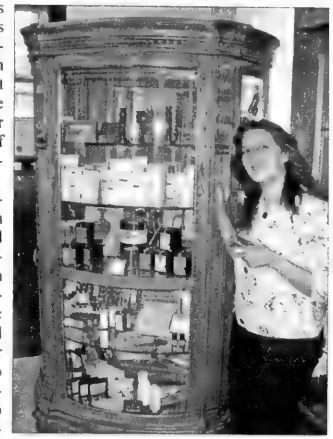
Packages from one day up to a week can be arranged. One-day packages include an Ayurvedic treatment and a spa treatment. The intense seven-day program includes consultation based on four different Ayurvedic treatments. All packages include use of the facilities, a morning yoga/meditation class and three healthy meals with both eastern and western culinary influences, and accommodation, sans TVs, in one of the 14 tastefully designed rooms, all with firm, corn-husk pillows and beds with foam mattresses.

Most of Elemental Embrace's clients come from the United States because Americans are more familiar with Ayurvedic treatments than Canadians, Teja says. Thirty per cent of the spa clientele are men, with that number growing because of their wives' recommendations.

There are 14 therapists, 11 of whom work full time. All treatments are personalized to suit each person. The staff includes an Ayurvedic Vaidyas, a medical and Ayurvedic doctor licensed in India who consults and administers treatments. Guests are made to feel welcome and relaxed – treatments are not hurried and if they run late, so be it.

Treatments include the Saarasota – a signature spa treatment that includes a herbal steam in a cabinet; aroma massage; a herbal wrap; mini facial; hotstone foot massage; and scalp massage. For those comfortable enough to try it, Elemental Embrace offers Colon Hydrotherapy using state-of-the-art safe equipment.

Ayurvedic treatments on offer include an Ayurvedic Vaidya Consultation, to determine your body constitution and current state, and allow the practitioner to suggest changes to diet, exercise and lifestyle. Nasya is a treatment in which oil or powder is placed into the nose, followed by a massage around the nose and chest. Teja says this is good for headaches, sinusitis, migraines, hormonal issues and physiological problems.



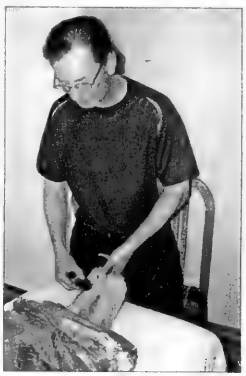
Begum Teja, Elemental Embrace owner.

A Shirodhara herbal oil treatment.

Shirodhara is administered by two therapists using four hands to fully massage the body in harmony, on a carved wood table. Then a warm stream of herbal oil is poured onto the forehead – over what is referred to as the "third eye." The sensation is very relaxing. The treatment ends in the steam cabinet, which helps to further absorb the herbs.

There are seven treatment rooms, a sauna, steam rooms, an indoor pool and a gym.

"We've tried to make the treatment rooms all look different," Teja says. "The Weightless Room has murals of the sky that make you feel like you're floating, the Grotto Room makes you feel like you are going down into a cave, and the peach-coloured Colonic Room has sayings on the wall that people who are anxious when they come in can read to calm themselves. The Aqua Bearer Room has an Egyptian feel – it is where we do our mud wraps. The Tips and Toes Room is designed with a Spanish feel.



The Saarasota

"Outside we have a reflective circle – it is a guided meditation. You go in with a concern, and you are guided through your issue. There is also a labyrinth, which is a meditative walk," she says.

For western services such as facials and body treatments the French product line Dr. Renaud is used. For all Ayurvedic services, oil- and herbal-based mixtures are administered. They are retailed for home care.

There are two golf courses nearby, and packages can be arranged to include golf.

For more information about Elemental Embrace, visit www.elementalembrace.com or phone: 1-866-212-9355. For area attractions, go to: www.northumberlandcounty.ca.

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Feel like a guest at your own function

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

"A party planner is there to make you a guest at your own function," says party planner Heidi Gruenspan (905-738-5030). "We're there to absorb as much as we can from the client and to make sure everything comes to fruition."

Karen Garscadden, co-event director of Up and Coming Events (416-665-6100) along with Karen Jacobs, emphasizes the importance of personalized service in ensuring that each event is reflective of the people involved: "Every party has its own unique personality."

Pictures on this page supplied by Up and Coming Events

She refers to herself and her staff as "party architects" who are equipped to reduce the emotional and financial pressure felt by their clients by offering experience, resources and a strong network of professionals.

"We take the clients' message and transform it into an event," Garscadden says.

Both women stress the need to establish a comfortable and trusting relationship between the client and the party planner to ensure the success of the function.

"We're there to create a relationship so that when anyone needs something, they're comfortable with asking," Gruenspan says.

Referring to the ways party planners can help with your celebration, Gruenspan identifies peace of mind as the greatest gift they have to offer. "We're insurance," she says.

Additionally, Garscadden highlights perspective and extensive knowledge as two features that make a party planner a necessity. Detached from family dynamics and emotional involvement, they can step back and observe the situation more objectively.

"We plan events every weekend of the year. Our resources are broader and we can bring new creative ideas."

Garscadden points to the growing demand for uniqueness in parties, while people still want to maintain the conventional elements that tie all functions together. "People may think there's just one way of doing a party, but now more than ever, there is no such thing as a traditional party," she says.

In venues ranging from ballrooms to bowling alleys, banquet halls to stables or campgrounds, party planners are invaluable in bringing a vision to fruition without losing sight of the warmth and meaning of the celebration. From start to finish, the client receives expert support and advice in bringing each detail together as part of a united, unfragmented whole.

"Most of my clients would attest to the fact that, in the end, it's the best money they ever spent. There is lots of worrying without a planner," says Gruenspan of the work she and her associate Lisa Schneider do.

Clients generally contact a party planner as soon as they have established a date for their celebration, sometimes sooner if they wish to inquire about possible venues. This usually ranges from six months to three years before the simchah.

Initially, the party planner asks a lot of questions in order to get a feel for the clients' vision of the event, as well as to ensure that all logistical details are taken into consideration, such as whether the date falls on a lesser-known holiday. After assessing the pros and cons of the clients' choices, the party planner will build on that foundation, adding creative touches and smoothing out the details, Garscadden says.

Gruenspan highlights the party planner's responsibility to be alert and ready to deal with unforeseen circumstances. She herself has experienced everything from bomb threats to fires while on the job.

Garscadden echoes the sentiment, recalling a time when she and her staff managed to relocate an entire wedding with hardly a hitch after the synagogue reported no heat or hydro on the day of the simchah, as the couple posed for photos in the bride's home.

In today's technological society, the Internet has begun to make event planning a do-it-yourself process. However, while the web does provide important information, it lacks the expertise of someone who has been in the business for years and has established contacts in all areas of the industry.

Both Garscadden and Gruenspan cite personal recommendations as the most valuable method of selecting a party planner. They caution against arbitrarily choosing someone from the Yellow Pages, and stress the importance of having clients' trust and making them feel comfortable.

"We take the 'oy' out of joy!" Garscadden says.

Other planners advertising in this supplement are: Ricky Bessner & Fern Cohen Party Planning, 905-731-2005; C&C Eventz, 416-720-4616; Creative Event Planner/Consultant, 416-277-6524; Sharon Goodman Wedding & Party, 905-731-7786; Judy Stein Consulting & Associates, 905-764-2728; Gayle Kertzman, 416-484-4467; Cherry & Baker& Associates, 905-771-1121.

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Use party planner's expertise and experience

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

From catering catastrophes to entertainment emergencies, planning an event can be a stressful endeavour, so why not leave it to the pros?

At Mint Lifestyle Events (416-923-6468, www.mintevents.com), they'll take care of everything for you.

"It's a one-stop shop," said Noah Cappe, one of the Mint co-owners. "We don't just do the entertainment and graphic work, we do invites, place cards, security and even valet service."

Cappe started Mint three years ago with his partners, Jared Florence and Jordan Fogle.

Cappe said it's their experience that keeps them ahead of the competition.

"We've been doing this for 10 years, we've worked on both sides of the fence and we really understand the dynamic of how it works," he said.

The three owners started out as DJs and worked their way up.

"We've done everything from MC-ing and managing to part-ownership. We've experienced every element. We pounded the pavement, did the right work, and we understand what goes into an event," he said.

Mint Events stands out for its incredible attention to detail and its personable staff. Cappe encourages each client to meet with his staff face to face, in order to understand exactly what they're looking for.

Mint Lifestyle Events makes the guests feel like they're in the spotlight.

"We make the guests feel like they're in the spotlight by listening to them," Cappe said. "We want to give everyone an opportunity to meet each other. Every guest is different and every event is different – $2,000 parties are just as important as $20,000 parties."

The key to each event, he said, is to make it about the customer, especially when dealing with younger clients.

"We make it a point to make the kid the star of the party. It's not about us, it's about the guest of honour. We build the event around them. We're there as a really good backup, but we don't come out with giant banners and signs," he said.

Mint's events are known for their originality and commitment to a theme. Whether it's a corporate event or a bat mitzvah, Mint will stay true to the theme from beginning to end with the help of its in-house creative department. During one video game-themed party, Mint created actual, playable video games as invitations.

"We made the guests part of the experience, that's what we try to do. There are no pre-made, cookie-cutter options. We're creative, we spend as much time as we can learning about the event," Cappe said.

The success of any party depends on the staff. At Mint, Cappe is very careful when hiring.

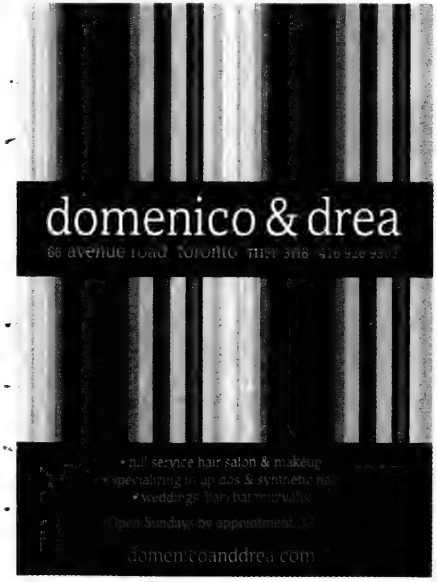
"Employees are hired based on personality and experience, not degrees. In this business, personality goes a long way. You need to be outgoing, warm and entertaining. We hire people who understand what we do," he said.

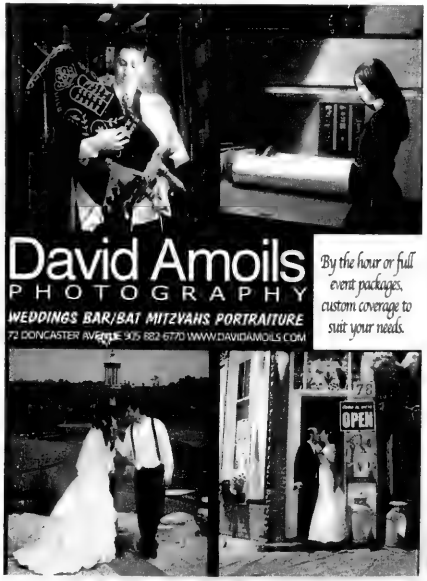
In order to keep Mint in the spotlight, Cappe and his colleagues are active nation-wide. This summer, they'll be launching a tour across Ontario.

"We give back to the community. We donate our services by throwing parties and camp socials," Cappe said. "I go to events and the kids know me."

While Mint is based in Toronto, the company has hosted events in Los Angeles and across Canada.

Cappe gives a simple reason for choosing Mint events: "There's nobody who does what we do," he said. "I worked with four different companies, big and small. We're the best."

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Entertainers dazzle, mystify, and make 'em laugh

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

It's not every day that people find themselves leaving a party scratching their heads wondering how someone could have read their minds and unable to wipe a childish smirk off their faces. If you want to ensure that your guests are dazzled, mystified, and laughing until it hurts, Swaye Entertainment (416-545-0741 or www.swayeentertainment.com) has got the entertainment you crave.

Founded in Toronto in 1996 by its president and award-winning magician, Adam Swaye, Swaye Entertainment provides premier entertainment at a large variety of events, including house parties, conventions, sports games, trade shows, casinos, bar and bat mitzvahs, and store openings.

The company has worked with more than 100 entertainers. Some of its headliners include comedian Mike Bullard, award-winning impersonator Andre Phillip Gagnon, professional hypnotist Mike Mandel, and the human statue, robotic moving Silver Elvis.

Swaye has become very popular since he began performing magic at age 13.

He "fell in love with magic" at age 12, following a trip with his family that led him to learn some circus tricks and juggling, he said.

Soon after the trip, he went to a magic store and began taking lessons with a magician he met. A while later, another local magician, Gordon Precious, mentored him and helped him get into the field.

Swaye continued performing throughout his time at university and then later when he opened his company. He has performed for Fortune 500 companies, Ontario premiers and national sports fans.

About 10 years ago, the Hamilton Magic Association awarded Swaye the Scott Lang Award for best close-up magician of the year. (Close-up magic is performed for small groups of people who are standing or sitting nearby.)

Swaye said that his company's entertainers usually work while everyone else is playing.

"Sometimes there are last-minute bookings for events," he explained. "While most people are out with friends or family on weekends and holidays, we're usually working."

Adam Swaye holds all the aces

The entertainers spend the day working on the business side of their jobs and perform at various events at night. While Swaye is fortunate to be able to make a full-time living as a magician, some entertainers do have day jobs.

Still, following their passions keeps them motivated.

"I get to play where people want to be," said Swaye. "It's a fun atmosphere, and I get to make people laugh.

"It's one of those dream jobs that allows you to do what you love, you don't work a day in your life."

Swaye Entertainment also provides catering of some special foods, such as cotton candy, as well as a large variety of inflatable games, from backyard bouncers to those that are 15 feet high.

While most of Swaye Entertainment's clients have been in the Greater Toronto Area, the company has also provided performers and other forms of entertainment across Canada and the United States.

Last year, performers entertained crowds at the FIFA Under-20 World Cup and the Toronto FC games.

Those who have always dreamed of astounding audiences with diverse tricks and leaving them begging for more can take magic lessons, which the company offers for people of all ages. People hire magicians to teach them tricks at their homes, and corporations bring them in to help employees practise team building.

Swaye Entertainment works with party planners and DJs, and will customize an event package to suit your specific needs and budget.

With his background – more than 15 years of experience performing at various events and booking entertainers – Swaye can recommend entertainers who are best suited for your event.

Other entertainers advertising in this supplement are: MVS Music, 905-333-5004; Sound of Fusion Entertainment, 416-629-8867.

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Flexible gift-giving options from Mirvish Productions

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

"...So long, farewell...," The Sound of Music launches the new season in October.

"People have become consumer-product fatigued," says Mirvish Productions director of communications John Karastamatis, given that most of today's biggest gift items will be obsolete in a year or two.

Instead, he says, "people are looking to give experiences for special occasions," from birthdays to anniversaries, graduations and more. "High on that list are cultural ones [experiences] – theatre tickets are very, very popular as gifts."

Mirvish has made giving the gift of theatre more flexible than ever: you're not just handing over a pair of tickets that may be hard to exchange for another date, or you find it's impossible to change seats or switch productions, Karastamatis says.

With gift certificates in any denomination, there are no more wrong guesses when gift-giving. "A lot of people buy a round number, or ask what the equivalent of two tickets to this show would cost." Gift certificates can be used for any Mirvish production, so if they're not *Hairspray* folks, maybe they'll enjoy this fall's by-popular-demand return of *Spamalot*.

For a more meaningful gift, season subscriptions are available from $90. The upcoming season is about as diverse as any in Mirvish history. "This is for someone who really has a passion about the performing arts," Karastamatis says.

The new season launches in October with a sensational new production of *The Sound of Music*, co-produced by Andrew Lloyd Weber. "He's always wanted to produce *The Sound of Music*," says Karastamatis. "It was the very first musical he saw on opening night in London when he was a child."

Typically, the role of Maria is played by an older, established actress, but, seeking a talented unknown, Weber will cast someone much younger, selected by Canadians from among 10 finalists on this summer's CBC reality series *How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?* Mirvish subscribers will be among the first to see her on stage in the role.

The eclectic season continues with glittering offerings such as *A Chorus Line*, *The Color Purple* (produced by Oprah Winfrey), Seana McKenna's captivating take on the ancient role of Medea and the edgy, passionate musical *Spring Awakening*.

"We like to have seasons that give you a sense of the entire range of theatrical shows," Karastamatis says. "Our subscription gives you a survey of what's happening in world theatre at this moment... we choose from...the best productions available around the world."

In June, the season that began with Weber as producer will close on a high note with Weber as composer – and the world première of a funny, heartbreaking new musical, *The Boys in the Photograph*, a tale of young love set against Ireland of the late 1960s. "It's quite exciting for us," says Karastamatis. "Subscribers will be the first to see it."

A Mirvish gift-pack has something for everyone.

When purchasing a subscription as a gift, you choose the section and day of the performances. The recipient is then free to choose seats within that section and schedule shows for the most convenient date. They can also share the tickets or pass them along – many families, companies and groups "pool" multiple subscriptions – but Karastamatis doubts they'll want to pass up on any of the 2008-09 offerings.

Other Mirvish productions are of special note when thinking about gift-giving include shows such as *We Will Rock You* and *Dirty Dancing*, "a story that has broad, broad appeal."

It's not even too early to think about Chanukah gifts: December's limited run of the new musical *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* is already half sold out. "It will appeal to a lot of people," Karastamatis says of the timeless classic, with its flying car. "Many adults grew up with the story, and now they're looking for an opportunity to introduce it to their children and grandchildren."

Karastamatis recommends checking online (www.mirvish.com) for updates and to find out about new Mirvish productions. "We always have two or three shows playing at once," he says. And because gift certificates never expire, you can be sure recipients will find something to enjoy. "There's no shortage of shows to choose from."

For more information about subscriptions, call 416- 593-4225; for ticket sales and gift certificates, call 416-872-1212.

More than flowers, you'll get flair to remember

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

"We don't just drop off the flowers and leave," says Renee Birnbaum of An Affair to Remember. "There's a designer there with them for the day… we're there."

For Birnbaum, "there" means every step of the up-to-six-month journey to the wedding – or birthday party, anniversary, bar mitzvah or gala – of your dreams. "Once they're booked, they can come in as many times as they want."

Whether it's a total change of heart – "I had a bride change her entire colour scheme two weeks before the wedding" – or just discussing the limitless possibilities, Birnbaum goes the extra mile, sometimes literally: "We're happy to take a sample to the venue, bring the linen, bring the centrepiece, table settings."

And once a client has decided on what they want, what they've seen is exactly what they get.

Birnbaum or an associate takes a picture of all samples and puts it in their file. They then show up on the day of the event with exactly what the client has ordered.

"That's why you're hiring a professional," she says. "You should be able to relax."

Birnbaum has seen a lot of change in event décor since she started An Affair to Remember almost 20 years ago.

Today, while theme parties are still popular, she says it's more about the "look of the room" rather than strictly adhering to a theme at all costs.

Flowers add to the 'look of the room,' says Renee Birnbaum of An Affair to Remember.

Today's look definitely involves colour, such as bold jeweltones or bright primary colours for boys. "Greens are very hot now, along with burgundies and dark reds."

Even for weddings, where white is still the focus, elements of green or purple are creeping in, along with the unexpected flower shapes of hydrangeas and orchids.

Traditional elements such as centrepieces incorporate contemporary colours in thrilling new ways, like the refreshing cool lime-green blast of a spider mum or the fanfare of a purple dendrobium orchid. Beyond flowers, other elements are creeping into the spotlight – grass and twined wires add height and drama to even the simplest arrangement of girlie-pink gerbera daisies.

There's even a touch of high tech, Birnbaum says, with LED-lighted vases that glowingly accentuate lush displays of twigs, moss, crystals and candelabras, or a smaller-scale, sleeker modern arrangement.

"I own all my own pieces," says Birnbaum. That means from vases to chupahs, candles to drapery, An Affair to Remember can supply everything you need to get the look of your event just right.

If she doesn't have it? "I have designers and I have people to build things for me," she says. "We have a warehouse studio with a full floral fridge… if we don't have something, we work with rental companies and lighting companies. We can provide to the client anything that we need."

Birnbaum "doesn't only deliver a product," says Jackie Shaw, who, as director of operations and development for the Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation, has worked with An Affair to Remember on five galas. "She becomes part of an event."

For last year's gala, Birnbaum transformed the Liberty Grand with a Caribbean "great escapes" theme, including sun umbrellas made of orchids and an airline check-in counter in the lobby.

Vision doesn't have to be compromised by budget, either, Birnbaum says. "People call up and ask, 'What's your starting price?'… I don't have one."

Clients have to be realistic about their budget, but at either end of the scale, the event will still be beautiful. "They don't have to break the bank."

For a smaller wedding, Birnbaum might focus on the backdrop and bridal table instead of centrepieces – creating focal points for a sensational look. "I stand by the value… and the service that we give them."

Whether it's a fundraising luncheon, family event or gala, Birnbaum calls herself "a stickler" – not only for the large-scale elements but also the tiny, often neglected touches – "the processing of the flowers, making sure everything goes out finished, the detail is done, bouquets are wrapped properly… everything's finished properly."

The most satisfying calls are the ones Birnbaum gets the day after an event from people who saw the flowers, loved her work and want to book her for their event.

"That's the best referral."

Other florists advertising in this supplement are Karen Baker Floral Design & Event Planning, 905-886-8100; Fran Sackler Floral Designs, 905-884-5848.

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Upscale resale gives you luxe for less

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Customers browsing through Deja Vu, Theresa Lobraico's upscale Markham clothing, store sometimes ask why there are dry-cleaning tags on many of the clothes.

That's their first realization that they're in a resale shop.

"I take that as a compliment," Lobraico says.

For anyone who associates resale clothing and consignment shops with dowdy dresses, clunky therapeutic shoes and the smell of mothballs, Deja Vu (www.dejavuboutique.ca, 905-472-9566; consignment by appointment only) offers luxe for less.

And why not? Why pay $300 to $450 for a pair of Cambio jeans when Deja Vu carries previously owned pairs for around $100?

At the more formal end of the spectrum are tremendous savings on evening wear, such as an elegant Vera Wang gown that retails for more than $1,000 while Deja Vu's price is $400. A $1,200 Hugo Boss suit might resell for $350, and accessories such as Coach and Fendi bags all come with similarly streamlined price tags. Other brands might include Versace, Votre Nom and Hilary Radley.

Deja Vu also carries a selection of new and sample merchandise from Frank Usher, Dusk and more.

What you won't find on the well-stocked racks at Deja Vu are mainstream brands available at any retail or resale shop.

"Every woman has clothes in her closet already," says Lobraico, who also offers in-home wardrobe and style consulting. "What she wants is something spectacular that you're not going to see everywhere else."

"I want wow," says client Lee, who drives in often from Pickering with her mother, Marian. "Anything you've seen in Vogue, you're going to see here."

That's especially important if you're a hostess looking for evening wear.

"The event is going to cost a fortune," but clothes don't have to, Lobraico says.

And even if you're just a guest, "you're going to look great, and no one has to know [it's resale] if you don't want them to."

With 15 years' experience, Lobraico only accepts for consignment "those pieces I feel I have a market for."

Her basic conditions are that clothing and accessories be current "within two years," of designer quality, and impeccably dry cleaned in like-new condition.

Whether in clients' homes or in the store, Lobraico is proud of her honesty, something girlfriends might not offer for fear of hurt feelings.

She deals it out gently and with a sense of humour.

"Customers thank me," she says.

It's not about putting them down, but rather steering them to clothes that look great.

"If it's not flattering, I'd just say 'Let's find something else.'"

Often, clients want more than clothes – they're looking to change their whole style.

Whether going through a life change, moving or downsizing, they want a style that will better reflect their personality.

"Fashion is trendy. Style is timeless," says Lobraico. "Style is your own personal signature."

You don't have to go broke to purchase an upscale designer gown.

Lobraico actually speaks at a women's shelter about image and how clothes can empower women.

"It's almost like dressing from the inside out."

She has also led government seminars on dressing for job interviews and in the workplace, and for self esteem.

As a single mother of three who launched her own business, she believes with a passion in what she does and offers far more than just a business transaction.

She's in touch regularly with an e-mail list of about 450 regular clients and will occasionally even e-mail them about a "surprise sale" with just a couple of days' notice.

Lobraico will also call one of her regulars if something comes in that she feels they'd love.

"It's like having a personal shopper," she says.

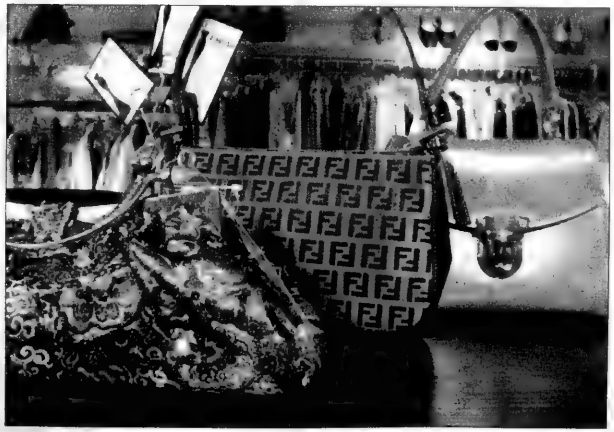
From casual to black-tie, from bar mitzvahs to galas, whether you're hosting or just enjoying the event, Deja Vu is sure to have the perfect outfit in a full range of current styles.

"They don't have to know I paid a fraction of the cost," because the end result is exactly the same, Lobraico says.

"People say, 'Wow! That's a great outfit.'"

Only your wallet will know the difference.

Other fashion stores advertising in this supplement are Crawford Boys, 416-782-8137; Guido Martella, 416-638-2018; Inspiration Fine Lingerie, 905-886-7361; K.Barketti, 416-225-6733; and St.Honore Ladies' Fashions, 416-449-2672.



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The Canadian Jewish news

Simchah package includes a Broadway-quality play

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

There was much fanfare at the Toronto Centre for the Arts when Dancap Productions (416-644-3665; www.dancapticketts.com) announced its theatrical lineup for 2009 with a live musical send-off.

Dancap, the entertainment company founded by Aubrey Dan in 2007, is known for staging Broadway-quality productions.

The pre-Broadway production of *Happy Days, A New Musical*, which was co-written by songwriter Paul Williams and Garry Marshall, creator of the original 1970s television show, will kick off Dancap's 2009 series in February.

Anne of Green Gables, The Musical, a co-production with the Charlottetown Festival, debuts in May and Dr. Seuss' *How the Grinch that Stole Christmas! The Musical*, an all-Canadian production, runs from November through to January 2010. (Venues for the shows are not yet finalized.)

'It's family- friendly entertainment for all ages'

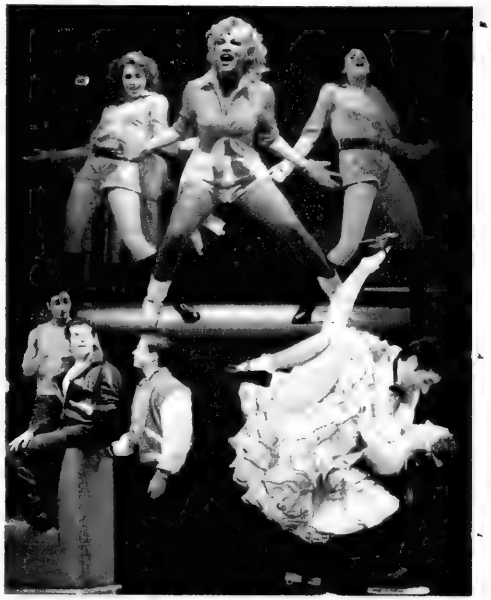
Cast members from all three productions were flown in from Charlottetown, Los Angeles and New York to perform. Also on hand were Williams of *Happy Days* and Canadian icon Don Harron, co-writer of the *Anne of Green Gables* musical.

Reporters were also treated to a smorgasbord of hors d'oeuvres prepared by Dancap Catering chef Kyle Hepburn. The food and drink were themed to symbolized the different productions. The *Happy Days* fare included mini burgers and shots of root-beer floats, while the smoked salmon blinis and raspberry cordials, and roast beef sandwiches represented *Anne of Green Gables* and *The Grinch* respectively.

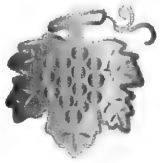
"We wanted to give people a taste of what the season would be like, Dan told *The CJN*. "It's family-friendly entertainment for all ages."

This year is the 100th anniversary of the publication of the Canadian classic, *Anne of Green Gables*, he said. "We're bringing a piece of Charlottetown to Toronto."

Continued on page B34



"I found my thrills..." *Happy Days* kicks off Dancap Productions' 2009 season in February.



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Dancap tickets can include meals

Continued from page B33

The production is a good educational tool and so the company will be partnering with schools to give students exposure "to this real Canadian treasure."

He pointed to *The Grinch* as another production with multi-generational appeal, noting that many people can relate to the grinch character because being an outsider is a universal feeling. "It's a heart-warming show. With the multi-ethnic diversity of Toronto, everyone feels like the grinch sometimes."

Tickets are still available for the 2008 season, which resumes with *Jersey Boys* playing at the Elgin Theatre in July and *Avenue Q* opening at the Toronto Centre for the Arts the last week of August.

Dancap is also offering a new type of dinner theatre for shows at the Toronto Centre for the Arts (5040 Yonge St.). People can order a meal created by Dancap catering, when they purchase their theatre tickets.

The new catering package began with the May production of *My Fair Lady*, and it will be available for the run of *Jersey Boys*.

"We can seat 100 people downstairs and another 100 people upstairs. A three-course meal during the week will cost you $30, including coffee," Dan said.

Three-course meal for just $30

"We make it so easy. When you book your ticket, you can book your prix fixe meal. It's a seamless process.

"People can park and go for dinner. This is a very unusual convenience. What people want is convenience. It takes dinner theatre to a whole new level. It's unique in Toronto."

He said the meal packages are ideal for fundraisers and corporate events as well as birthday and anniversary gifts.

"You're giving a night out as a gift. Dancap gift certificates are great for Mother's Day and Father's Day.

He suggested that the theatre venue may also fit the needs of people who want a different kind of simchah or celebration.

"My niece is having her bat mitzvah party here instead of a more traditional venue. Some kids don't want to have these traditional parties."

The setting would also suit a more intimate party, however, people could opt to have a pre-show experience and later, a post-show party, he said.

"Our whole focus is catering to the customer. We make the ordinary extraordinary."

About Life

Dear Ella,

My husband Mike and I threw a black-tie event to renew our vows. We invited all of our friends, and it was truly like a second wedding.

At our age, we have a number of friends who are no longer with their spouses. One such couple are Warren and Pam, who have recently gone through a divorce. My husband golfs with Warren regularly, and I never lost touch with his ex-wife Pam. They were both invited, and we sat them at separate tables. They were both invited alone, but at the last minute, Pam asked us if she could bring a date. Although we were a little uncomfortable for Warren's sake, we decided that they're adults and it was not our place to refuse. Mike, however, did call Warren to let him know and offer him the option to bring a date, too. He declined.

You could have knocked me over with a feather when Pam waltzed into the hall in a skin-tight, sequined, black strapless ball gown with a drop-dead gorgeous younger man on her arm. Heads turned. I hadn't seen her for a while, and it was clear she'd had lots of work done. The two of them danced the night away as they gazed into each others' eyes. They were one of the last couples to leave.

It wasn't until later in the week that we found out her date was a paid escort! I could not believe what I was hearing. I am so angry with her that I haven't had the guts to call her to tell her how I feel. I feel like she made a complete mockery of what was supposed to be a very special occasion for Mike and me. What do you think of this prank?

She's Got Nerve

Dear She's Got Nerve

Let's not lose sight of what this whole evening was about. It was about you and Mike renewing your vows, and nothing should spoil that for you.

Now let's move on to Pam. When a person goes through a life-altering event such as a divorce, it's not uncommon for that individual to take stock of their life. Often they will do something out of character, such as go back to school, take a big trip or work on their appearance.

It sounds to me like this is exactly what Pam did. She took control of the way she looks and the way she wants others to look at her. This really is not your problem. Perhaps she should not have used your simchah for her "coming out," but she decided that she would take an uncomfortable situation and turn it around. For Pam, that meant hiring a date so she would not have to walk into your simchah alone. There's no question that she wanted heads to turn.

She did ask your permission to bring a date, and you agreed. Technically, she followed proper protocol. Would you have felt better if she looked a little more like she did in the past and brought someone she met through a dating service?

Please don't let the actions of one of your guests put a damper on what sounds like a very special evening that you and Mike shared.

A few years from now, it will just be something you add to the rest of your memories of what was a truly lovely and special occasion for you and your husband.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *e-mail: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

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This Week

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National

Military seeks recruits from Jewish community. *Page 34*

Health & Lifestyles

Circle of Care offers taxi service for seniors. *Page 25*

Heebonics

Celebrity personal trainer is a celebrity himself. *Page 40*

Books & Authors

Gerald Tulchinsky documents the history of Canada's Jews. *Page 41*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 16
According to Reports 21
Health & Lifestyles 25
Family Moments 27
What's New 28
Obituaries and Notices 30
Just Between Us 32
Israel & the Jewish World 35
Heebonics 40
Books & Authors 41
Arts & Travel 42
Sports 50

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IsraAID provides relief in Burma

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The presence of Israeli relief teams is still being felt in Burma, as IsraAID recently dispatched a third team of medical and relief professionals to offer aid to the victims of the May 3 cyclone.

Cyclone Nargis devastated the Delta region of Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. It killed some 78,000 to 130,000 people and left hundreds of thousands vulnerable to disease and starvation.

This prompted the Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid (IsraAID) – an organization that represents 15 NGOs in Israel – to send a small team of doctors, nurses and water specialists to Myanmar just four days after the cyclone hit.

One month later, Israelis are still working in the field to try to help survivors bounce back from the disaster.

In a phone interview from Israel, Shachar Zahavi, the director of IsraAID, said Israeli doctors are in Yangon – Burma's largest city and former capital, also known as Rangoon – and relief professionals are in a small village called Tar Tipe, which is a four-hour boat ride down the river from Yangon.

IsraAID has already shipped 10 tons of relief supplies, including food, water, mattresses, buckets and clothes to distribute to the survivors.

Zahavi said that many who were left homeless fled from the Delta region to the outskirts of Yangon and built makeshift refugee camps. IsraAID volunteers were able to reach them to distribute basic supplies to them as well.

Continued on page 35

This villager from Tar Tite, who found refuge in the local monastery after her home was destroyed by Cyclone Nagris, leaves with basic supplies provided by IsraAID. Inset, locals and IsraAID volunteers load the boat that takes them to remote affected areas with relief items.

[Photos courtesy of IsraAID]

Father, daughter co-authors win book award

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Eight books and their authors were honoured with awards last week at the 20th annual Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards.

The awards ceremony attracted some 350 people to the Leah Posluns Theatre in Toronto for an evening of shmoozing and celebration of literary talent hosted by the Koffler Centre of the Arts.

Top fiction prize went to Toronto writer John Miller for his second novel, *A Sharp Intake of Breath* (Dundurn), which focuses on characters in a left-wing Jewish family in Toronto in the 1930s, one of whom goes to jail for stealing a diamond, another of whom is a friend of the radical Emma Goldman.

"I've loved these characters so much, and I'm thrilled that you seem moved by this story," Miller told jury members in accepting the award.

Anna Porter

The novel won out over Nancy Huston's *Fault Lines*, a tale of Holocaust survival that has been a best-seller in its original French in France and was nominated for that country's Prix Goncourt, as well as Britain's prestigious Orange Prize. Huston, a Canadian who lives in France, won a previous Canadian Jewish Book Award in fiction for her 1998 novel, *The Mark of the Angel*.

As in past years, the awards committee received more than 100 submissions. While the jury has been expanded by several members, the number of prize categories has been reduced to eight from the 10 or 11 awards that were often given in previous years.

Anna Porter, recipient of a recent Rogers Writers' Trust Non-fiction Prize, won the history prize for *Kasztner's Train: The True Story of Rezso Kasztner, Unknown Hero of the Holocaust* (Douglas & McIntyre). The award came as "a huge surprise – I wasn't expecting it," Porter told *The CJN*.

Continued on page 46

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U.S. presidential nominees address AIPAC — see page 38

The News in Brief

CANADA

JNF Award Protested

LONDON, Ont. — Some 100 people demonstrated outside a June 1 Jewish National Fund Negev Dinner honouring the president of the University of Western Ontario. The Canadian Arab Federation, the Palestinian Arab Society of London and the Canadian Arab Society of London protested Paul Davenport's acceptance of the honour and JNF's land policies, the *London Free Press* reported.

Student Income Boost

MONTREAL — Montreal philanthropist Marcel Adams, founder of Iberville Developments, said last month that he will supplement the income of 10 Israeli student scientists funded in U.S. dollars by his Adams Family Foundation, in order to offset the 20 per cent rise in the shekel's value against the greenback. Adams, an 88-year-old Holocaust survivor, announced the one-time gift in Israel at a meeting of Adams Fellows last month, the *Jerusalem Post* reported.

Lawyers Honoured

TORONTO — Jewish lawyers make up more than half of the 10 winners of the Law Society of Upper Canada's 2008 awards. Earl Cherniak, Sidney Troister, Audrey Loeb and Clifford Lax of Toronto, and Abraham Feinstein of Ottawa received the Law Society Medal, the group's highest honour, on June 5. Toronto's Morley Wolfe, a former president of B'nai Brith Canada, won the Lincoln Alexander Award, named for the former Ontario lieutenant-governor and given for outstanding public service.

WORLD

Court Denies Appeal

PITTSBURGH — The Pennsylvania Supreme Court declined to hear the appeal of the man who killed Canadian rabbinical student Neal Rosenblum, 25, in Pittsburgh in 1986. Steven Tielsch was convicted in 2002 of third-degree murder and is serving 10 to 20 years in jail. Three juries were deadlocked in the case, and Tielsch was convicted after a fourth trial. Prosecutors said Rosenblum, a Torontonian, was shot because he looked Jewish.

Rabbi Turns Self In

SAO PAULO — An Israeli rabbi who fled to Brazil amid child-abuse allegations will likely be extradited for trial. Israeli police said they have asked Brazil to extradite Rabbi Elior Chen, 29, who surrendered to police in Sao Paulo last week. Israel issued an international arrest warrant for the rabbi, who allegedly counselled followers to beat and burn children to rid them of the devil. Some of the abuses caused life-threatening injuries. Rabbi Chen was previously said to be hiding in Canada.

Mistrial Declared

SEATTLE — A mistrial was declared June 4 in the case of the Seattle Jewish federation gunman. The jury wrestled with whether Naveed Haq, 32, was not guilty by reason of insanity when he stormed the federation in July 2006 and shot six employees, killing one woman. During deliberations, the jurors asked the judge to clarify the legal definition of insanity. The judge said she couldn't give them more help. Haq, who has a history of mental problems, had said he wanted to send a message about Israel and the Iraq war. Prosecutors said he planned the shooting carefully and knew right from wrong. They said they plan to retry the case this year.

Charges 'A Lie,' Agriprocessors Owner Says

NEW YORK — Aaron Rubashkin, owner of the embattled slaughterhouse Agriprocessors, America's largest kosher meat plant, denies he has engaged in unethical labour practices and blames the failure of U.S. immigration policy for his mostly illegal workforce.

In the first substantive comments by a company representative since U.S. authorities rounded up more than one-third of its employees on immigration charges in a May 12 raid on its Iowa plant, Rubashkin flatly denied allegations of worker mistreatment and plant mismanagement.

"Everything is a lie," Rubashkin, 80, told JTA in an interview May 30 outside his Brooklyn butcher shop.

The firm sells meat under labels such as Aaron's Best and Rubashkin's. No criminal charges have been laid, and most of the accusations are unproven. But nearly 300 ex-employees have pleaded guilty to various forms of fraud involving fake work documents and face deportation.

Meanwhile, several prominent Jews signed a boycott threat against the company. Rabbi Shlomo Riskin, Ruth Messinger and Rabbi Avi Weiss are among 1,000 people who signed a petition organized by a group of students at the liberal Orthodox seminary Yeshivat Chovevei Torah in New York. The group says the firm must comply with the labour requirements of both Jewish and secular law or it will begin a boycott on June 15. The Orthodox Union has also said it will withdraw its hechsher if criminal charges are laid.

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Hillel Community Day School in Rochester, New York (www.hillelschool.org) offers attractive opportunities for qualified Jewish Studies teachers interested in working in a dynamic Jewish educational environment in Rochester, New York, a community with high quality of life and attractive, affordable housing. For the 2008-2009 academic year, immediate staff openings are available in Grades 1 and 2. Hillel School has been implementing the Tal-am program and employment at the school would include training opportunities with these materials. Hillel School is also actively developing an integrated curriculum through collaboration and, at some grade levels, co-teaching by Judaic and General studies teachers.

For additional information please contact Principal, Rabbi Chaim Hisiger, principal@hillelschool.org, tel. 585-271-6877

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Canada joins Israel in discussing terror threat

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Canada joined eight other western nations in Israel recently in a forum to discuss the international terrorism threat.

In an address to the First International Security Conference, held May 28 to 30 in Jerusalem, Canadian Ambassador John Allen called for "co-operation and co-ordination" to address an "ongoing threat."

John Allen

"We live in a time when terrorists see the whole world as their field of action, and so must we. Because they enjoy global reach, we need unparalleled co-operation. Because they often operate at a sub-state level, we must adopt a transnational approach ourselves," Allen said.

The conference, held in Jerusalem, brought together interior ministers and officials involved with internal security to "promote and strengthen the co-operation between the countries and to share the knowledge, capabilities and experience accumulated among the countries during their war against terror while facing other homeland security challenges," organizers said.

Joining Canada and the host Israelis were representatives from the United States, Germany, England, Italy, Spain and Poland.

Addressing the forum, Allen noted that Canada has signed a declaration of intent "to enhance co-operation between Israel and Canada in the area of public safety. This declaration will allow us to improve our combined efforts in the areas of organized crime, emergency management, crime prevention and other related public safety concerns.

"This declaration seeks to establish a more structured framework for the continued co-operation on public safety issues between Canada and Israel, and we look forward to building on it in the days ahead," the ambassador added.

Referring to previous terror attacks and conspiracies in New York, Barcelona and Montreal, Allen said "new intelligence reveals plans for other attacks, in different parts of the globe. We do not doubt for a moment the determination of our enemies, nor do we misinterpret any period of calm as the end of their designs. The fact is that the danger has not passed and we must be vigilant."

> ***'Terrorist groups have no strategic plan. They simply execute an attack as soon as capability and opportunity meet'***

Conference host Avi Dichter, Israel's minister of public security, said "the past five years of the first decade of the 21st century were probably the most lethal years in the history of terror." He pointed to the 9/11 attacks that killed 3,000 people in New York City and Washington, and to other deadly incidents in Madrid, Bali and London, as well as to the 900 Israelis killed during the first three years of the intifadah as examples.

"I have learned that terrorist groups have no strategic plan. They simply execute an attack as soon as capability and opportunity meet," Dichter said.

Dichter accused Syria of hosting and sheltering terrorist command centres of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and he said the current peace initiative is "undoubtedly a strategic process on a global scale" designed to draw Syria closer to the western world.

The main terrorist threat emanates from Iran, he continued. Its regime uses terrorist organizations "to execute attacks in countries all over the world, including here in Israel. Striking Iran as a country of terror is a global necessity. Whether it is because of their development of nuclear weapons or whether it is because of their spearheading world terrorism, we are currently at a crucial and dangerous stage."

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Into the eerie through Cabaret

There are no subtleties in *Cabaret*, the well-known musical now playing at the Stratford Festival. There couldn't be. The story is too harsh. Nor should there be if the music, lyrics and dance are to adequately convey the sinister spectacle of that brassy, brutal society. The very opening scene – seedy, stark – punches the audience into silence.

We enter the world of the hedonist, where life is lived hard and indulgently, where morals and morality do not exist, except perhaps as an academic concern in the classroom.

From the editor's desk

The story depicts life in Berlin as the 1920s were giving way to the '30s. German society was in the throes of the Versailles Treaty convulsion. The masses suffered from biting poverty; the elites were self-serving sybarites. An undercurrent of unrest was steadily growing and would soon destroy decency and goodness in its powerful undertow.

To portray this turbulent world, the author, Joe Masteroff, and playwright John Van Druten create the Kit Kat Klub, the cloudy mirror that reflects back to the audience the disturbed light of Berlin society at that time.

Into the club and its environs they bring a handful of key characters who embody that society.

The quality of the music and dancing is superb. Some of the music suggests the obvious and appropriate influence of Kurt Weill. The ensemble numbers are loud, brash and overwhelmingly eye-popping in costume and energy.

Many of the actors deserve high praise for their performances.

The endomorphic Bruce Dow sporting an anti-establishment mohawk haircut is superb as the ubiquitous narrator. He is an exemplar of the decadent amorality that suffuses life in the Kit Kat Klub. Though decadent, he is not vile; he rejects the villainy that encroaches upon the stage and soon overtakes the streets outside the Klub. When he is not stitching together the pieces of the story, he sits in the shadows, observing the decay of decency slowly unfolding on stage.

Dow brings just the right amount of irreverence and scorn to the role.

Trish Lindström is excellent as Sally Bowles. Loose and lascivious permeate her portrayal of the songstress and seductress.

She combines edginess and in-your-face impudence with high-energy singing and dancing. She delivers the play's signature song, *Cabaret*, with strength and confidence. Reflecting her own doubts over the path she has chosen, she begins the song tentatively, hesitantly. Then, her resignation evident and complete, she picks up the pace and the emotion, and finishes with the flourish for which the song is famous.

Nora McLellan as Fraulein Schneider, the equivocating "ordinary" German who closes her eyes to the ever deepening descent into moral chaos, is always a presence on stage. "One does what one must," becomes her personal anthem. At a late point in the play at the crescendo of the song *What Would You Do?*, she holds up her hands in perplexity, as if surrendering. In fact, of course, she does surrender her morals, her individuality and probably her chance for true happiness. "In the end," she asks, "what other choice have I?" The question is posed to us all.

Her chance at love appears in the character of Mr. Schultz, played warmly and elegantly by Frank Moore.

He brings weight and believability to the role. He is the paradigm of self-delusion, assuming the equanimity of the rule of law even though thugs and bullies and murderers control the instruments of state.

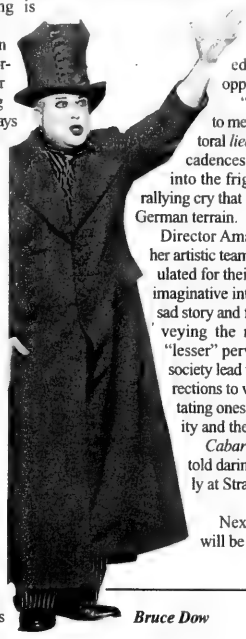
"Are we too old for words like love?" he asks innocently, and so sincerely. But he misses the point and thus misphrases the question. "Are we too doomed [German society] for words of love?" he should have asked.

In the end, he is always generous to others, but never to himself.

Cory O'Brien effectively portrays the unctuous but dark, duplicitous Nazi.

The first act slams shut and jars us to the point where we fear what comes next.

The action in Act II moves quickly and ominously. The dance line announces that the world has changed. The Nazis have arrived and are asserting their eerie control. The politics of evil arises like ugly, frightening gargoyles thrust suddenly in one's face. The mob is easily manipulated. Only a very few oppose or resist.



Bruce Dow

"Tomorrow belongs to me," the innocent pastoral *lied* begins with quiet cadences, but it transforms into the frightening beer hall rallying cry that thunders across all German terrain.

Director Amanda Dehnert and her artistic team are to be congratulated for their bold, aggressive, imaginative interpretation of this sad story and for effectively conveying the message that the "lesser" perversions of Berlin society lead ultimately in all directions to wider, more devastating ones of politics, morality and the soul.

Cabaret is a chilling tale told daringly and masterfully at Stratford.

* * *

Next week's column will be written in Israel.

–MBD

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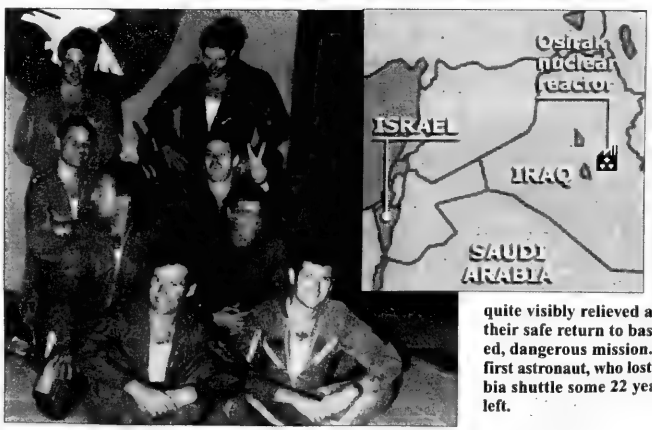


IRAQI REACTOR DESTROYED

On the order of then-prime minister Menachem Begin, Israeli jets destroyed the Iraqi nuclear reactor near Baghdad on June 7, 1981, just before it was to become operational. The crew that carried out the mission is quite visibly relieved at their success and at their safe return to base from the complicated, dangerous mission. Ilan Ramon, Israel's first astronaut, who lost his life on the Columbia shuttle some 22 years later, is at the top left. [IGPO photo]

Elie Wiesel honoured by Heschel school

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Fanaticism can never be an option when confronting other societies, Elie Wiesel told a Toronto Heschel School gala last week.

"It's up to you to make the world better. And in so doing, you are helping God," the renowned Nobel laureate, Holocaust survivor and human rights advocate told the more than 700 people who converged on the Direct Energy Centre June 2 to hear his words.

"When you study the Bible, not a single character is absolute. They all have shortcomings. It's human to fail. But it's crucial to learn from that failure," he said.

Wiesel was in town at the invitation of the Toronto Heschel School – founded on the humanitarian teachings and philosophy of the late Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel – to receive the first annual Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel Humanitarian Award.

The school's inaugural award gala raised more than $600,000 to help the school train teachers, create scholarships and enhance educational programs, organizers said.

Ticket prices ranged from $180 for general admission to $54,000 for a block of 16 tickets. The latter included a private, pre-ceremony dinner with Wiesel.

A silent auction was also held.

Prior to his speech, organizers surprised Wiesel by playing a pre-recorded greeting from Rabbi Heschel's daughter, Susannah Heschel, who is a professor of Jewish studies at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire.

Prof. Heschel recalled the long, deep friendship shared by her father and Wiesel.

"On Shabbat afternoons, they would walk together… and discuss the state of Jews in the Soviet Union," she said. "My father took great joy in his friendship with Elie."

By way of introduction, Gail Baker, Toronto Heschel School's principal and co-founder, praised Wiesel as a man "who has taught us to not give up on life and not give into despair."

She added that her school "strives to honour" Wiesel's teachings and that her students learn that "it's not a choice to stand up to injustice, it's a commandment."

Baker then turned to Wiesel and said, "Prof. Wiesel, I can assure you that in our school, the term 'Never again' will not become just another slogan." She then invited him to take the stage.

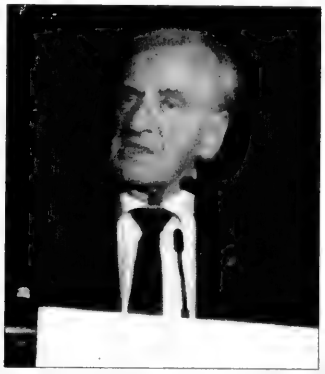
A visibly moved Wiesel took the podium, cupping his hands together in front of his mouth while taking in the applause from the appreciative audience.

"Every Shabbat, I would walk and discuss everything under the sun with Rabbi Heschel. We understood each other so well," recalled Wiesel, the winner of the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize and a humanities professor at Boston University.

Wiesel then spoke about an encounter he had with the Dalai Lama years ago and told of how he offered the pacifist leader advice on how to ensure that Tibetans survived their struggle by comparing them with the Jewish people.

"I told him the art of survival starts with the passion for learning," Wiesel said, noting that the Jews only took their Bible with them into exile and nothing else of value.

He exhorted the staff of the Toronto Heschel School to ensure that their students' "passion for learning" is always kindled.



Elie Wiesel addresses the audience at the First Annual Abraham Joshua Heschel Award ceremony.
[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

"The relationship between teacher and pupil is sacred. The pupil is there to receive, the teacher to give. Together, they achieve the miracle of eternity. Words not forgotten," Wiesel said.

In a moment of levity, Wiesel spoke about how he became disenchanted with his philosophical pursuits.

"I studied philosophy because of the questions. I left because of the answers," he quipped to the crowd.

But existential questions always remained, ones that he and Rabbi Heschel would debate ad nauseum, he remembered.

"Is man God's mistake? His victim? His prisoner? We didn't have an answer," Wiesel opined. "So we sang Yiddish songs. And the song is the answer."

In his closing remarks, Wiesel said he hopes that all the students at the Toronto Heschel School will remember their heritage.

"Say to yourselves: the memory of my people is in my memory. As long as my memory lives, my people exist as a spark and a fire. And as long as my memory lives, that fire will never be extinguished."

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An Assortment of Brownies, Cookies, Tarts and Squares

Seasonal Fresh Fruit and Berry Platter

$17.95 per guest

Sample Dairy Dinner Menu

Raisin or Plain Challah

Butternut Squash Soup

Baby Spinach Salad with Candied Pecans and Pear

Edamame Salad with Charred Corn & Water Chestnuts in a Cilantro Sesame Dressing

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Greater Toronto Area

Chassidic musicians fundraise for Safed

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

For more than 500 years, the Holy City of Tsfat (Safed) in the Galilee was the home of Jewish scholars, mystics and spiritual leaders.

Several earthquakes left the city in ruins in the middle of the last century. It was said that the city could not be rebuilt to its former grandeur, however, Breslev Rabbi Gedaliah Kenig received a directive from his teacher, Rabbi Avraham Sternhartz, who was then the leader of the Breslev chassidic community in Jerusalem, to undertake the task of rebuilding Tsfat.

Rabbi Kenig accepted the mission and worked tirelessly on it. When he died, he passed on the task to his three sons, who have continued in their father's footsteps.

Tsfat is once again a vibrant area. Located there are the non-profit institutions of Nachal Novea Mekor Chochma, founded in 1967, which include the Great Breslev Synagogue, a kolel, a mikvah and a nursery.

Rabbi Aharon Carmi, a member of the Nachal Novea Mekor Chochma's board of directors and the gabbai for Rabbi Elazar Mordechai Kenig, the community's spiritual leader, was in Toronto recently to prepare for a fundraising concert.

Welcome To Tsfat, featuring the group Simply Tsfat, will be held on June 17, at the Eglinton Grand, 400 Eglinton Ave. W. at 8 p.m.

"Simply Tsfat is a trio of talented chassidic Israeli musicians. In concert, they merge heaven and earth through music and stories," Rabbi Carmi said.

"The aim of the group is to spread the joy and inspiration of Judaism and to bring a breath of fresh air from the mystical city of Tsfat, the home of Kabbalah."

Nachal Novea Mekor Chochma's mission since 1967 has been to provide social and educational assistance to families in need.

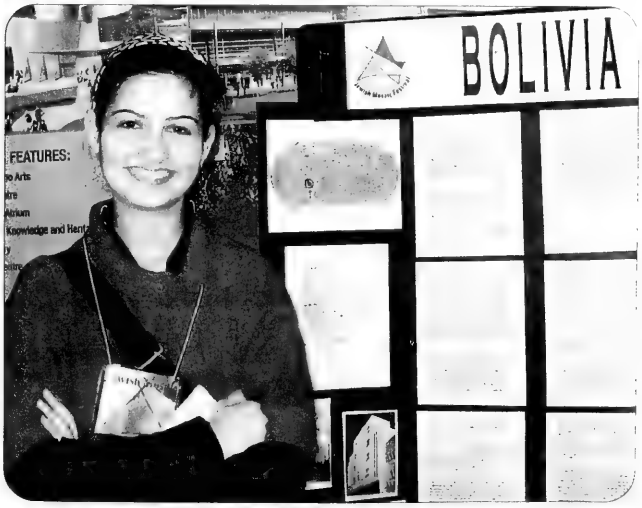
"We provide weekly food distribution to more than 200 families in need," Rabbi Carmi said. "A special project, Eat Well, Learn Well, was established to help children from underprivileged families to escape the hunger situation at home and to provide them with a hot, nutritious meal. We serve up to 400 children daily at our newly decorated soup kitchen."

The community offers many educational programs, including one that helps those with learning disabilities.

Because of the Second Lebanon War of 2006, the poverty in the city has worsened, Rabbi Carmi said. "Many visitors have stopped coming to Tsfat, therefore everyone's income is down. Some people are in such need that they rent out their homes and move in with others to get some money."

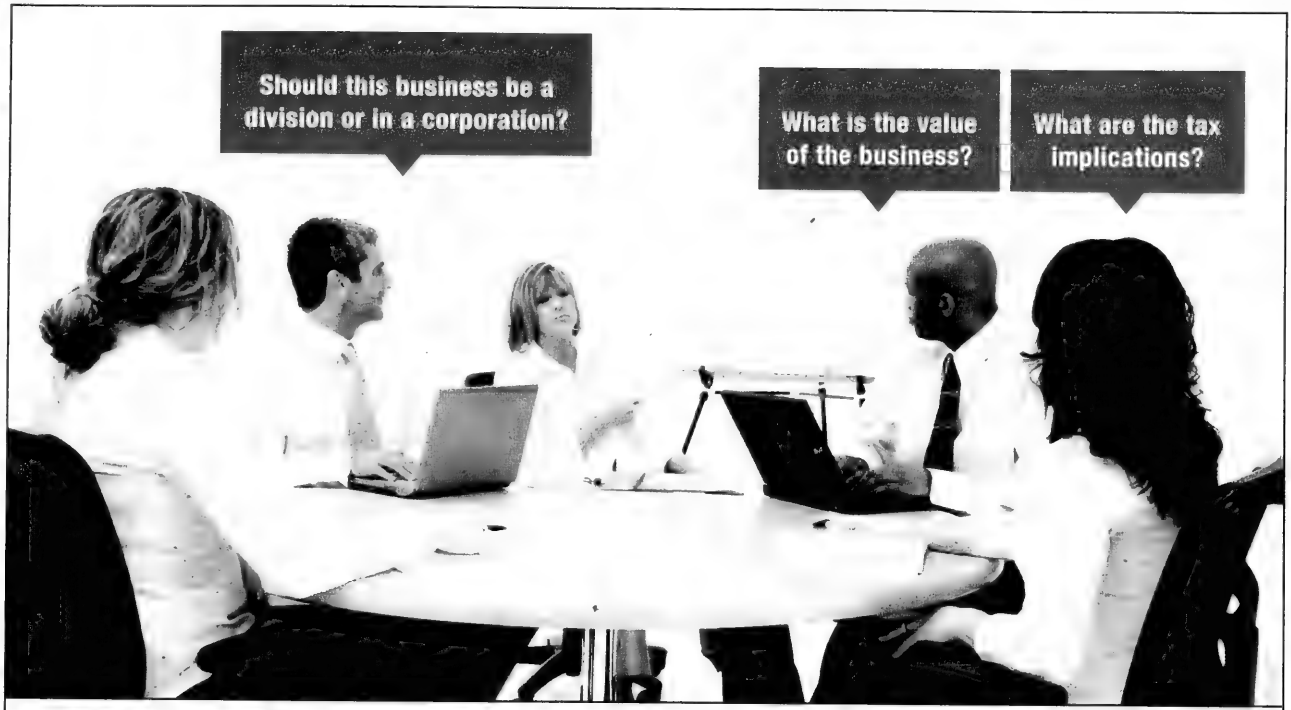
Nachal Novea Mekor Chochma has created a foundation to help and support needy families in the city.

To order tickets for the concert or for information,e-mail concertreservations@gmail.com; call Deena, 416-887-3779; fax 416-783-8141; or write to 208 Carmichael Ave., Toronto, Ont., M5M 2X3.



MOSAIC FESTIVAL: The second annual Mosaic Festival, held last week at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, highlighted multiculturalism within the Jewish community. Countries represented included Argentina, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, China, Ethiopia, India, Peru, Tunisia, Uruguay, Yemen, and Iran.

[Carolyn Blackman photo]



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Clocks are ticking

Like small stones that fall of their own accord down a large hill, discrete events have a way of gaining their own momentum and crash landing with a thudding, far-reaching impact. This is the image evoked by a confluence of unrelated events that occurred last week. Ominously, all of them relate to Iran.

On the eve of his departure for Rome, where he attended the world food summit of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad once again fulminated against the Jewish state.

In a speech to foreign guests at an event marking the anniversary of the death of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, the Iranian leader attacked Israel and the United States. "You should know that the criminal and terrorist Zionist regime, which has 60 years of plundering, aggression and crimes in its file, has reached the end of its work and will soon disappear off the geographical scene," Iran's official IRNA news agency quoted Ahmadinejad as saying.

Ahmadinejad's apologists will simply dismiss his comments as more wild, empty rhetoric, merely mischievous, wishful thinking. But the language is transparent and the threats are real.

Later in the week, the U.S. director of national intelligence, Mike McConnell, flew to Tel Aviv to discuss Iran's nuclear program. He met with his counterpart in the Israeli intelligence community and with Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak.

On Wednesday, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert held a private meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush to discuss, among other pressing subjects, Iran. "Naturally the Iranian issue was central to our talks, and our shared point of departure is the need to deal with Iran before it manages to acquire non-conventional capabilities," Olmert told reporters. Olmert added that, as a result of his meeting with Bush, there were fewer question marks between the two allies concerning the means, the time constraints and the level of American determination in dealing with the Iranian nuclear program.

The "level of American determination" is really a euphemism for the extent to which Bush is personally resolved to upgrade the steps to be taken against the Iranian regime, if not the Iranian nuclear program, before his term of office expires in six months. That "level" may have reached higher in light of the strong statements on behalf of Israel's security by presidential candidates John McCain and Barack Obama. "I will do everything in my power to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. Everything," Obama, the candidate considered the more dovish of the two, told the American Israel Public Affairs Committee gathering.

Whether the Europeans, Russians and Chinese share the American level of determination in dealing with the Iranian nuclear program will be a critical factor in deciding the next steps to be taken against Tehran. Alas, it is unlikely that they do. But various clocks are ticking, and the inevitable hour for decision is not far off. Events are unfolding, thundering down the hill. We await the impact of their landing.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Robert Stanley, president of Howell Transport Canada, a major trucking firm, apologized for a letter he sent to other transport companies suggesting that certain Jewish-owned toy stores had cheated on weights and measures. He also donated $1,000 each to six Jewish charities in Toronto and Montreal.

Editorial Advisory Board: **Guy Aboodi, Michael Brown, Donald Carr, Gal Corfas, Igor Korenzvit, Rabbi John Moscowitz, Lou Rouson, Alan Sandler, Rabbi Philip Scheim, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Ehud Telem , Rabbi Reuven Tradburks, Nelson Wiseman.**

Hezbollah's mindset

The profound difference for the respect of the rule of law was illustrated this month when Israel handed over convicted Hezbollah spy Nassim Nasser after he had completed his prison sentence ("Israeli soldiers' remains released," *CJN*, June 5). Hezbollah, as a part of the Lebanese government, ignores its commitment to allow the Red Cross to interview and ascertain the well-being of prisoners. Israel Defence Forces soldiers Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, if they are still alive, have not been afforded their rights under international law to be visited by the Red Cross.

The gruesome delivery of the remains of what are claimed to be Israeli soldiers is simply another illustration of Hezbollah's inhumane attitude toward Jews, dead or alive.

Islam professes that bodies of the deceased must be handled with dignity. To have kept the body parts of Israeli soldiers in the hope of achieving some exchange advantage is another despicable example of the mindset of Hezbollah.

Bert Raphael
Toronto

* * *

Birth of a new stream of Judaism

Rabbi Martin Lockshin's article "Modern Orthodoxy decides to fight back" (*CJN* Perspectives, May 15) has many historical precedents. A group of rabbis is upset with the extremism of the main body and sets up a group within the mainstream. It is is eventually rebuffed and expelled by an intransigent establishment. It then grows to be a legitimate branch of Judaism in its own right. This is the exact history of how Chassidism broke from traditional Judaism; Reform broke from traditional Judaism; Conservative Judaism broke from Reform Judaism; and Reconstructionist Judaism from Conservative Judaism.

The historical evidence shows we are witnessing the birth of another and important, legitimate and independent stream of Judaism, modern Orthodoxy. Despite the protestations by these rabbis that they seek, above all, to avoid a split, they will not avoid it. It is not in their hands – it is the hands of the intransigent haredim, and all the evidence and history point toward one inevitable outcome.

Eric Mendelsohn
Toronto

* * *

Nero fiddled while Rome burned

We know full well that in a matter of months, Jerusalem could, God forfend, be divided again. Everyone knows about it, and yet we read and hear little about it. If there is any opposition to such a horrible, unimaginable eventuality, it is almost completely muted. We cannot ignore the fact that it is our leaders who are among the perpetrators of this travesty to God, Israel and the Jewish People.

Let us not emulate the emperor Nero who fiddled while Rome burned. Instead, let us make it known that we, each and every one of us who cares, will never accept the division of Jerusalem. Period.

Pesach Nussbaum
Montreal

* * *

Abuses at slaughterhouse a wake-up call

The many recent abuses of people, animals and the environment at the Agriprocessors' Postville, Iowa, kosher slaughterhouse should be a wake-up call to the need to consider many issues related to animal-based diets ("Embattled slaughterhouse seeks new CEO," *CJN*, June 5). It is essential that we consider that such diets are contributing significantly to: • an epidemic of heart disease, several forms of cancer and other diseases;

• global climate change, since, according to a 2006 UN report, animal-based agriculture emits more greenhouse gases (in CO_2 equivalents) than all the cars and other means of transportation worldwide combined (18 per cent vs. 13.5 per cent);

• widespread hunger, since over 70 per cent of the grain produced in the United States and more than 40 per cent produced worldwide are fed to farmed animals;

• increasing water and energy scarcities, since animal-based diets require up to 14 times as much water and 10 times as much energy as vegan (all-plant) diets.

And, the consumption of animal products is projected to double in 50 years, making the situation even worse. Hence, a major shift toward plant-based diets is essential to move our precious, but imperilled, planet to a sustainable path.

Richard H. Schwartz
Staten Island, N.Y.

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Schalit

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Israeli firms seek out alternative energy

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

At a lab in Rehovot, Israel, the man who developed the Arrow missile is consumed with his next mission: making Israel energy independent by using cheap solar power.

"The issue of energy is the greatest danger to Israel because in 30 years there will be no energy means, no oil and no gas, and the use of coal will be prohibited," said Dov Raviv, now the CEO of MST, an Israeli renewable energy company. "Without energy, Israel cannot survive, and we must find a substitute and find it fast. That is what I am trying to do."

Raviv's company is working to reduce the high price of solar power, which is not yet competitive with the price of conventional energy sources like oil, by more efficiently harnessing solar energy through a method of concentrating sunlight on a matrix of single solar cells.

MST is one of dozens of alternative energy startups across Israel seeking solutions to the global energy crisis.

Among the innovations under development are a gear system that dramatically boosts the efficiency of wind turbines, a device that would reduce gas emissions from trucks; the generation of bio-fuels from desert plants; and various techniques to generate energy from unlikely sources, including seaweed and sewage water.

Entrepreneurs say Israeli solutions can help not only Israel but the world.

"Israel has the minds, the R&D [research and development], the technology and the entrepreneurship, but we are lagging behind in terms of actual deployment," said David Schwartz, the chairman of MyPlanet, an Israeli consortium of companies involved in energy and security issues. "This is impeding reaching our full potential as a source of alternative energy for the world."

Israel's leadership in the development of alternative energy also can have security benefits. If the world is weaned from its overwhelming dependence on oil, the oil-rich autocratic regimes that surround the Jewish state, including Iran, will have less oil revenue to pay for their anti-Israel activities – whether the development of nuclear weapons or the funding of fundamentalist terrorist groups.

During a recent visit to Israel to accept the $1 million Dan David Award for promoting environmental awareness, former U.S. vice-president and environmental activist Al Gore asked a question many Israelis have been pondering themselves: "How is it here, in the land of the sun, there is no widespread use of solar energy?"

Alternative energy is "good for the Jews," Gore told a conference on the subject at Tel Aviv University.

Industry observers say more aggressive government policies, such as underwriting renewable energy initiatives and granting more land for power plants, are needed to bolster the development of alternative energy.

"Europe and the U.S. have made incredible strides," Schwartz said. "Israel has not."

Meanwhile, Israel has an energy shortage looming. Israel's supply capacity is 10,600 megawatts per day, and the country has come dangerously close to exceeding that demand on especially hot and cold days.

With limited energy reserves to accommodate for surges, and as the country's population and energy use grows, the problem is becoming more acute.

Former U. S. vice-president Al Gore spoke at Tel Aviv University recently when he received the Dan David Award for promoting environmental awareness. [Isranet photo]

Amnon Shpira, the head of Israel's public utility authority, told JTA that plans are under way to launch deliberate rolling brownouts this summer among certain industries at peak times to deal with the problem.

Other short-term strategies include encouraging Israelis to scale back their electricity use, limiting the use of large appliances on certain days and setting their air conditioner thermostats at higher temperatures.

The head of the Israel Energy Forum, Yael Cohen-Paran, says some relatively simple measures could significantly reduce the load on the energy grid: cash rebates for those who purchase energy-efficient air conditioning and heating units, and government encouragement of energy-saving building practices.

The long-term solution, however, may require more of a shift.

At the Tel Aviv energy conference, Israel's infrastructure minister, Benjamin Ben-Eliezer, responded to criticism of government policy on the issue by announcing a commitment to increase the share of such energies to 15 to 20 per cent of Israel's total energy use by 2020, double that of previous targets.

He also pledged to adopt a plan to build one new solar station per year for the next 20 years and introduce a bill to make the Negev Desert and southern Israel a "national preference region" for renewable energies. Tax breaks and other incentives would be part of the package.

Turning Israel into a centre for clean technology could build new bridges between Israel and Diaspora Jews, says Jonathan Shapira, a recent American law school graduate living in Tel Aviv who organizes monthly meetings for entrepreneurs interested in clean tech and writes a blog on the subject.

As an example, Shapira cited the business park for renewable energy firms being built in the Arava, with funding from Toronto's Jewish community.

"Rather than just making a charitable donation, people are helping create the infrastructure for economic growth and a cleaner environment in Israel," Shapira said.

Yossi Abramowitz, the president of Arava Power, wants to install 62,500 solar panels by year's end on the sun-drenched sands of Israel's deserts. He says his company has found investors to pay for solar power stations that would be capable of supplying up to 500 megawatts of electricity for the country – nearly five per cent of Israel's daily energy needs during daylight hours.

The project relies on the use of photovoltaics, or PV, a relatively expensive technology that uses a fraction of the silicon used in conventional solar panels to convert sunlight-generated photons into energy.

But for this energy to be competitive on the open market, the government needs to double its current rate of subsidy, Abramowitz says, bringing Israel more in line with the levels of subsidy in countries such as Germany and Spain.

Funding for Abramowitz's project is also conditional upon the government promising a 20-year subsidy for the solar power, known as a feed-in tariff. Israel's public utility authority is scheduled to vote on the matter soon.

"While there is great innovation and technology in solar energy, there is zero commercial solar energy being generated today," Abramowitz said.

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev announced a new deal last week with the Israeli startup Zenith Solar to license solar energy technology developed by its researchers that could revolutionize the way solar power is collected and drastically reduce its price.

The new method, a form of "concentrated PV," would use fewer of the expensive silicon solar cells to create energy. Instead it would use low-cost glass mirrors to collect sunlight and then focus it onto a relatively small amount of those solar cells to generate power.

"We can envision systems of $1 per kilowatt for the entire system, which is the kind of costs that conventional fossil fuel costs before you start figuring in the costs of fuel they have to burn," said David Faiman, the chairman of the university's solar energy and environmental physics department and director of the National Solar Energy Center.

The Israeli founder of an algae fuel company called GreenFuel, Isaac Berzin, who was named by *Time* magazine as one of its Top 100 people in the world for 2008, says Israel is too small of a country to keep such technology to itself.

"Israel should be a catalyst for change," Berzin said. "Israel is a very small market, a very small place in the middle of nowhere, but it has here what it takes in terms of technology, the know-how to change the world."

Opinions

Their misleading narrative

As Israel celebrates the 60th anniversary of its restoration, its Arab adversaries again lament its founding, mourning, as they do annually at this time, their "nakba," their "catastrophe."

Their lexicon of manipulation, exaggeration, and inversion of historical facts – all geared towards a denial of Israel's legitimacy – continues to find traction the world over. However, this year, perhaps much more so than before, the notion of Palestinian "dispossession," as a devious and premeditated Zionist plot, has been gaining momentum.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

Take a peek at websites such as "Al-Awda, The Palestinian Right to Return Coalition" (www.al-awda.org). There you will see accounts of the Palestinian refugee predicament that underscore the distortions that Israel's Arab enemies have so zealously promoted – and that the gullible, the uninformed, and the declared anti-Zionists in the West and elsewhere, are so ready to accept.

According to such sources, Palestinian refugees are seen as "the indigenous inhabitants of Palestine"; Jewish militias "terrorized the Palestinian street, destroyed villages and slaughtered entire Palestinian families [in 1948]"; the Palestinian refugee problem occurred because of "a systematic policy of ethnic cleansing," and "dispossession and expulsion continued with the 1967 war, which Israel launched on its Arab neighbours and which resulted in the occupation of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank."

In fact, the Palestinians have very little evidence to back up their claim that they are the "indigenous inhabitants of Palestine." The history of the region, spanning some 5,000 years, is highly complex. It is one of conquest and further conquest with, from time to time, the Canaanites, Jews, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Byzantines, Christian crusaders, Turks, and Mamluks, among others, all asserting their sovereignty over the tiny slice of land where Israel is today. Amid all of this, Arabs ruled the area for only a relatively short period, from 638 until their defeat by the Crusaders in 1099.

Also, the accusation that the nascent Jewish state embarked on a declared policy of ridding the region of Arabs in 1948 has been credibly refuted again and again. And as to the charge that Israel started the wars against surrounding Arab nations, either in 1948 or 1967, this, too, is a flagrant misrepresentation of the historical record. On the contrary, by taking up arms in their efforts to destroy the Jewish state – rather than embracing the many peace initiatives that would have assured them of their own state – the Arabs accepted what has been termed by essayist Lawrence Auster as the "verdict of arms."

Fortunately for Israel, they lost that verdict in 1948 and then again in 1967. So, were it not for the intransigence of their leaders over the past 60 years, the outcome would have been vastly different – and so much better for all, both Palestinians and Israelis.

A genealogy project leads to fascinating find

I've been interested in my roots since childhood, but I recently renewed my ongoing interest because my daughter, Naomi, has had a year-long Grade 7 project on the topic. The journey has been enriching for both Naomi and for the whole family. We discovered much about our history and that of the assorted communities from which our ancestors came.

Yair Lootsteen in Jerusalem

Naomi is the progeny of a rich blend of different cultures and traditions, from East and from West, with grandparents from Poland, India, England and Holland, each with a unique mélange of ancestries.

She spent hours interviewing older family members, gathering historical facts and fascinating anecdotes, some of which were not previously known. Relatives willingly provided stories and information about their branches of the family, eager to help and to be part of the project.

The Internet has been central. We found archives, articles, stories and other materials about the places our forefathers had come from. Through it, we also found lost relatives. It helped us to build a family tree of more than 500 people.

While reams could be written about each of Naomi's grandparents and their pasts, one discovery we made while investigating my father's family history was particularly moving.

The decimation of Holland's Jewry in the Holocaust was immense. Of the 140,000 people registered as Jews with the Germans, 107,000 were deported and only 5,500 returned.

While researching the topic, we compiled a Lootsteen family tree going back eight generations. The story it tells is chilling. The Germans and the Dutch were pedantic about details. Precise deportation records exist, including for dozens of Lootsteens. For instance, my great-grandmother, Mietje Lootsteen, was deported to Auschwitz and murdered there on Sept. 21, 1942. Her son, Mozes (my grandfather's brother) met a similar fate on Jan. 31, 1943, as did his wife, Margareet, and their 14-year-old daughter, Mary, on Oct. 12, 1942.

Miraculously, my father's nuclear family survived, in no small measure because of my grandmother's bravery and her connections with the underground, and because my grandfather boldly removed the infamous yellow Star of David from his clothing.

At war's end, my grandparents knew of only five living Lootsteens – the four in their immediate family and one cousin. I grew up knowing there were no other Lootsteens in the world.

But researching the family tree, we discovered that one branch had apparently not been completely severed. While there were death dates for nearly all the Lootsteens, there wasn't one for a woman named Carla. If alive, she'd be my father's second cousin. I scoured the Internet for any possible sign of her, eventually coming up with what appeared to be a phone number in Holland.

I phoned with Naomi at my side. After all, it was her project that had produced these results. We dialed the number and, lo and behold, a man answered. I explained who I was and why we were calling. He listened, and after asking me a couple of questions, he passed me on to his wife, Carla.

We spoke for half an hour or so. At first, she was astonished, but she soon began to tell me her life story. She'd been hidden with good people after both her parents were taken away, and she came out of the war thinking that she was the only Lootsteen on earth.

I got back to my father with the amazing news. Ever since, he and Carla have been in touch several times a week, by phone or via the Internet – just getting to know each other. Carla, who knew of no living relatives, enjoyed learning of her "new" extended family, and we were curious about hers.

All of this culminated, at the beginning of May, with a trip to Holland by my father, sister and me to meet Carla and her family. It was wonderful, emotional and natural. We hit it off famously. The experience left us feeling that it was the beginning of a great relationship.

None of this would have happened if it weren't for Naomi's school project. But it also required courage on the part of my father and Carla, and their willingness to take the emotional plunge into the past and open old wounds. Not everyone could travel that road. They consented, and we have all been enriched and rewarded.

Time is short. Those who remember will disappear. If you can, go down the road. Help them take the plunge before it's too late. The rewards will be gratifying.

Post-Olmert political reform?

As the sordid details of the "Olmert saga" are revealed, Israelis are also getting a second chance at much-needed political reform. Our electoral system, developed in Poland during the 19th century and adopted by the Zionist movement, has perpetuated a corrupt and incompetent political class. Many of Israel's "best and brightest" have avoided or dropped out of politics after realizing that success was incompatible with maintaining moral principles.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

The dysfunctional electoral system is also a major source of the gridlock that has served Israel so poorly. After the founding generation of idealists – former prime minister David Ben-Gurion, Menachem Begin and their contemporaries – passed on, the centrality of political parties has allowed mediocre people (at best) to manipulate the system.

This framework excludes talented outsiders and allows corrupt elites to control the system. Their power is based on their role in small parties, which are justified on narrow ideological, religious and other grounds, and the fate of government coalitions is determined by the personal desires of their leaders. Israel's national interests are lost in the process.

The dysfunctional nature of party-based politics and the need for reform was widely understood a number of years ago. Indeed, the Kadima party was created by former prime minister Ariel Sharon in response to public demands for a broad-based framework that would unite pragmatists from different groups.

But Sharon's stroke ended this experiment, leaving Ehud Olmert as the accidental prime minister, with no interest in a reform process that would impede his own access to money and power. His first test was in the 2006 Lebanon war, and while his performance was less than adequate, he has been able to cling to power.

Olmert's downfall would allow Israelis to try political reform again, based on support for leaders whose skills go beyond manipulation and fundraising. One option is Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, who was until recently more of an outsider in politics, but she lacks the necessary experience.

Threats from Iran, Hamas, Lebanon, North Korean nuclear reactors in Syria, etc., highlight the importance of security credentials for Israel's future leaders. Within Kadima, former IDF chief of staff Shaul Mofaz, is clearly eager to become prime minister, but the years that Mofaz has spent in politics have tainted him. In the other parties, former prime ministers Benjamin Netanyahu and Ehud Barak are unlikely candidates for reforming the system. The Likud and Labor parties are the pillars of the failed political framework.

More likely, leaders of the "second wave" of reform will come from a cadre of respected Israelis who left politics rather than joining in the corruption, as well as from former Israel Defence Forces generals with track records that combine competence and the refusal to play the political game by the old rules.

Uzi Dayan and Moshe Ya'alon both fit this description – as military leaders, they demonstrated both skill and commitment to the national interest. And after leaving the IDF, both have spoken out on public issues while refusing to be tarnished by old-style politics. There are many others in this group.

In restarting the reform process, the need to separate money from politics is central. No democracy is immune – the British Labour Party has had its share of funding scandals, and despite financing regulations, U.S. election campaigns are dependent on massive donations. But in Israel, the fragmented political system has greatly amplified the harmful impact of dependence on influential donors and the resulting "get rich quick" schemes.

Earlier, money was generated through the alliance between the Histadrut labour union and the Labor party, and when Labor finally lost power in 1977, the centre of gravity shifted to wealthy individuals, both in Israel and abroad. Neither arrangement placed the national interest at the centre of the political process.

The post-Olmert era will present another opportunity for reform based on the principles of good government. Changing the system will not cure all of Israel's problems – internal or external – but it will give us a fighting chance to choose the type of leaders that are necessary for Israel's success in the next 60 years.

The Kirshner File

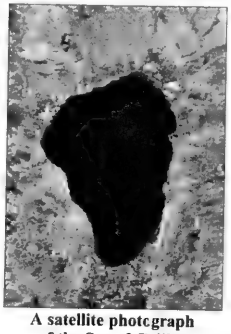
It all comes down to land in talks with Syria

Ever the realist, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert warned last month that negotiations with Syria will be long and difficult. He made that sober comment shortly after Israel and Syria jointly announced that they had held indirect peace talks in Istanbul through Turkish mediation. Israel's objective is an agreement modelled after its 1979 peace treaty with Egypt, the first Arab country to formally recognize Israel.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Though details are still sketchy, these discussions were launched last year, when Olmert finally realized that it is "best to talk and not shoot." Yet Israel and Syria have been there before, having gone through two sets of face-to-face talks since the 1991 Madrid peace conference. The first phase ended in the winter of 1996, while the second one lasted for just over a year, from 1999 to 2000.

According to the Syrians, a great many of the issues were settled when the talks collapsed, a claim Israel does not dispute. By all accounts, the talks foundered over the demarcation of the border, though this is not to say that other important issues, from security arrangements to water rights, were completely resolved. Now, eight years later, this festering issue is at the forefront yet again, even though Israel and Syria have not resumed direct negotiations.



A satellite photograph of the Sea of Galilee

Syria – which has fought Israel in four wars and numerous skirmishes since the first Arab-Israeli conflict in 1948 – agreed to a resumption of talks after receiving categorical assurances from Israel, via Turkey, that it would withdraw from the Golan Heights and return to the pre-1967 armistice lines in exchange for a peace treaty. "We received commitments for a withdrawal from the Golan to the June 4, 1967 line," said Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Moallem.

As he suggested, this is not a new pledge. Yitzhak Rabin, the former Israeli prime minister, set the precedent in 1993, when he conveyed a message to Damascus, through the United States, that Israel would cede the Golan in full if all its needs were met. Rabin's declaration is known as the "Rabin deposit."

Ehud Barak, the current Israeli defence minister, promised to honour it and not to "erase the past," when he was prime minister from 1999 onward. In fact, Barak got cold feet when the moment of truth dawned.

With talks deadlocked, Bill Clinton, the then-U.S. president, tried to salvage them at a summit with his Syrian counterpart, Hafez Assad, in Geneva in March 2000. Since Clinton did not have a firm commitment in hand from Barak that Israel would relinquish all the territory claimed by Assad, the meeting was a failure, signifying the end of one more frustrating chapter in Israel's on-again, off-again talks with Syria.

In light of this missed opportunity, the question that now arises is whether history will repeat itself. It is far too early to draw hard and fast conclusions, but judging by Olmert's most recent statements on the territorial issue, one might well conclude that he may not be as forthcoming as Syria seems to assume.

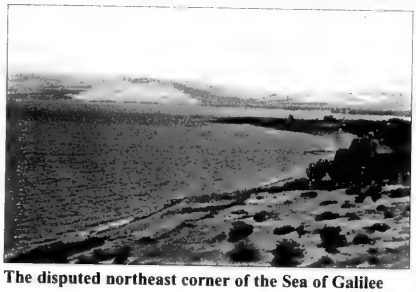
Addressing the Knesset's foreign affairs and defence committee, he denied reports that he had accepted Syria's condition for renewing talks, Israel's withdrawal to the pre-Six Day War lines. "All I said to the Syrians was that I know what you want, and you know what I want," he said. "There was no commitment beyond that."

In the wake of Olmert's remarks, Israeli newspapers quoted unnamed sources as saying that Israel had no intention of meeting Syria's demand. Moallem countered that Israel had indeed made such a commitment. Amid the confusion, the Israeli press quoted yet another high-level official as saying that Olmert had, in fact, given Syria a "formula" for the Golan that its president, Bashar Assad, had sought.

Last week, Assad – Hafez Assad's son – talked about that contentious matter. "What is on the agenda is the return of all land," he asserted, adding that negotiations would eventually require international sponsorship and the participation of the United States.

Clearly, the dispute over territory is at the heart of Israel's conflict with Syria, though Syria's alliance with Iran and its continuing support of Hezbollah are also issues of great concern to Israel.

The territorial issue has its origins in the period after World War I, when Britain and France laid claim to former Ottoman domains in the Middle East. In 1923, the two colonial powers established what would be the international border between Palestine and Syria. Under the agreement, the Sea of Galilee, including a 10-metre strip along its northeastern shore, was allotted to Palestine. The 1947 United Nations partition plan placed the Sea of Galilee in the proposed Jewish state.



The disputed northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee [Sheldon Kirshner photo]

During the War of Independence, the Syrian army seized about 25 kilometres of land in the Jordan Valley, west of the international border. Among its conquests was the northeastern corner of the Sea of Galilee, which presently supplies Israel with half of its freshwater. By the terms of the 1949 armistice accord, Syria retained that sliver of land. Israel recaptured it, as well as the adjacent Shebaa Farms region, during the Six Day War.

Israel established settlements on the Golan, repelled a Syrian offensive to reconquer these lands in the 1973 Yom Kippur War, and annexed the Golan in 1981.

The status quo remained intact until the 1991 Gulf War, waged by the United States and its European and Arab allies against Iraq. In gratitude for Arab backing and assistance, Washington pressed Israel to negotiate with Syria to defuse the Arab-Israeli conflict. Israel concentrated on the Syrian track, at the expense of the Palestinian one (which became active again with the launch of the 1993 Oslo process).

Israel's policy from the outset was that the depth of a withdrawal would be equal to the depth of security and normalization offered by Syria. Rabin's successors – Shimon Peres, Benjamin Netanyahu and Barak – worked on the assumption that Syria would be satisfied with a pullback to the international border. They miscalculated. Syria insisted on a withdrawal to the June 4, 1967 lines, and this remains its position today.

Israel can legitimately claim that Syria has no right whatsoever to land it conquered in 1948, but Syria can refute that argument by pointing out that Israel acquired far more land in that war than it was entitled to under the United Nations two-state plan.

The situation, however, is not hopeless. Several years ago, Alon Liel, the former director general of Israel's foreign ministry, discussed these issues with Ibrahim Suleiman, a Syrian American who has close ties with the Syrian government.

These informal discussions, which concluded in the summer of 2006, took place with Israel's and Syria's consent and climaxed with an agreement under which a "peace park" would be created in the disputed zone between the international border and the June 4 border. It remains to be seen whether this proposal will resurface should Israel and Syria resume direct negotiations. But obviously, it will only be relevant if Israel and Syria can agree on a common border.

Surveys indicate that about two-thirds of Israelis would oppose a complete withdrawal from the Golan. Such is their mistrust of Syrian motives and intentions.

Yet it is worth noting that, while 70 per cent of Israelis opposed a pullout from the Sinai Peninsula before the 1978 Camp David accords, 70 per cent supported a withdrawal after Israel and Egypt forged a historic rapprochement.

It would therefore seem that public opinion in Israel is susceptible to changing circumstances on the ground.

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New camp director plans to expand Jewish education

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

After nine years of teaching Judaism through rope-climbing and water-skiing, Camp George is celebrating its 10th summer with a new director.

Jeff Rose, the former director of Camp Sabra in Missouri, is planning to expand the camp's interactive Jewish education with new programs.

Rose, who has a degree in education and a lifetime of camping experience, isn't trying to change the direction of the camp.

"I'm just ushering it into the next 10 years," he said. "I won't change the basic pillars. [My goal] is to make Judaism a little more engaging."

Camp George uses informal lessons to integrate Jewish teachings into everyday life. The lessons include skits and interactive videos about Judaism.

"We don't give them a textbook," said Ira Schweitzer, a faculty member at the camp and the director of education for Temple Sinai. "We're trying to teach in a fun way. I do things down at the ropes course to teach about co-operation, or I'll go mountain biking. Some staff use arts and crafts. We're not bound by walls."

Rabbi Erin Polonsky, who is also from the Temple Sinai, uses the camp's environment to take a different approach to education.

"You can be a little different than [you might be] in religious schooling. You can go outside – if we wanted to, we could just sit outside under a tree or have class in the middle of the night and talk about the stars. There's all kinds of possibilities," she said.

Camp George, located on Maple Lake, just southeast of Parry Sound, Ont., is the only Canadian camp that is part of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ). Staff members use the camp's 200 acres of space as a classroom. Bike paths, rope courses and the surrounding waterfront are used for religious teachings.

"We make the Jewish culture surround them. [The camp] is built on a peninsula, so we have a lot of water activities," Rose said. "Jewish programming might have a stigma – it's not synonymous with camp, but we pride ourselves in [the fact that campers] don't know that they're learning."

Jeff Rose

Rose will use his experience to make the camp even more interactive through daily services and new programming.

"I grew up [camping] in Ontario. I put everything I've learned into practice, I try to duplicate the things that I loved," Rose said. "We do daily prayers where the kids are actively creating their own services through creative readings or skits. We need something different every year."

This year, Rose plans on introducing a videography program in which kids can shoot videos around the camp about Judaism and turn those videos into half-hour news shows.

He also plans to expand the music program by bringing in more instruments for campers.

Deborah Cooper, who is part of the steering committee, is enthusiastic about expanding this program.

"The bigger vision is to have children more involved. If they're more involved in music, it will give them a part to play in the services," she said.

Cooper sees Rose's experience and personality as an asset to the camp. "I think any director of a Jewish camp is an educator. Jeff is aware of this. He's a great people person – that's what drew [the committee] to him," she said.

"Jeff comes with a great treasure of experience. URJ camps are different – they blend the best of Ontario camping with Jewish camping and Jeff understands both."

Camp George is made up of faculty and staff from educational and religious backgrounds. Rabbis and Jewish educational directors live at the camp.

"One of [our] greatest resources is the number of Jewish professionals at camp. It's somehow very different when a kid can sit down on a log and chat. They get to know [each other] as people," Cooper said.

Rose also sees this as an asset.

"[Jewish professionals] are around camp all the time. I think kids like it. They see them as human beings. The idea is to make Judaism a living thing," he said.

Rose hopes to continue to immerse campers in Judaism through the Tikkun Olam program.

"It's the Jewish value of repairing the world," he said. "[Campers] are taught to give back to the community. Last year they learned to respect elderly people, this year we're looking at collaborating with the Koby Mandell Foundation [which helps Israeli children traumatized by terror]."

Rose also plans to use the Birthday Angels program to help teach kids about charity. Through this program, campers who are celebrating a birthday will be able to sponsor a birthday party for a disadvantaged child in Israel.

Ron Polster, the former director of Camp George, has seen the camp grow in the past five years.

"It's a young camp, we needed more of a community spirit," he said. "It's become more of a summer continuum. Campers looked forward to [coming back] and becoming CIT's [counsellors-in-training] or staff."

Cooper has high hopes for Rose.

"He's a passionate person. We're thrilled to have [him] with us," she said.

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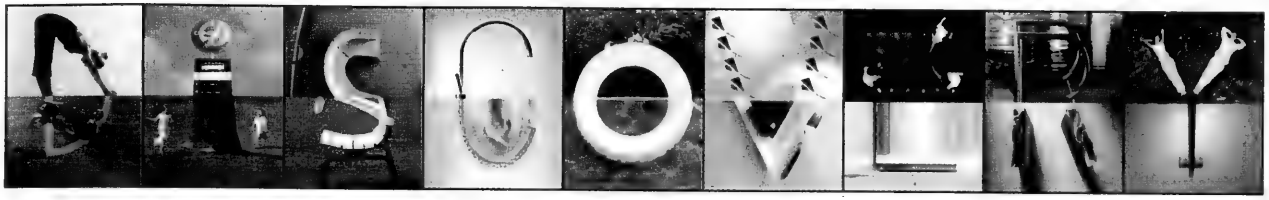

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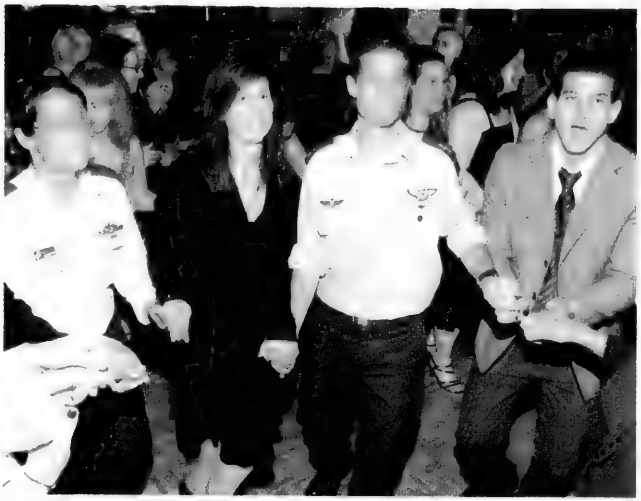


Guests dance with two Israeli soldiers at a recent gala hosted by the Association for the Soldiers of Israel in Canada. For security reasons, the soldiers' faces cannot be shown. [Isaac Dykopf photo]

Community shows support for Israeli soldiers

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

No army in the world can compare to the Israeli Defence Forces, said Stan Moneta, chairman of the Canadian Zionist Cultural Association (CZCA) at a fundraiser for Israeli soldiers.

Moneta was speaking at a recent gala hosted by the Association for the Soldiers of Israel in Canada (ASI) on behalf of the CZCA. He emphasized the importance of Canadian support, both financially and morally.

"We stand with Israel because Israel's cause is our cause," he said to an audience of around 800 guests. "The IDF are laying their lives on the line not only to protect the state of Israel but [also] for you and all Jews."

Amir Gissin, the consul general of Israel for Toronto and Western Canada, also spoke at the June 1 event. He stressed that Israeli soldiers' activities are not limited to Israel.

"The IDF saves lives, and not just in Israel – all over the world," he said. "When national disasters happen, when terrorist attacks happen, IDF specialists have been there, even in countries that are not so friendly to Israel."

ASI and CZCA support Israeli soldiers and their friends and family. ASI does this through programs such as DIGNITY, which provides special grants to soldiers and their families in financial need. CZCA also has a DIGNITY program that provides food packages for families of soldiers.

Four Israeli soldiers spoke at the gala, offering their thanks and sharing their stories.

Maj. Shay Claper, a husband and father of three, talked about his experience in the middle of battle.

"With bullets whistling over head, [I thought], 'I am going to help [fight] and [rescue] the wounded, but I, myself, may not come back,'" he said.

At the time, Claper's thoughts turned to his children and the last phone conversation he had with his wife a few hours before, during which he had learned that she was pregnant. Still, he did not turn back.

"I [went] to fight. You do it because it's the right thing to do. [There was] no hesitation, you do it with all your heart. You are not fighting just for yourself, you are fighting for your people, for your country, for your children," he said.

The IDF saves lives all over the world

Capt. O., who can't be named for security purposes, is a pilot in the IDF. During a mission, the left engine of his helicopter exploded, forcing him to crash land the aircraft in a manner that would save the lives of the 22 special unit soldiers aboard. After he landed, the soldiers transferred to another helicopter and continued their mission.

"That night, we did two missions back to back. It shows you the kind of determination required," he said.

Capt. O. ended by thanking the guests, who gave the soldiers a standing ovation.

"Your efforts are no different than the efforts of a soldier fighting for Israel's right to exist," he told the audience.

Brig.-Gen. Avigdor Kahalani, the chairman of the Association for the Wellbeing of Israel's Soldiers in Israel, emphasized the importance of supporting the IDF.

"[They] need this kind of evening. [It gives] our soldiers the feeling that we're behind them," he said.

Benefit attendees entertained, enlightened

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center (FSWC) has had some pretty impressive fundraising events in past years, featuring A-list headliners.

Last year it was the Goreacle – Al Gore – the former U.S. vice-president and Democratic presidential candidate who is one of the foremost advocates for countering climate change.

A few years before that, his former boss president Bill Clinton headlined the event.

You can't get much more A-list than that. But for 2008, the FSWC may well have outdone itself, if not for celebrity status, at least for interesting, entertaining, thought-provoking and often hilarious presentations.

Led by high-energy, self-deprecating, Cheetos-loving television host Glenn Beck, and supported by the scholarly musings of former Republican House Speaker Newt Gingrich and former Democratic House leader Dick Gephardt, the trio thoroughly engaged 2,600 people, including 1,000 students, attending the Spirit of Hope benefit at the Sony Centre for the Performing Arts.

Speaking in a "Situation Room" format, the threesome opined on a variety of topics ranging from the presidential race south of the border to the dangers posed by Iran to climate change. There was even some mention of the Canadian scene when Gingrich turned to the audience and urged Canadians to get rid of the country's human rights commissions which are, he said, "an act of tyranny." Last week Mark Steyn, a conservative author and columnist, along with *Maclean's* magazine, were called before a commission tribunal in British Columbia to determine whether excerpts from Steyn's book, *America Alone*, published in the magazine, violated the province's anti-hate laws by offending Muslims.

A second Canadian reference occurred when Beck, introducing the dignitaries, recited the full title of Jason Kenney, Minister for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity. "I don't even know what that is," he quipped.

Humour punctuated the proceedings with Gingrich lampooning presidential hopeful Barack Obama's hope/change slogans in a manner that would do *Saturday Night Live* proud. Beck said "the thing I like about Canada is that you never have to apologize for Jimmy Carter."

But there was also serious discussion during the evening. In opening remarks, Beck described his personal evolution from a Cheetos-eating "slug" being fed the news to a more concerned individual. Sept. 11 changed him and a trip to Israel showed him it was not the country portrayed in the media. It was time for the Cheetos-eating public to wake up and take a stand, he said.

Beck voiced strong opinions on the threats posed by Iran and about the upcoming presidential election. He called the three remaining candidates – Hillary Clinton, John McCain and Barack Obama – Larry, Moe and Curly, and asked, "who is there who really hears what people are saying to move us in the right direction?"

Gephardt said, "I think this will be the toughest time to be president ever."

The new president, he said, should level with the American people on energy, the economy, jobs, terrorism and foreign policy "and ask us to take a stand" – even to make sacrifices.

Providing thumbnail sketches of the candidates, Gingrich said McCain was passionate about security, Clinton was "the least risky" of the three while Obama is "a total wild card." The American people could get lucky and he could turn into another John F. Kennedy. If they're unlucky, he could become a second Carter.

"I don't think he knows who he is," the former speaker stated.

Beck was much more critical of Obama. He noted his links to radicals, including a proponent of suicide bombings, and he pointed to his confusion over which concentration camp his uncle helped liberate (the candidate confused Auschwitz with Buchenwald). More important, Beck said, was that he not appease the kind of people who created the concentration camps.

That led him into a discussion of Iran, whose president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, holds the messianic belief in the return of a lost 12th imam and is willing to hasten his arrival in blood and chaos. A deterrence policy vis-a-vis Iran would not work, he suggested.

Gephardt said the use of force against Iran must remain on the table while Gingrich said Iran has paid no price for its role in the killings of American soldiers in Iraq. The "penalty" could include acts to destabilize and replace the Iranian regime, he said.

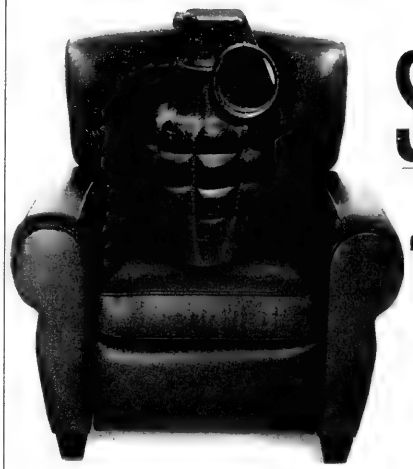
Gephardt asserted that reliance on Mideast oil lay at the root of America's problems, including terrorism, and he advocated the government step in to raise taxes and develop alternatives "to free ourselves of Middle Eastern oil."

Gingrich called for development of clean-burning coal plants and for drilling for oil that has already been found in the United States.

"A country determined to be suicidally stupid should not be surprised to pay a cost" for not developing new energy sources, he said.

The event raised more than $1.9 million to support the Friends' education programs that address issues of racism, anti-Semitism, terrorism and genocide.

The event has become the FSWC's "must attend event of the year," Avi Benlolo, president and CEO of FSWC, said.



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Aaron Klein is Jerusalem Bureau Chief for WorldNetDaily.com. He has regular segments and commentary on America's top radio programs and serves routinely as a co-host of ABC Radio's national "The John Batchelor Show."
Mr. Klein's book was released in 2007 and was based on his interviews with terrorists.
Mr. Klein has interviewed many influential Middle East newsmakers, including government officials and terrorist leaders. Mr. Klein made headlines in 1999 when he spent time with and interviewed a group connected to Al - Qaeda. Some of the people he has interviewed include Yasser Arafat, Hamas Chief Mahmooud Al - Zahar and leaders of the Taliban to name just a few.

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We should be wary of Durban II

Guest Voice

By KEITH LANDY

Late last month, more than 100 Jewish leaders from around the world gathered in Geneva at an international conference under the auspices of UN Watch to strategize for what has become known as the Durban Review Conference (DRC).

The DRC, scheduled for April 2009 in Geneva, is a follow-up to the World Conference Against Racism (WCAR), held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, which was one of the most hate-filled, anti-Semitic, anti-Israel gatherings in recent memory. Given how preparatory conferences for the DRC have developed, it seems clear we are once again heading towards a radical Islamic-inspired hate fest against Israel.

The WCAR, also known as Durban I, became a forum to attack Israel, invoke the infamous allegation that Zionism is a form of racism, and even deny the uniqueness of the Holocaust. Even worse than the official conference was the parallel NGO forum, where many participants openly expressed hatred towards Israel and Jewish NGO representatives in attendance. The forum adopted an extreme declaration that sought not only to criticize Israel but also to delegitimize its very existence.

The final declaration and program of action from Durban I was eventually cleansed of some of its worst language, but only after the United States and Israel withdrew from the conference, and with the help of Canadian officials present at Durban 1. However, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was the only regional conflict mentioned in these two documents – with "the plight of Palestinians" listed in the section titled "Victims of Racism" – compelling the United States and Israel to cast negative votes when they were submitted to the UN General Assembly for approval.

In December 2006, the General Assembly decided to convene a WCAR review conference in 2009 "on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action," and it asked the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) to plan the conference.

Considering the structure of the HRC and its hostility toward Israel, it was all but certain that the preparatory process would be marred by attempts to single out and censure the Jewish state. Indeed, the committee established by the council to oversee the preparations for the review conference included Libya as elected chair and Iran and Cuba among 19 vice-chairs.

Last fall, the HRC put together a plan to guide preparations for the Review Conference and submitted it to the General Assembly for its approval. The plan went beyond the parameters set by the resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 2006 to accommodate Islamic states seeking to introduce new accusations against the West of "defamation of Islam." Accordingly, the plan stipulated that the Review Conference will not only concentrate on the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Program of Action, but also consider "further actions, initiatives and practical solutions for combating all the contemporary scourges of racism." It also stipulated regional preparatory meetings, although western countries and others expressed opposition to such meetings. As a result, the European Union and other western countries voted against the plan in the General Assembly.

On Jan. 23, Canada courageously announced that it would not take part in the DRC, citing the degeneration of Durban I into "open and divisive expressions of intolerance and anti-Semitism that undermined the principles of the United Nations and the very goals the conference sought to achieve." Canada also said it had hoped the preparatory process would "remedy the mistakes of the past," but concluded that it will not.

Discussions at the recent UN Watch Geneva gathering acknowledged this viewpoint, although a significant number of groups remained wary of pulling out altogether. As such, discussions ensued about developing red lines that, if crossed, will be points of no return. These red lines, once agreed upon, will be the markers for Jewish groups to determine any participation in the 2009 Geneva conference.

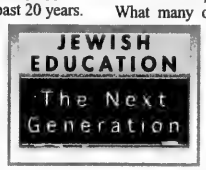
As acknowledged by two General Assembly resolutions, the UN bears a special responsibility to assure that the Holocaust and its lessons are never forgotten and that it will serve as a warning to all people of the profound dangers of hatred, bigotry, and racism. Sadly, plans for the DRC seem more intent on delegitimizing Israel and the Jewish people. All countries that hold to values of democracy and ideals that reject racism and anti-Semitism must stand in solidarity with the Jewish people and deny a legitimate stage to those who would target Israel and world Jewry.

Keith Landy is past president of Canadian Jewish Congress and a CJC delegate to WCAR in 2001. He was a participant in the recent UN Watch conference in Geneva.

Reaching the adult learner

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

With much of the focus of Jewish education centred around children in day and supplementary schools, it's worth noting that there has been a steady and quiet surge in Jewish learning opportunities for adults over the past 20 years.



Although some of this popularity can be attributed to the desire for Jewish growth, it is undeniable that a key factor is social, to feel a sense of community. In a recent study, Diane Schuster and Lisa Grant argue that Jewish adults "tend to initiate new Jewish learning at times of transition in their personal and professional lives… Some are motivated to acquire new competencies; others are looking to socialize with other Jews; others to find answers to spiritual questions."

Because such learning often happens at the margins of the adult's day, and must compete with a myriad of other life commitments (e.g., work, family, entertainment), adult courses are often conducted on a miniature scale, from four to six weeks at a time. The grownup student is a consumer who shops for lectures or courses that seem appealing or directly relevant to their life situation, be it classes on Jewish parenting, Judaism on relationships, or the ethics of money. What many of these students have in common is a desire for a non-judgmental, safe learning atmosphere. The safety is not physical but emotional.

Some adults have bad memories of afternoon or day school, where as children they were subject to less-than-optimal environments, ranging from dull to possibly punitive, and where ostensible intellectual or linguistic deficiencies may have been exposed and commented upon by teachers. Obviously, as adults, they don't want their Jewish educational experience to repeat that cycle of shame. This can lead to some foreboding about engaging in Torah in any way at this point in their lives, which can be offset by a nurturing teacher/facilitator, and by the feeling that their opinion is not only valued but that the accumulation of their life lessons can bring a unique perspective to the textual material being studied.

We tend to understand that a non-threatening and encouraging classroom is seminal to the education of children, but we may overlook its centrality in the lives of adults as well. Despite having "grown up," adult learners still have significant need for comfort and collegiality. Once that is established, reigniting a feeling of competence that the texts can be negotiated and even enjoyed is the fundamental task for the adult educator.

Ultimately, the inspiring of adult learning can bear fruit in many ways. Foremost is the satisfaction of developing a renewed relationship with the heritage of Judaism. But there are also long-term benefits for Jewish families. When children see their parents immersed in Torah study, they are absorbing a powerful message regarding Judaism's beauty and daily relevance. Years later, when those children become parents, they will reach out and back, almost unconsciously, for the Jewish model that they were given by their parents. The recollection of a house in which Torah was valued, not just in word, but in deed, will remain with them forever.

Jewish Life

Revelatory revisionist history

***Human Smoke* by Nicholson Baker, Simon & Schuster.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

This provocative and disturbing book is concerned with the political and social landscape that gave rise to World War II, up until the time of the participation of the United States.

Nicholson Baker, a confirmed pacifist, has collected 474 brief footnoted vignettes from many sources: newspaper reports, radio speeches, memos, memoirs, public proclamations, etc., that depict mankind's descent into the madness of war.

The book's main figures include Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt; members of the international pacifist movement, including Mahatma Gandhi; Adolf Hitler and his entourage; and diarists such as Victor Kemmerer in Dresden and Mihail Sebastian in Bucharest.

Churchill is depicted as a mercurial personality – impetuous, bloodthirsty, fearless and bullying – and exhilarated by war and his power to make history.

One of our great aims Churchill wrote, in July 1941, "is the delivery on German towns of the largest possible quantity of bombs per night." Soon afterward, he said publicly, "It is time that the Germans should be made to suffer in their own homeland and cities something of the torments they have let loose upon their neighbours and upon the world."

This was his undeviating aim even when the bombing was largely ineffectual in destroying military and industrial targets.

In 1927, he visited Rome and declared, "I could not help being charmed by Signor [Benito] Mussolini's gentle and simple bearing, and by his calm, detached poise in spite of so many burdens and dangers."

"If I had been an Italian, I am sure I should have been entirely with you from the beginning to the end of your victorious struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism."

It was Churchill's decision that the British government hold 11,000 people in its detention facilities, most of them Jews. Eventually, some refugees were shipped to Canada. One inmate wrote, "I am witness to how a great nation thought it right – for the first time in the long centuries of its heroic history – to begin a war for the liberation of western civilization by imprisoning the most embittered enemies of its own enemies."

Roosevelt, regarded as a friend and icon by masses of American Jews, was actually hardly friendly to Jews. In 1922, he noticed that Jews made up one-third of the freshman class of Harvard University. He went to the Harvard board of overseers, of which he was a member. "It was decided," he later explained, "that over a period of years, the number of Jews should be reduced one or two per cent a year until it was down to 15 per cent."

In 1939, Congress considered a bill to rescue a number of European Jewish children. Roosevelt opposed it. As a result, it never left committee. Unhappily, he showed little concern or sympathy for the plight of European Jewry.

Regarding Asia, the author makes clear that the Japanese on a number of occasions protested the military buildup of Pearl Harbor. The American ambassador to Japan warned Roosevelt that he was pushing Japan toward armed conflict, but the president continued his war preparations, which included allocating $100 billion for airplanes alone.

In the volume's afterward, the author confides that the basic questions he hoped to answer were these: "Was it a good war? Did waging it help anyone who needed help?" He believes that peace overtures from the enemy should have been considered and perhaps accepted. It would have prevented the death of millions of human beings and the devastation of much of civilized society.

But, of course, peace with the enemy would have meant ceding Europe to Hitler's Germany and Asia to Japan. Would German and Japanese imperialists have been content with a limited victory? Would the remainder of European Jewry and Nazi "undesirables" been slaughtered without compunction?

This well-documented and revisionist book is revelatory and shocking. It would have us believe that blood-lust was pervasive and that few of the principal figures engaged in the terrible struggle, even on the allied side, had clean hands or merciful hearts.

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Summer camp nostalgia, Pt. 1

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Hello Muddah, hello Fadduh,
Here I am at Camp Granada.
Camp is very entertaining,
And they say we'll have some fun if it stops raining.
[tinyurl.com/49az2d]

Whether you went to Camp Massad, Camp Ramah, , Camp Moshava… or Allan Sherman's fabled Camp Granada, nothing can compare to those long days and bug-filled nights at summer camp. As your kids count down the days and you finish ironing on the labels, here's a look at some summer camp memories.

Dina Fuchs owes a lot to her summer camp. Her existence. Dina's parents met at a Jewish camp. And Dina continued her family's connection to the camp when she packed up at the tender age of seven. But for Dina, things didn't start off too well: "To me, camp was like a Jewish juvenile detention centre."

Eventually, things changed and now she looks back fondly at those years. "My camp memories still sneak up on me once in awhile. One day, I was walking to my car after a rainstorm and I caught a whiff of that sweet grass-soaked fragrance that lingers after a summer downpour. And in that instant, I was carried back to those sleepy mornings where I stood shivering in the dewy field at Camp Judaea – standing with my hands folded behind me, singing *Hatikvah*." **[tinyurl.com/2haq9j]**

A few summers ago, Contact, The Journal of Jewish Life Network, devoted an entire issue to Jewish Summer Camps: Our Precious Resource. If you love camp or want to understand more about it, do yourself a favour and download this lovely 16-page magazine. **[tinyurl.com/6875uw]**

As you scan the web, it actually is fascinating to note how many scholarly studies you'll find that have examined the importance of camping in Jewish life. One that keeps on coming up is "Limud by the Lake: Fulfilling the Educational Potential of Jewish Summer Camps." **[tinyurl.com/5n9wb8]**

Given its role in North American Jewish life, it shouldn't be that surprising that the Jewish Museum of Maryland decided to focus on the summertime ritual. The museum's Avi Decter explains that for many Jews, "the fundamental values we acquired came from or were reinforced at summer camp – fairness, teamwork and respect for others, pride and self-confidence, the importance of tradition, a sense of belonging to a community. A show about camping is not history lite, but history *lived*!" **[tinyurl.com/4vcbdh]**

Understanding what camp really is like can be daunting for parents, especially if they never had the opportunity to experience it themselves when they were young. If you're in that category and your kids are about to set off, then hitch a ride with Amy Baskin. As the mother of a child at Camp George in Parry Sound, Ont., **[george.urjcamps.org]** she knows the drill. In Scenes from Summer Camp, she's written a sneak-peak tour for those who don't:

• About the cabins: the camp cabin is a social microcosm where lifelong friendships are forged and every night is a slumber party. Try to ignore the lingering odour of wet towels and grubby socks.

• About the canoe trip: on canoe trips, kids experience the wonder of time slowing down. After a hard day's paddle, a group of usually hyperkinetic 11-year-olds sit silently on a rock transfixed as a beaver swims back and forth gathering sticks for a dam.

•About the counsellors: kids think counsellors are like parents – only cool. **[tinyurl.com/5ttxn2]**

Camp is not only a special time for kids but also for the parents they left stranded back in the city. Stay on the same webpage for Parents Do the Darndest Things. Let's just say that this story hits a bit too close to home: "To his profound embarrassment, one 12-year-old camper opened his trunk and discovered his mom had packed all his clothes in 14 separate zip-lock bags. As he was to be at camp for two weeks, there were 14 pairs of socks, 14 pairs of underwear, 14 T-shirts – one complete outfit per bag."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Israeli scientist wins L'Oreal Prize

Credits Weizmann Institute of Science for believing in her

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Ada Yonath, a molecular biologist at the Weizmann Institute of Science, has become the first Israeli to receive the $100,000 L'Oreal and UNESCO For Women in Science Life's Work Prize.

Five prizes are awarded annually to outstanding female scientists on each continent. Yonath represented Europe/Israel. The prize was established by the cosmetics company in 1998 to promote the advancement of women in science.

Born in Jerusalem in 1939, Yonath is a crystallographer best known for her work on the structure of ribosomes. She received her PhD at Weizmann and in 1970 established what was for nearly 10 years the only protein crystallography laboratory in Israel.

At a recent roundtable discussion at L'Oreal Canada's Toronto offices, Yonath said L'Oreal helps promote women in a field that is typically male dominated.

"The barriers and challenges facing women in science are not scientific. The challenges lie in the fact that women are less motivated to compete at higher levels. They worry more about their families than men, and they don't often have the emotional support necessary to pursue high-level studies."

Michael Meyer, national executive vice-president of Weizmann Science Canada, said that although 50 per cent of Weizmann students are women, few of those "end up in academia."

Ada Yonath is a molecular biologist at the Weizmann Institute

To encourage women to pursue postdoctoral studies, he said, a special scholarship has been set up at Weizmann.

One recipient of that scholarship, physicist Nirit Dudovich, worked at the National Research Council in Ottawa before becoming the first female senior scientist at Weizmann, he said.

Yonath said that she spends a lot of time encouraging girls to go into science.

"I meet with girls to show them what I do, we have a camp for science lovers, and we sponsor physics tournaments," she said. "We try to give equal opportunity to males and females. We don't want to discriminate either positively or negatively."

Growing up, Yonath said, she was always interested in science, and she conducted her own experiments at home.

"Once, I broke my arm trying to calculate the height of our balcony, and another time, a fire broke out when I tried to see if water moves faster than kerosene. [The problem started] when my father came outside to smoke."

After high school and military service, she earned her bachelor's degree in chemistry and master's degree in biophysics at Hebrew University before joining Weizmann.

She also held a number of postdoctoral positions – always balancing her career and her family, she said – at such places as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Carnegie Mellon University, and she has won prizes for her work, including the Israel Prize, the Wolf Prize (Israel's equivalent to the Nobel Prize), and Columbia University's Louis Gross Horwitz Prize.

She credits Weizmann for believing in her before she began winning prizes. "They let me work on something that might not have matured. They saw a light at the end of the tunnel."

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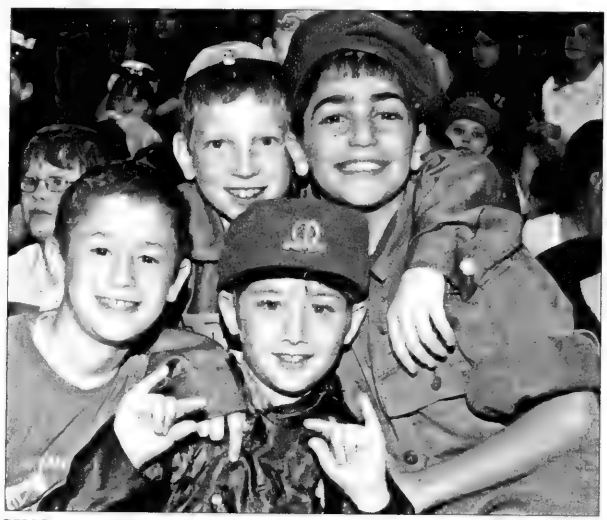


SINGING STARS: In honour of Yom Yerushalayim, Netivot HaTorah Day School Grade 4 students, clockwise from left Sammy, Eitan, Nave and Yonatan took part in a grades 3 to 5 singing contest in which each grade was given marks for, among other criteria, creativity in portraying their song. [Rebecca Ansel

Group for people with eating disorders gets grant

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Eating Disorders of York Region (EDOYR) has received a $125,500 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The award, recently presented by Thornhill MPP Peter Shurman and Trillium Foundation volunteer Gary Gladstone at a reception at Thornhill Square, will be paid over three years.

EDOYR, a not-for-profit organization, was founded in 2004 by a group of parents and friends whose families had been affected by eating disorders, mainly anorexia and bulimia. It was to be primarily a support group, but also intended to seek increased government support and assistance for people with these diseases.

Meetings were held in various locations until last September, when permanent facilities were opened at Thornhill Square.

Janice Morgante, executive director of EDOYR, said the grant was to pay for staff, an executive director, two facilitators and part of the rent for the offices.

"The idea is to help organizations get on their feet," she said, not to be permanent funding. The foundation helps define and carry out a graduated series of goals.

EDOYR has held a number of public information nights, which, Morgante said, have been well received. It has gone to schools, established a resource centre and library, and held programs. It has also organized support groups, therapy groups, open forums and special events.

Telephone referral lines and help lines have provided information and help to an increasing number of people, she said. The website has been beefed up, and more volunteers have been recruited.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ontario government, provides grants to charitable and not-for-profit organizations working in the fields of arts and culture, sports and recreation, the environment, and human and social services.

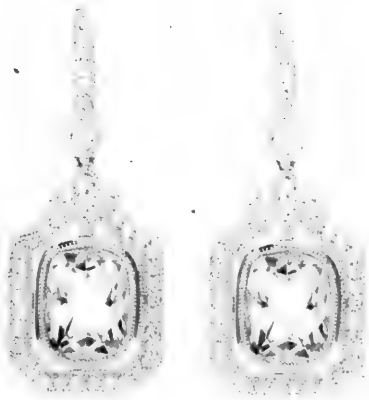
One of the requirements for the grant is more fundraising. Every year, Morgante said, the organization holds Wings of Hope, a gala and silent auction. Last year's event raised $50,000, she said, and plans are underway for the 2008 program, A Salute to the Sensation Sixties, to be held in November.

A media release stresses that eating disorders, "contrary to popular belief, do not have anything to do with food or weight. They are unhealthy coping strategies that are adopted to help the individual deal with underlying stressors that are too difficult or painful to approach head on."

Eating disorders, the release asserts, "are devastating, life-threatening illnesses that have severe physical and psychological ramifications for individuals and their families."

In fact, the daughter of one of the founders of EDOYR died last month from complications of what speakers at her funeral called "this insidious disease."

For more information, call 905-886-6632, e-mail info@edoyr.com, or go to the website www.edoyr.com.



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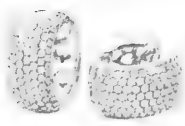

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Book offers new take on parents and Jewish schools

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Alex Pomson and Randal Schnoor originally set out to write a book about teachers in Jewish day schools, but as their research progressed they shifted their focus to parents.

Their new book, *Jewish Day School in the Lives of Adult Jews* (Wayne State University Press, $26.95), focuses on Toronto's Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School.

The Penna school is unique, among other reasons, for its non-traditional location away from the suburbs where most of the Jewish community lives, and for its student population, which has an uncommonly high proportion of children of intermarried or same-sex couples.

But Schnoor, a sociologist who teaches at York University's Centre for Jewish Studies, and Pomson, a senior lecturer at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, maintain that lessons can be drawn from their research that are broadly applicable.

"It's not that the phenomena we saw there don't occur anywhere else," said Pomson. "What was unusual was the intensity of the phenomena because of the intensity of the proportion of families that don't have deep Jewish backgrounds or large Jewish networks.

"Our argument is that it's possible that more such families could be attracted to Jewish day schools if the schools knew better how to talk their language."

The book began as a sabbatical project for Pomson when he served as co-coordinator of the Jewish Teacher Education Program at York University.

Early in the project, his focus was on how teachers translate ideas for use in the classroom. But the more time he spent at the school, the more he became aware of "the frequent and often intense presence of parents," he said in a phone interview from Chicago on a recent visit to North America.

Schnoor and research assistant Dafna Ross came on board following the receipt of a research grant five months into the project.

As research progressed, Pomson said, "we were frequently deeply surprised by how meaningful and deeply important what parents were doing, was to them as adult Jews."

The widespread nature of that discovery, which was observed in the two other Toronto day schools and three American ones that were studied, came as a surprise to Pomson, a father of four whose children attended an Orthodox day school in Toronto before the family moved to Israel in 2004.

Another surprise for Pomson was the role of non-Jewish parents in the school community. "I came to the project deeply skeptical about the possibility of raising Jewishly literate and committed kids in intermarried families, and I saw plenty of examples of families who were intermarried and who were deeply invested in their children's education.

"Whether you can generalize from that, I don't think I'm prepared to say, because this is a really small sample, but I was surprised by how seriously interested many non-Jewish parents were in their child's schooling."

Another phenomenon noted in the book was the role the school played in some cases by acting as a synagogue substitute, in part by providing a Jewish community and also by serving as a resource for information on Judaism.

Pomson said that "very little" has been published on the subject of day schools, and even less on the subject of day school parents.

He expects the new book will be used in academic settings, both graduate and undergraduate, in courses on contemporary Jewry and Jewish education. As well, he said, professional and lay leaders of Jewish day schools may discover new ideas about the relationship between parents and their children's schools.

Schools may not realize that parents look for schools to help them connect to their peers, to a Jewish community and to Jewish learning, said Schnoor. "They might want to pay more attention to that in the marketing of their schools."

The father of a 3-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son, Schnoor – who graduated from United Synagogue Day School and the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto – found the project had personal relevance for him and his wife as they investigated Jewish schools for their children.

As a parent, said Schnoor, "I'm looking for, among other things, a parent body that I'm going to feel comfortable with over the next few years."

Although he noted that there is more to a school than its parent body, "the research reinforced for me the importance of the way a school can provide a comfortable fit for a Jewish parent."

Omission

In "Israel faces leadership crisis: Birthright co-founder" (*CJN*, May 29), some information was omitted. Evan Cooperman and Warren Blatt co-chaired the "Bay St. Meets Wall St." event.

Alleged terrorists saw Canadian Jews as 'enemies'

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Canadian Jews are the enemy.

That's the gist of phone conversations recorded by legal wiretaps between individuals who allegedly plotted to carry out terrorist attacks in Canada, a Toronto man's trial heard last week.

Snippets of the recorded conversations heard in a Brampton, Ont., courtroom June 5 included one alleged co-conspirator exhorting another to attack a Jew if he was "pro-Zion" or if he "wears a big Jewish thing" – likely referring to a kippah or shtreiml.

Another excerpt had an alleged co-conspirator stating to another that Jews are "all our enemies. It's not enough to say they're only my enemy in a certain part of land… every single Jew is your enemy."

The trial stems from a massive police terror investigation that led to the arrest of 18 Torontonians, mostly young offenders, in June 2006. Charges against seven of the accused have been stayed.

The man on trial was 18 when he was arrested. Now 20, he's the only young offender still being charged as an outcome of the investigation.

Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, told *The CJN* his organization was taken aback by the wiretap evidence.

"While viscerally we have always understood this hatred is out there, it nonetheless remains shocking to see it come out in a court of law," Farber said.

He added that Congress has always striven to reach out to Canadian Muslims to bridge gaps between the two communities and will continue to do so.

"We've broken bread with them," he said proudly

"We will continue our work with the moderate Muslim community, which makes up, I believe, the vast majority of Muslims in this country," Farber added. "Sadly, it is more difficult to reach out to those [radical Muslims] who want to see you dead and buried."

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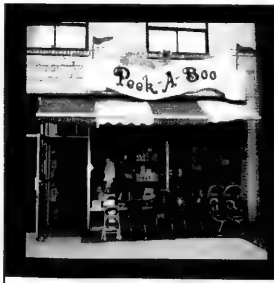

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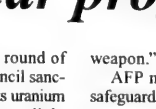
Greater Toronto Area

UN body shines new spotlight on Iran's nuclear program

According to Reports



By PAUL MICHAELS

Iran, already under a third round of (albeit tepid) UN Security Council sanctions due its refusal to suspend its uranium enrichment program, is in the spotlight again regarding its nuclear ambitions.

In a May 26 report, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expressed "serious concern" that Iran is hiding information about possible nuclear weapons work.

Iran has long denied that it's aiming to develop nuclear weapons. Last November, it felt vindicated by the bombshell U.S. National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) report, which claimed, "with high confidence," that Tehran had halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003.

At the time, most of the media reported the NIE claim as established fact rather than what it was – a high-probability estimate. Largely missed was the further claim that the NIE judged "with moderate-to-high confidence that Tehran at a minimum is keeping open the option to develop nuclear weapons" and has "the scientific, technical and industrial capacity" to do so.

What makes the IAEA expression of serious concern about an Iranian nuclear weapons program so important is that it comes from a UN agency rather than a U.S. government body. Recent American intelligence estimates have been either skeptically received or wrapped in controversy, as was the case when the Central Intelligence Agency reported that former Iraq dictator Saddam Hussein was working on nuclear weapons just prior to the U.S.-led invasion in 2003.

In "Look Who's Tough on Iran Now" (*New York Times*, June 1), William J. Broad wrote: "In the annals of role reversal, the switch by the United Nations' atomic sleuths in Vienna and the American intelligence community has been striking. Having long taken a back seat to the Bush administration in publicly challenging Iran's nuclear program, the global inspectors last week moved into the driver's seat, demanding that Tehran come clean on any progress it has made toward building a bomb."

In "IAEA meets to discuss Iran's alleged nuclear weapons work," June 2, Agence France Presse (AFP) reported that the IAEA report alleged that "Iran may have been looking into high explosives of the sort used in implosion-type nuclear bombs, and exploring modifications to missiles consistent with making them capable of delivering a nuclear weapon."

AFP noted that the IAEA's head of safeguards, Olli Heinonen, briefed diplomats on the technical aspects of the report and "expressed 'alarm' that Iran has in its possession a document describing the process for making what could be the core of a nuclear weapon."

The IAEA apparently accepted the previous NIE estimate that Iran suspended its nuclear weapons program a few years ago. However, it is refusing to accept Tehran's repeated denials that it had been working on nuclear warheads. The UN agency is demanding that Iran disclose 18 secretly obtained documents. It views Iran's defiant push for uranium fuel as the key ingredient that can be used to easily revive its weapons program. (Israeli and other experts strongly believe that Iran never ceased working on the warheads.)

The *Economist*'s May 31 editorial, "Iran's endless filibuster," pointed to three specific target areas of the IAEA inquiry: "high-explosive testing of triggers for nuclear bombs, a plan for an underground nuclear-test shaft, and efforts to redesign the nose-cone of Iran's far-flying Shahab-3 rocket to accommodate a nuclear warhead."

Iran is denying work in any field and generally is stonewalling any request for documents or information.

Precisely what can be done to force Iran to comply remains the principal challenge for the international community. But at least this is something the international community now understands it must do, most likely through economic sanctions that actually have teeth. If all else fails, the threat of military action remains an option.

* * *

In "Iran blames 'Zionists' for rising food prices" (*National Post*, June 4), Malcolm Moore wrote from Italy that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad "used a United Nations food summit in Rome [on June 3] to attack Israel, hinting that 'Zionists' were behind rising food prices across the world."

This is the latest crazed statement from the Iranian president, who the day before, on his first visit to Western Europe, used the occasion to declare that it would serve the interests "of the people of Europe if Israel ceased to exist."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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and
The Baycrest Centre Foundation

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June 18, 2008
3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

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The following By-laws will be presented for approval:

Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care By-law No. 2 - 2008
The Baycrest Day Care Centre By-law No. 2 - 2008
Baycrest Hospital - By-law No. 2 - 2008
- Medical Staff By-law No. 4
The Jewish Home for the Aged - By-law No. 2 - 2008
- repeal of Medical Staff By-laws

By-law No. 2 - 2008 for each of the above corporations adds the Government Relations Committee to the by-laws as a board standing committee, empowers the board of directors to extend the maximum number of one-year terms served by an individual standing committee chair, and makes minor consequential amendments related to Medical Staff By-law No. 4.

Medical Staff By-law No. 4 replaces all medical staff by-laws of Baycrest Hospital. Medical staff of The Jewish Home for the Aged will now be considered medical staff of Baycrest Hospital. Medical staff by-laws of The Jewish Home for the Aged are therefore repealed. Medical Staff By-law No.4 differs from the preceding medical staff by-laws as follows. It:

- Amends appointment process and duties of the Vice President, Medical Services
- Eliminates departments in clinical epidemiology, anaesthesiology and rehabilitation medicine
- Describes the three divisions of the Department of Medicine
- Revises list of medical programs
- Subsumes prior associate consultant staff category under associate medical staff category
- Establishes positions of Medical Division Head and Department Deputy Chief
- Eliminates medical services and medical sub-program categories
- Replaces temporary medical staff category with courtesy medical staff category
- Amends credentialing process for temporary appointments
- Adds physician reporting and other safeguards to check for convictions, malpractice and professional misconduct
- For client safety, expedites process for mid-term revocation or suspension of privileges

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Canadian to attend child survivors' reunion

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Leslie Kleinman plans to attend an unusual reunion in Germany.

Kleinman, a Holocaust survivor who is originally from Romania, will be the sole Canadian at the gathering, which is scheduled to take place in Kloster Indersdorf from July 27 to Aug. 2.

A retired dress manufacturer from Sauble Beach, Ont., he will meet 13 other survivors (and their relatives) from Israel, Britain, Brazil and the United States at the planned reunion.

Anna Andlauer

Kloster Indersdorf, near Munich, was a displaced children's centre established by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration after the end of World War II.

For a brief period, Kloster Indersdorf catered to former forced labourers from Poland, but from July 1946 onward, it housed only Jewish survivors like Kleinman.

Born and raised in Satu Mare (Satmar) on May 29, 1929, he is the sole survivor of a large family that was wiped out during the Holocaust.

His father, a rabbi, died in the Soviet Union while digging trenches for the Romanian army. He was sent to the Russian war front by the Romanian government, an ally of Nazi Germany.

In April 1944, following his death, Kleinman, his mother and seven siblings – three brothers and four sisters – were deported to Auschwitz.

Separated from them after their arrival in that concentration camp, Kleinman never saw them again. Against all odds, he survived the rigours of Auschwitz for about a year.

He was liberated by the American army on April 23, 1945 after a "death march" from Flossenburg to Dachau.

"A Jewish sergeant found me and took me to a U.S. military hospital," Kleinman said in an interview last week.

Several months later, having recovered from his ordeal, he was placed in Kloster Indersdorf – then the site of a Bavarian monastery – where child survivors from Poland, Romania and Hungary found a refuge.

Within about six months, Kleinman was dispatched to a youth hostel in London, England.

He lived in England for 35 years, raising a family and earning a living in what he describes as the "shmatte trade."

He and his wife immigrated to Canada in 1980, settling in Sauble Beach, a resort close to Owen Sound.

He looks forward to the reunion, which is being organized by a German citizen, Anna Andlauer, a 57-year-old retired grammar school teacher.

"It will be a unique chance for the survivors to see each other again," she said from her home in the town of Indersdorf.

Andlauer has a keen interest in the Holocaust, having worked as a guide at the former Dachau concentration camp for 20 years now.

She has also written newspaper articles and a book about survivors.

Not until recently did she learn that child survivors were cared for in Kloster Indersdorf.

Galvanized by her discovery, Andlauer began to research the topic, finding photographs and lists of survivors at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, the Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City and the United Nations archives.

Jewish girls in Kloster Indersdorf in 1946. If you recognize yourself or anybody you know, please contact Anna Andlauer at andlauer@onlinehome.de

She then wrote hundreds of letters and e-mails in an attempt to track down former residents of Kloster Indersdorf. So far, Andlauer has turned up the names of 30 such survivors.

"Anna found me through two boys, now living in San Francisco, who had studied with my father," said Kleinman, who belatedly plans to celebrate his bar mitzvah on May 31 in Owen Sound.

"He missed his bar mitzvah during his time of persecution," Andlauer explained.

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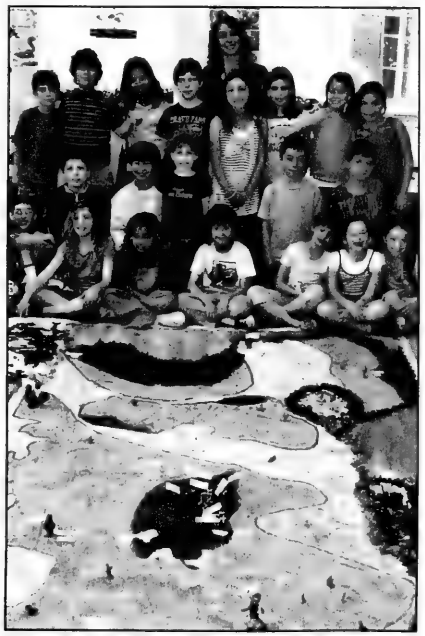

MAPPING IT OUT: As part of a month-long study in honour of Israel's 60th birthday, Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 3 students designed and created a three-by-five metre living museum map of Israel, made of sand, brown sugar, paint and tissue paper. Students also researched and created models of the many diverse people of Israel in preparation for a school-wide Israel Festival Day.

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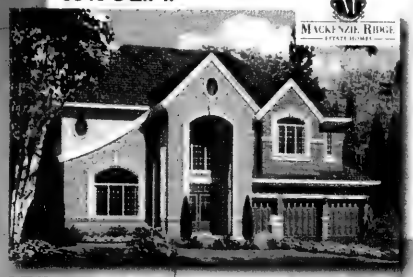

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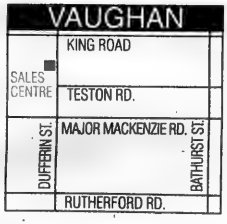

Ga'ava provides social network, support for GLBT

By RIVA GOLD
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — Ga'ava is a new student-run organization serving the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered (GLBT) Jewish community in Montreal.

Ga'ava (Hebrew for "pride") aims to create and sustain a social network for people of various sexual orientations across the city. Since its formal launch party at l'Original in March, the group has hosted several events, from movie nights to a special "pride-oriented" Birthright trip.

Ga'ava was launched in December by its president Joey Waknin, a current McGill student and former Concordian. "Feygelah [the previous Jewish GLBT umbrella group in Montreal] was inactive, so there was no longer a place for GLBTs to gather together," he said.

Waknin and students from other campuses wanted to help GLBTs feel that they are part of a group within the Jewish community. With the support of Hillel Montreal and a handful of other organizations, they founded Ga'ava.

Aside from social events, Ga'ava also provides support services to assist those struggling with their sexual orientation. Its projects are designed to meet various health and social needs of GLBT Jews.

"We will gladly offer an ear to anyone who needs one," Waknin said. "We direct people towards moral support and self-acceptance. As the name implies, you have to have pride in your identity and be proud of who you are."

Ga'ava also aims to create a safe space for GLBTs within the broader community. "We're trying to develop awareness through education," Waknin said. "We try to create an inclusive group that will unite all members of the Jewish community, gay or straight."

It's no coincidence that Ga'ava boasts an extremely wide assortment of members. "We're open to everyone," Waknin said. "We strive to create a place where anyone can feel welcomed, regardless of their sexual orientation."

The organization includes Jews of every sexual orientation, be they heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, transgendered, or pansexual (a sexual orientation characterized by the potential for esthetic attraction, romantic love and/or sexual desire for people, regardless of their gender identity or biological sex).

At the same time, Ga'ava also aims to help people adhere to their Jewish heritage while accepting their orientation. The organization is open to Jews from all streams. "We're here to promote diversity," Waknin said.

Next year, Ga'ava hopes to expand its member base. Currently, those building the organization are students from Dawson College, McGill University, University of Montreal, l'Université du Québec à Montréal , Concordia University and even the University of Toronto.

"We've been working pretty intensely on reaching out to new members from different places," Waknin said. In future, he hopes to expand the core group. "We are hoping a more varied set of individuals will be willing to offer an extra hand."

Waknin said that there are many projects in store for Ga'ava in the years to come. "I don't want to spoil the surprises... but we will be present everywhere there's a Jewish concentration," he said.

For more information, e-mail gaava.mtl@gmail.com, visit www.gaava.org or check out the Facebook group Ga'ava.

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Seniors' taxi service is a well-kept secret

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Mort Weisberg, supervisor of Circle of Care's transportation services department, wants to share a well-kept secret.

For almost nine years, the agency has been transporting seniors to appointments, grocery stores and social engagements for a nominal round trip fee.

The program started in 2000 with one vehicle and one part-time driver doing 40 rides a month, he said, and has grown to include seven vehicles, with two on order, and 11 drivers doing 1,500 rides monthly.

"We still have capacity for more passengers. I don't want to keep this service a secret," said Weisberg, a retired advertising executive who was a driver himself for two years before taking on his present position.

He said drivers can pick up passengers anywhere in the service's catchment area – Centre Street in the north to St. Clair Avenue in the south, and Dufferin Street in the west to Bayview Avenue in the east. It is a two-zone service, with Sheppard Avenue being the dividing line.

The price for the service is $10 for a home-to-home round trip for one zone, and $15 for a round trip through two zones, which "lies somewhere between a taxi and Wheel-Trans, but many people are not eligible for Wheel-Trans because they need to prove a disability."

The exception, Weisberg said, is that the service includes trips to North York General Hospital at Leslie Street and Sheppard, which is outside the catchment area. "We stress medical appointments – they are working towards a downtown hospital run – and we want to make it easy for seniors to have easy access to their doctors."

People in their 50s who have a disability may be considered, he said.

Weisberg said the service provides more than a ride. "The drivers are all 'junior seniors,' and we pick up passengers in our brand-new vans and create a social environment for them. We also load their groceries onto the van and then into their homes. Passengers have praised our drivers and called us their lifeline. They're able to maintain some independence, and they don't have to depend on their family."

Weisberg, who came to Circle of Care two weeks after he retired from advertising, said that he's never felt so good about working with people. "It is a treat for me to come to work."

Passengers need good cognitive skills, he said, and the vans are not wheelchair accessible.

The service is available Monday to Thursday from 9:15 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Friday until 1 p.m. Rides can be booked up to three weeks in advance for medical appointments, and passengers can call for a ride at the last minute, he said. "Chances are we will be able to take them. There is no penalty for cancelling, so spots open up."

There is typically a three-day waiting period to sign up for the service. For information, call 416-635-2860.

STUDENT FUNDRAISERS:

Students at Leo Baeck Day School's south campus present a cheque for $965 to Ellen Schwartz, third from right, co-founder of Jacob's Ladder, the Canadian Foundation of Control of Neurodegenerative Disease. The students beaded bracelets and necklaces over recess time and sold them at open houses to support the cause. Pictured with Schwartz, from left, are Pauline Landen, Samantha Flomen, Jaclyn Flomen, Kaley Willer and Eric Petersiel.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Honoris Causa) is awarded to Dr. Goodall in recognition of her global contribution as a humanitarian, conservationist and peace activist and, in particular, for her initiative in founding *Roots & Shoots* – a global program that encourages young people to address both human and environmental issues in their communities, and aims to foster a new generation of enlightened leaders.

Presented by Canadian Friends of Haifa University in partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute of Canada, proceeds from the Tribute Dinner will be directed to the following projects in Israel and Canada:

- the establishment of Jane Goodall Scholarships in Environmental Studies for bright, deserving students at the University of Haifa, and the creation of a *Roots & Shoots* program at the University, and
- funding for ongoing development and expansion of the *Roots & Shoots* program in Canada, including the establishment of a youth leadership component and the creation of national youth campaigns.

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So, how much do you want to lose weight?

Lisa Weinberg

About Nutrition

Q. I have tried to lose weight many times, and I really believe that I know what to eat and what not to eat, but I just can't seem to stick to any diet. Why is this?

A. This is such a common scenario that you are not alone. I often spend a lot of time with patients who are trying to lose weight, educating them more about the behavioural aspects of weight loss than about the nutritional requirements.

Many people trying to lose weight have been doing so for most of their lives. They are "professional dieters" who have read numerous books, tried many diets and are very well-educated on how to diet. So why are they unsuccessful? I think you want to consider a few possibilities that may apply to your situation.

One thing I believe is necessary when it comes to weight loss is is to have a clear understanding of the difference between wanting to lose weight and being willing to do the work required. It's much easier to say you really want to lose X amount of weight, or weigh a particular amount, or look like her or him, or like you did before. Or you want to fit into certain clothes. But are you willing to do the work needed? This is a tough but honest question. If the answer is a resounding, definitive *yes*, then you are guaranteed success in achieving your goal. If it's a more hesitant commitment, then you may be in for a bit of an uphill battle or in need of changing your thought process more than just your diet. If you frequently want to eat the piece of cake, etc., in front of you, more than you want to lose the weight, then the cake will often win.

You want to change your thought process from looking at a food and saying or thinking, "I want that and I can't have it" – in other words, feeling deprived, to instead believing that "I can have it, but I don't want it, because it's getting me further away from my goal."

There may be a few other obstacles at play here, too. Many people unintentionally sabotage themselves, for example, by having tempting food in the house. It's not good enough to say, "I have willpower. I can avoid all of my favourite foods." You have to get them out of the house, out of your car, off your desk and out of your purse, or you are setting yourself up for failure. Few people have enough willpower to avoid these temptations, and I think that's OK and normal.

We *all* have foods that call our name, foods that when they are in the pantry or on the counter, call to us. *So don't buy them!* It's much easier to walk by them in the grocery store once than to do so in your kitchen a hundred times. I know what you're thinking – I hear it all the time – "there are other people in the house who eat it too." They probably don't need it either.

The other very significant barrier in weight loss often is why we eat. Everyone knows that sometimes we eat if we are bored, depressed or stressed, or simply for social reasons, but it is really important to look at ourselves and evaluate how often we do this, in order to determine if it is having a negative impact on our weight or health. Once we have identified if or when we eat for emotional or social reasons alone, we can start to implement strategies to reduce this behaviour and, more importantly, to recognize when it's happening.

The last strategy that I find educational for people perpetually struggling to lose weight is probably the easiest – keep a food diary. This entails writing down everything you eat and drink every day, including portions. You must do this right after eating, and not try to recall accurately at 11 o'clock at night what you ate all day. There are two reasons this works. First, people are often shocked to see what they actually ate while watching TV, for example, or what they snacked on while cooking dinner. More importantly, it makes you think twice about everything you eat when you know that you have to write it down. Committing to black and white is taking ownership, and you will make smarter choices.

For anyone struggling with why weight loss seems difficult to achieve or stick to, consider whether some of these suggestions might apply to you and whether you can adopt any of these strategies to assist you in being more successful.

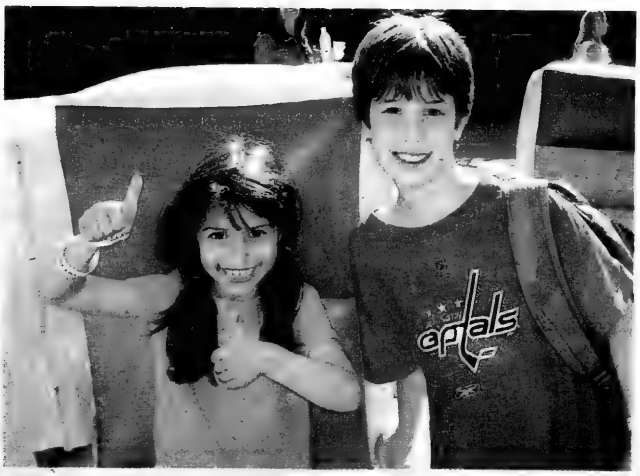
For every "good" day you have, pat yourself on the back, because it is hard work. Good luck!

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

All About Kids

FUNDRAISING POWERHOUSE: Amanda Belzowski, 10, presents Rocco Rossi, centre, of the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario with a cheque for $101,087, representing the total amount she has raised for the foundation by selling lemonade over the last 10 years. This year, she raised money in memory of her great-grandfather, David Dale, who passed away in December. He had an artificial heart valve and had helped Amanda right from the beginning 10 years ago. With Amanda and Rossi at the June 1 Becel Ride for Heart are her father Dan, who is holding her brother Joshua, and her mother Lisa.

CLOWN SUPPORT: A group of Grade 1 students at Associated Hebrew Schools' Posluns campus recently ran a lemonade stand that included activities such as hockey shots, face painting, basketball hoops and bubble contests. They raised $540 for the therapeutic clown program at the Hospital for Sick Children. Pictured from left are Dara Birnboim, Joey Hotz, Joey Birnboim and Brooke Sacks.



CARNIVAL KIDS: Grade 1 student Rachel Bloom and her brother Benjamin, in Grade 5, were all smiles May 28 after enjoying the carnival rides at the annual barbecue at United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tikvah campus.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel tov Jack & Bella Crone on your 60th anniversary. Love from David, Sandra, Joe, Danielle, and grandchildren Mark, Amy, Nicole, Tom, Michael, Gabriel and Nathan.

Mazel tov to Isadore (Smitty) Kerzner on your 90th birthday on June 9. With love from Ted, Jinni & Joel, Daniel & Amy.

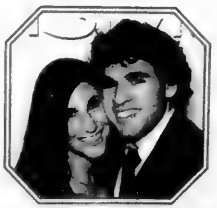
Mazel tov to Esther & Sidney Halpern on your 50th wedding anniversary, June 8. With love from your children and grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Max Dankner on his 83rd birthday. Much love from the family.

Mazel tov to Sonny & Ellie Kaizer on your 50th wedding anniversary, June 15. You made it! Love from all the family.

Mazel tov to Ryan Kraft on his upcoming graduation from Simon Fraser University with a BA in communication. Love, Mom, Dad, Sari and extended family.

Happy 70th birthday to Helen Shneer on June 10. With much love from your family.



Mazel tov on the engagement of Jackie Ostro & Zak Klinghoffer.

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North York, ON. M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, June 16, is the deadline for the June 26 issue and Monday, June 23, is the deadline for the July 3 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, June 12

SURVIVAL IN WARSAW

The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation will present the 2008 **Louis Lenkinski** Award to **Stacy Hushion**. Hushion will present a paper on "Jews, Gender and Survival in Aryan Warsaw" and discuss her research. 7:30 p.m. at 2 Covington Rd. www.pjhftoronto.ca

LITERARY THURSDAY

The Latner Jewish Library presents **Howard Shrier** reading from his new book *Buffalo Jump*. 8 p.m. 416-635-2883, ext. 111

Sunday, June 15

SINGLES GAME NIGHT

Join singles for an evening of board games and bingo. Early bird bingo 7:30-8 p.m. at Beth Torah Synagogue. $8. Call **Mollie** for info, 416-733-3634.

LIVING *KADDISH*

Books and Bagels presents **Rabbi Gedaliah Zweig** speaking about the history and customs of saying *Kaddish*, and sharing stories collected from Jews around the word who performed the mitzvah of saying *Kaddish* for loved ones. 11 a.m. at Beth David Congregation.

Monday, June 16

UPTOWN CHABAD BENEFIT

Uptown Chabad presents "Save a Soul, Save a World," with **Leon Leyson**, the youngest Holocaust survivor from Schindler's List, sharing his Holocaust experiences, and M Generation, a boys choir. 7:30 p.m. at the Leah Posluns Theatre, followed by a dessert reception. Tickets $90 and $180. Reserve, 416-635-9696 or www.uptownchabad.com.

Tuesday, June 17

PRAYER CONFERENCE

The Toronto Jewish Healing Project offers a conference on "The Security of Prayer: Who is Speaking? Who is Listening?" with keynote speaker, **Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl**, at Beth Tzedec Congregation. Registration, 416-944-3359.

BROADWAY & BEYOND

Beth Tzedec Congregation 2008 Concert Series Musical Magic concludes with a concert by **Cantor Simon Spiro** accompanied by a full orchestra. 7:30 p.m. Tickets, 416-781-3514, ext. 218.

SUPPORT TSFAT'S NEEDY

Nachal Novea Mekor Chochma, an organization that provides social and educational assistance to families in need in Safed, Israel, hosts an evening of music with the trio Simply Tsfat and Consul General **Amir Gissin**. Paintings, sculptures and artifacts by **Haim Sherrf** will be displayed. 8 p.m. at the Eglinton Theatre. $72, students $18. Tickets, call **Deena**, 416-887-3779

TERRORISTS TALK

Aish Toronto hosts "From Hollywood to the Holy Land: Jihadists Reveal Their Global Plans to a Jew," with **Aaron Klein**, the Jerusalem bureau chief for worldnetdaily.com, discussing his experiences interviewing some of the most notorious terrorists. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

CHUG HATANACH

Join a study group in a discussion of *The Book of Obadiah*. 8 p.m. at Beth David Congregation. All welcome.

Wednesday, June 18

BAYCREST BOARDWALK

Join the annual Baycrest Boardwalk, a 2K walk and fundraiser

Continued on page 29

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Gary Gladstone, CFRE Campaign Coordinator at 416-830-4313
or check us out on Facebook Group Cheder Chabad
or email info@chederchabad.com

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What's New

Continued from page 28

unlike any other. Set off from Baycrest's Khedive Street entrance for a lively stroll around Baycrest campus. On the way, meet new friends and enjoy herring and schnapps at the Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community. Then, head to the finish line at the Terraces of Baycrest and join the BBQ. 5 p.m. To register or donate contact, www.baycrest.org/boardwalk or 416-785-2500, ext. 2025.

BEREAVEMENT SEMINAR

Temple Har Zion concludes its bereavement seminars "Dealing With Loss" with **Mark Ziv** facilitating a discussion on "Personal Experience." 7:30 p.m. 905-889-2252

NEW HADASSAH CHAPTER

Join a group of young professional women between the ages of 25 and 35, who are either single, in relationships or married, as they form a new Hadassah group in the Bathurst and Lawrence area. For info and location, lseetner@hotmail.com

Other News

OSHAWA SYNAGOGUE

Beth Zion Congregation, a conservative community in Oshawa has Shabbat services led by **Rabbi Israel Man** at 9:30 a.m. followed by kiddush. Join them and meet other Jews from Durham region. For information about religious school and bar mitzvah lessons call 416-840-9723 or 905-723-2353. www.bethzionoshawa.com

KINUS 2008

Reena of Toronto and Tamir of Ottawa host "Kinus 2008," a conference for professionals and interested parties supporting individuals with a developmental disability, June 15-17 in Toronto. The conference theme is inclusion, overcoming barriers to ensure individuals with a developmental disability live as full citizens in the mainstream of our Jewish communities and communities at large. The keynote speaker is **Ian Brown**, of the *Globe and Mail* and CBC. Other speakers include **Shelly Christensen**, author of the *Jewish Community Guide to Inclusion of People with Disabilities*, **Elaine Hall**, founder of The Miracle Project, a musical theatre project for children of all abilities from Los Angeles. Info, contact **Arlene Margolese** 905-889-2690, ext. 2111 or amargolese@reena.org.

A NIGHT IN JAMAICA

Temple Har Zion hosts "A Night in Jamaica" Saturday, June 21. $36. Tickets, anightinjamaica@sympatico.ca

TOXIC TRESPASS

Join Darchei Noam's Shomrei Adamah Environment committee for a screening a documentary about the effects of pollutants on health and ecological consciousness, *Toxic Trespass: How Safe Are Your Children*? A discussion follows with **Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg**, executive producer of the film and **Rabbi Shalom Schachter**. Sunday, June 22, 7 p.m. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

JUNIOR HOCKEY TRYOUTS

Jewish hockey players who play Junior A, AAA, AA and A level are invited to try out for the Canadian Junior Jewish National team which will participate in the World Jewish Hockey Championships in July 2009 in Israel June 22-24. Info visit Israel Ice Hockey website or contact info@israelicehockey.com.

KNITTERS NEEDED

Knitters are needed to knit mittens, hats and scarves for inner city school children. Wool is provided. Mountains of Mittens is a project of Jewish Women International Canada. 416-630-9313 or info@jwicanada.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215 for info and registration.

High Conflict Divorce. A workshop for parents to lessen the impact of divorce on their children. This workshop requires active participation and is not for individuals in an abusive situation. Tuesday, June 17, 6:30-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building.

Adolescents and Divorce. A workshop for parents who have adolescents and are going through a separation or divorce, to help understand their children during this transitional time and help them cope. Tuesday, June 17, 7-9 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, #313 .

Developing a Successful Relationship With Your Ex. A workshop for parents wanting to develop a businesslike relationship with their 'ex' partners by negotiating the day-to-day details of their children's lives based on their needs. Wednesday, June 18, 7-9 pm. at The Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tikvah Synagogue Friendship Group presents "A Taste of Opera," a program of operatic music presented by **Syd Seltzer** featuring Jewish opera singers who performed at the New York Metropolitan Opera. Thursday, June 12, 2 p.m. $3, non-members $5. 416-221-3434

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC discusses "Power of Attorney for Property and Personal Care, Substitute Decision Making and More" with lawyer from Advocacy Centre for the Elderly. Thursday, June 19, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

The Association of Jewish Seniors' hosts a "To Our Good Health" seminar with **Jan MacQuarrie** on "Laughter is the Best Medicine." Monday, June 23, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre. Lunch and entertainment included. Free for members who pay next year's dues, guests $10. Reserve by June 16. Reserve, **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama. Wednesday, June 18. No dances in June. Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom Social Club offers theatre trips to see *Wonderful Town*, Wednesday, July 2, *A Little Night Music*, Tuesday, August 12 and *The Music Man* Sept. 3. $85 each, includes orchestra seats for matinee performance and transportation. Reserve, 416 633-3838.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"A Jewish Perspective on the 10 Commandments" with **Rabbi Howard Morrison**, Tuesday, June 17, 10 a.m. $3, non members $6.

Dénture Clinic, Tuesday, June 17, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free.

Chiropody Clinic, accepting new clients, up to six visits/year, $42.50. Appointment, call ext. 131.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

The Book and Munch Club has resumed meeting with group leader **Marilyn Fine** on Wednesdays from 12:00 Noon to 1:15 p.m., in the Gathering Place

The Torah Study program is held weekly on Sundays in Classroom A and B, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

"Hebrew from Scratch," an ulpan for beginners, level *aleph*. Learn how to read with and without vowels. For beginners and those looking for Hebrew review. No prerequisite. June 16-19, 7-9 p.m. $90, non members $110. Ext. 154

"Abraham to Saddam: History of the Jews of Iraq" a lecture with **Diana Mingail**, Thursday, June 19, 7:30 p.m. Members free, non members $8. Info, ext. 154.

Jazz @ the J, Ron Davis Sextet, Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. $24, students $15, day of show, $28. Ext. 0.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

BJCC 6th Annual Golf Tournament Thursday, June 26 at Glen Eagle Golf Club. Call **Jim**, ext. 371.

Conversation Cafes, newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

Volunteers Wanted

CIRCLE OF CARE

Circle of Care is looking for mature thinking, caring individuals who would like to give back to the community. A bubbie or zaide is waiting for you to befriend them. E-mail slynch@circleofcare.com or call **Selena**, 416-635-2900, ext. 462 to volunteer.

15TH ANNIVERSARY OF W.O.W.: Widows and/or Widowers, a group that offers friendship and support for those 55-70 who want to move on with their lives, recently celebrated its 15th anniversary. Programs include monthly meets, dinners, speakers, get-aways and holiday celebration. For information call Sonia, 416-398-1962 or Sam, 647-340-1281. From left: Bea Rosenberg, Rhoda Zaracoff, Betty Molnar, Bev Bobkin-English and Helen Linetsky.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 32

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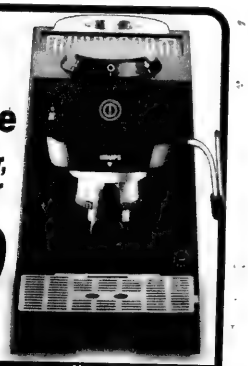

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Evgeny Kravchenko	May 16/08	520 9th Street
Muriel Goldstein	May 23/08	645 Castlefield Avenue
Shirley Mann	May 24/08	1238 Queen Street, East
Gunter Salomon	May 25/08	20 Strathaven Drive
Stanley Smither	May 26/08	19 Royal Oak Drive
Lorraine Dingman	May 26/08	27 Chestnut Park Road
Morris Kerzner	May 27/08	244 Dunvegan Road
Rae Joel	May 27/08	165 Crescent Road
Norman Morrison	May 28/08	668 Roselawn Avenue
Edna Rockman	May 29/08	127 Rosbury Street
Helen Zamon	May 31/08	6 Orchid Court
Lynne Cogan	May 31/08	270 Queen's Quay

HEBREW BASIC

Neta Shapiro	May 27/08	4266 Bathurst Street

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Marcus, Anita	May 23/08	287 Betty Ann Dr
Seach, Freda	May 24/08	
Adwokat, Sigalit Cheryl	May 25/08	55 Cedarcroft Blvd
Roberts, Rose	May 25/08	Private
Shapiro, Kateryna	May 26/08	Private
Doppelt, Max	May 26/08	80 Antibes Dr
Gardner, Howard Aubrey	May 26/08	234 Cundles Rd
Weisz, George	May 28/08	88 Redondo Dr
Soberman, Louis	May 29/08	2 Covington Rd
Glowinski, Jacob	May 29/08	177 Linus Rd
Pelchovitz, Leo	May 29/08	333 Clark Ave. W
Fisher, Ruth	May 29/08	3560 Bathurst St
Levenchuk, Efim	May 30/08	Private
Sak, Olia Golda	May 30/08	Private
Davidner, Abraham Arnold	May 30/08	Private
Kertesz, Alice	May 31/08	Private
Block, Pearl	May 31/08	
Braun, Masha	June 1/08	11 Townsgate Dr
Markus, Margaret	June 1/08	4160 Bathurst St
Mann, Morris	June 2/08	7460 Bathurst St

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
MARTIN DORFMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd at 11:00 a.m.
Beth Tzedec Memorial Park
Bathurst north of Finch, Section 6
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of
ROZALIA FRIEDMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd at 1:00 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St., 3 km north of Major Mackenzie
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

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The Canadian Jewish news

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of the late
SAUL MARMUREK ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 15TH, 11:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Apter Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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Your Loving Kids,
Stephen, Perry, Cindy, Blake

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
MIETEK (MIKE) WEINREICH ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd at 10:30 a.m.
Beth Tzedec Cemetery
Bathurst St., N of Finch
Section #12 Plot 64
Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

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Coast to Coast

Doctor quits rather than treat ailing man

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — The doctor who originally wanted to remove an Orthodox Jewish man from life support last fall has resigned from Winnipeg's Grace Hospital, saying that "continued support of the patient is tantamount to torture."

The trial to decide whether the hospital has the right to remove Sam Golubchuk's life support against his family's wishes and religious beliefs is set to begin Nov. 24, almost one year after Golubchuk's family initially obtained an injunction against doctors who wanted to remove the 84-year-old from life support.

In an affidavit, Dr. Anand Kumar said he withdrew his services because it is "in violation of my medical ethics to continue [treating Golubchuk]." He also said he believes that the "services administered in accordance with the [injunction] order are not of any medical benefit," and in fact cause harm to Golubchuk because they're uncomfortable and painful.

In his resignation letter, Kumar wrote, "If we honestly attempt to follow the Court mandate to focus on keeping Mr. Golubchuk from his natural death, we will likely have to continue to surgically hack away at his infected flesh at the bedside in order to keep the infection at bay. This is grotesque. To inflict this kind of assault on him without reasonable hope of benefit is an abomination. I can't do it."

On June 3, Grace Hospital made a motion to the Court of Queen's Bench to have the trial moved up from November to September because Kumar quit.

Gord McKinnon, the hospital's lawyer, told the court Kumar's resignation leaves the facility with only five intensive care specialists.

Dr. Elizabeth Cowden, the hospital's chief medical officer, said in an affidavit that if other physicians were also to withdraw their services, the intensive care unit "may be forced to close."

The court also heard from the hospital's lawyers that Golubchuk is "barely above a vegetative state," and that nurses are also experiencing a great deal of stress in providing care that they believe is harmful to a patient's dignity.

The lawyer for Golubchuk's family, Neil Kravetsky, responded that Golubchuk's condition is no worse than it was several months ago, and that it has actually improved from last November, when the court first issued the injunction preventing the removal of Golubchuk from life support.

Kravetsky noted that the hospital could have appealed the injunction to a higher court but did not do so.

He also said that because he is a sole practitioner, he will not be ready to conduct the trial at the earlier date. He emphasized that the complex case will involve bringing in out-of-town medical experts, and that moving up the date would leave him with inadequate time to properly prepare his case. He also has another trial set for September.

Kravetsky argued that the idea other intensive care specialists at the hospital may follow Kumar's lead in resigning is "merely a hypothetical."

In any event, he said, the case will take months to go through the courts, particularly since it's unlikely that a judge would render a decision immediately after a trial.

Chief Justice Marc Monnin is expected to make a decision regarding trial dates shortly. In the meantime, the injunction remains in force.

Golubchuk has been in the intensive care unit since last October, when he was admitted suffering from pneumonia and pulmonary hypertension, and was put on life support Nov. 3.

Montreal bagels eaten in outerspace

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Could there be better free publicity on – or off – the planet than to have it revealed that the renowned Montreal bagel has been eaten among the stars?

Or can bagels be so good as to be literally out of this world?

That was the case recently after media across Canada reported that Montreal-born astronaut Greg Chamitoff, aboard the Discovery space shuttle on his way to a six-month stay at the International Space Station, lifted off on May 31 carrying with him 18 authentic Montreal sesame seed bagels from the Fairmount Bagel Factory.

It couldn't hurt, of course, that Chamitoff's aunt, Mona Shlafman, owns the business.

Gregory "is in touch with us all the time," said Cote St. Luc resident Shlafman, whose late brother, Usher (also known as Ashley), was Chamitoff's father.

"He called us up and said he would like to take some bagels along."

The general media got wind of it through a family friend, Sol Boxenbaum, who disclosed the news on a program he hosts on radio station CJAD.

"After that, people were calling us left, right and centre," Shlafman said.

As was reported in a March 27 *CJN* interview, Chamitoff and his family moved to California when he was 11 after spending his formative years in Chomedey, Laval.

Shlafman said that although her nephew was originally informed he could take a mere seven bagels along as part of a "wish list" the astronauts get, she sent him four packages of six anyway, of which he was ultimately allowed to bring three on board.

Shlafman, who sent the bagels to her nephew only one day before blastoff to maximize their freshness, is also pretty confident they were all eaten up by the time the crew got to the Space Station two days later.

She said the recent media coverage has been the most the family has gotten since the Bagel Factory reopened its doors almost 30 years ago. She said if St. Viateur Bagel – the city's other main contender for king of the bagel hill and only one block away – was in any way envious about the publicity, "they didn't show it," and were in fact very gracious.

Her nephew always enjoys her bagels during his visits to Montreal, she said, including prior to the current mission when he and the Discovery crew underwent training on the Canadian-designed robotic arm at the Canadian Space Agency in Longueuil.

Shlafman said she was "very, very nervous" prior to her nephew's liftoff, but said he received spiritual support through "two beautiful Jewish prayers" given to him by Shlafman's daughter, Rhonda, and granddaughter Jacqueline Rose, 7, a student at United Talmud Torahs in Snowdon.

In his personal possessions kit, Chamitoff also carried with him on board two rocket-shaped, handcrafted mezuzot designed by Tel Aviv judaica silversmith and artisan Laura Cowan.

He is scheduled to return to Earth in the fall.

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Coast to Coast

First Nations group supports Israel

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

WINNIPEG — An aboriginal Christian leader here has founded a new solidarity organization with Israel in honour of Israel's 60th birthday.

Rev. Raymond McLean, the pastor of the First Nations Family Worship Centre, launched the organization, World Indigenous Nations for Israel, to galvanize support for the State of Israel.

"No one in the aboriginal community has ever done this before. We will go from church to church, and I believe that within two years we can have one million people registered as members," he said. The group's motto is, "Wherever we stand, we stand for Israel."

A recent celebration of Israel's birthday in Rev. McLean's church on Flora Avenue, in the heart of the north end of the city, was televised by Songs of Living Waters Ministries, an affiliate of the Miracle Channel. The Miracle Channel is a Canadian Christian television station.

Rev. McLean, who was in Israel for Yom Ha'atzmaut, had brought back Israeli flags, which were used to decorate the church. Dale Jack, an aboriginal woman, sang *Hatikvah* at the celebrations.

"We are going to be celebrating all year, because the Jewish people got their land back that God had promised them," Rev. McLean told the revellers at the Israel birthday festivities. "As long as we're going to be on this planet, we stand with Israel…We are commanded to love Israel and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem.

"I believe that since the Jewish people are God's chosen people, we have to stand with them."

Christian aboriginal leader Rev. Irvin Wilson also spoke at the event. "We are going to stand with the real indigenous nation, the people of Israel," he said.

Those attending the event sang and danced, many with Israeli flags in hand, during the celebration that lasted for more than two hours.

Phyllis Godfrey, an aboriginal woman, held a "tabert," a round decorative item with tassles on it while she danced at the event. She said she made the tabert, which was decorated with a Magen David and a dove, by hand.

Rev. McLean has been to Israel eight times and will be leading a tour to Israel this July. "I try to lead two trips a year to Israel," he said.

He also attended the Walk for Israel, which took place here on May 25, in celebration of Israel's 60th birthday.

People can join World Indigenous Nations for Israel online when the organization's website is up.

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TIME TO GET MOVING: Zareinu Educational Centre student Yosef Gavert leads 11th Annual Zareinu Moveathon fundraising ride along the Niagara Escarpment on June 1.

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משהו משמח

כשקורה משהו משמח בישראל-יש לטור הזה חובת דיווח. עיתון הארץ מדווח על ד"ר גיל ויגש, פסיכולוג ויזם, שהקים חברה שמתמחה במתן שירותים טלפוניים. ההבדל ביניה לבין חברות דומות הוא שהיא מעסיקה אך ורק אנשים עם מוגבלויות.

בתנאי הקבלה לחברה כתוב שהיא מעסיקה רק בבדי שמיעה, עוורים, חולי לב, משותקים, אחזה קבוצה שכמעט אף פעם לא מתקבלת לעבודה. רק לשם סטטיסטיקה-160 אלף מבין 180 אלף בעלי המוגבלויות בישראל אינם מועסקים כיום.

מאחר וענף התקשורת הטלפונית משותע לכוח עבודה קבוע, כי סטודנטים נשארים שם תקופות קצרות בלבד -הקים ד"ר ויגש קורס להכשרת בעלי המוגבלויות, והעובדים שלו נחטפו לעבודה.

בתג הפסח קיבל ד"ר ויגש מכתב תודה מהעובדים שלו ובו היה כתוב: "זהו תג חירותנו הראשון".

מָרְנָ"שׁ. כן ירבו.

מה יהיה

אהוד ברק, מנהיג מפלגת העבודה, הביע ברבים את דעתו שעל אהוד אולמרט להתפטר או לעזוב את תפקידו במהלך החקירה שמתנהלת נגדו עכשיו. בארץ יש רחש של בחירות ממשמשות ובאות. לי אישית זה הכל נראה כמו ספין ועבודה בעיניים:

כל הסקרים מראים שאם יתקיימו בחירות עכשיו-תימחק מפלג תקדימה, וממפלגת העבודה כמעט לא ישאר דבר. לשון אחרת-הליכה לבחירות ביוזמת מפלגת העבודה או קדימה תביא למחיקתן. יתרה מזאת-גם ש"ס והגימלאים עושים רושם כמו מי שלא ירוויח בבחירות מוקדמות. מאוד ברור שהמרוויחים הישירים יהיו נתניהו והליכוד.

כל מי שמכיר את ההידבקות לכיסא של הפוליטיקאי הישראלי המצוי מבין שאנשי העבודה, קדימה וש"ס לא יבצעו התאבדות המונית רק כדי לראות את נתניהו עולה.

ועל כן הדרכה יותר סביר שלמרות התצהרות-יסכימו השותפים הקואליציוניים למנהיג חדש למפלגת קדימה-קרוב לודאי ציפי לבני. אבל שישאר בינינו.

Peace Now made the 'unthinkable thinkable'

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Peace Now made the "unthinkable thinkable," says Sheldon Gordon, the president of Canadian Friends of Peace Now, which marks its 28th anniversary this year.

"Peace Now has won legitimacy, in Israel and the Jewish Disapora, for the idea of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian dispute," said Gordon, referring to the Israeli grassroots movement that has called for territorial compromise and Palestinian statehood since its inception exactly three decades ago.

"Even Likudniks pay lip service to the concept," he added. "It wasn't that long ago that the idea of partitioning the Land of Israel was heresy to the right. Even the centre rejected the possibility of a PLO-led Palestinian state. Peace Now has made the unthinkable thinkable."

Gordon, who has headed CFPN for the past year, says it has played a valuable role in this country. "CFPN, by its presence, shows that the Jewish community is not monolithic in its views on Israel, and that it is legitimate to question policies of an Israeli government while at the same time supporting the state of Israel and its right to exist in peace and security."

Saying that Peace Now has exerted considerable influence on Israeli politics, he said, "It says something that the prime minister of Israel today talks like a member of Peace Now."

Peace Now was founded in March 1978 after Israel and Egypt launched peace talks. Concerned that the then Israeli prime minister, Menachem Begin, was not sufficiently flexible, a group of Israeli soldiers and officers wrote a letter asking him to desist from steps "that could cause endless problems to our people and our state."

They argued that Jewish settlements in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were counterproductive and that Israel's occupation of the territories could undermine Israel's Jewish character.

Thirty years on, Peace Now – which monitors the building of Jewish settlements in the territories and strives to bring together Israelis and Arabs in dialogue forums – advocates policies that are consistently supported by "a majority of Israelis in public opinion polls," Gordon observed.

Sheldon Gordon

Nonetheless, CFPN – a constituent organization of Canadian Jewish Congress – is for all practical purposes shunned by the Canada-Israel Committee. "It's hard to be part of the debate, let alone influence it, when we are denied a seat on the Canada-Israel Committee's board," he said.

Gordon, a journalist, admits that CFPN is still far from popular among some Canadian Jews.

"There's no denying we are a minority taste in the Jewish community. That said, we are considered more 'respectable' and 'mainstream' today than in the early 1980s. My goodness, we're even welcome to hold events in Conservative synagogues, which wasn't always the case. *The Canadian Jewish News* writes articles about us and covers our events. Even the *Jewish Tribune* [the house organ of B'nai Brith Canada] does so from time to time."

CFPN was founded in 1980 by Mel Shipman in Toronto and by Dr. Frank Guttman in Montreal.

"We don't have members as such," Gordon said. "We have supporters, donors, 2,500 across Canada. The number has held fairly steady."

Peace Now supports a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict that would facilitate Arab recognition of Israel.

"The Beirut plan, reaffirmed by the Saudis, provides such a framework," he said in a reference to a 2002 Arab peace plan that calls for a full Israeli withdrawal from the territories and a resolution of the Palestinian refugee problem in exchange for peace and normalization with all member states of the Arab League.

"Peace Now would welcome a peace settlement based on whatever degree of territorial withdrawal by Israel is acceptable to both sides," said Gordon. "This is likely to require an Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, in the case of the Palestinians, and from the Golan Heights, in the case of Syria, that is far reaching and may not be total. Israel [may be able to retain] some settlement blocs in the West Bank in return for compensating the Palestinians with alternative territory."

Gordon said that Israel's settlements are not the sole impediment but definitely "a major obstacle" in the attainment of peace.

He warned that their continued growth may "foreclose any eventual possibility of peace."

Asked if he is hopeful about the prospects of peace now or in the near future, he replied, "We've learned from sad experience that it never pays to be overly hopeful about the Arab-Israeli dispute."

Indeed, he noted, Peace Now suffered a series of setbacks with the collapse of the 1993 Oslo peace process, the eruption of the second Palestinian uprising in 2000 and the ascension of Hamas following its victory in 2006 parliamentary elections and its seizure of Gaza last June.

Nevertheless, Gordon points to what he described as "hopeful signs."

As he put it, "One is that Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Israel and President Mahmoud Abbas of the Palestinian Authority both seem sincere in their desire for a peace settlement. They are hampered, however, by their domestic political weakness.

"Another hopeful sign is that Israel and Syria are engaged in indirect negotiations through Turkey. Yet another encouraging sign is that the hands-off approach of the Bush administration toward the conflict might be succeeded by a more activist U.S. administration, particularly if Barack Obama is elected president in November."

Gordon said that Israel should try to strengthen Abbas, at least in the eyes of Palestinians, by dismantling roadblocks and checkpoints not vital to its security yet interfere with "Palestinian economic and labour mobility within the West Bank."

He urged Israel to continue negotiating indirectly with Hamas, through Egypt, so that a long-term truce can be signed that results in the release of abducted soldier Gilad Shalit, who was kidnapped near Gaza two years ago this month.

Gordon warned that Hamas can block a peace agreement. "It can play, and is playing, the role of spoiler. It's somewhat surreal for Abbas and Olmert to be negotiating a final-status agreement while Hamas is firing rockets at Sderot and triggering Israeli retaliation that harms Palestinian civilians in Gaza."

He opposes Israel's current blockade of Gaza. "It has been a moral and strategic failure. It punishes Gaza's entire civilian population with severe humanitarian deprivation, which is unethical, and has totally failed to dislodge Hamas or weaken its hold on power in Gaza."

Iran's pursuit of a nuclear capability, within the context of a radicalized Middle East, is the greatest external threat Israel faces, according to Gordon.

On the home front, the biggest internal threat Israel confronts is its "fragmented and dysfunctional political system," which he said, thwarts the achievement of a realistic peace agreement that the majority of Israelis and Palestinians could support.

STUDENTS HONOURED: At its recent Family-in-Israel Dinner, Emunah Women of Toronto presented awards to students with outstanding extracurricular participation and community service involvement who will be also studying in seminaries in Israel next year. Pictured, from left, are Paula Dubrow, award committee co-chair; Danya Borenstein, a student at the Vaughan campus of the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, who received the Jack & Edie Kalb Award; Chaya Solomon, a student at Ulpanat Orot who received the Dorothy Zeifman Memorial Award; and Roberta Newman, award committee co-Chair. Not pictured is Yardena Keslassy, a student at Tiferes Bais Yaakov who received the Louis Manpel Memorial Award. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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Military recruitment targets Jewish community

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When it comes to public perceptions about the military, there are several myths that recruiters, both in Canada and the United States, have to contend with. Like the one that says only poorly educated people with few prospects would enlist, or another that holds that the pool of potential recruits has dried up because of unpopular wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In fact, applications to the Canadian Armed Forces were so numerous in the past year, recruiters responded by increasing their quota to 6,800 from 6,400. Thousands more were turned away.

Scenes of the Canadian military in some of their various roles. [Photos courtesy of the Canadian Armed Forces]

In the United States, the Pentagon announced this month that all military services met or exceeded their recruiting goals for April. The Marine Corps led the way, signing 142 per cent of the number it was looking for.

As for the educational level of soldiers, the military on both sides of the border boast higher levels of educated personnel than can be found in the general population.

In fact, providing a university education or training in a trade is one of the Canadian Armed Forces' key enticements and is one referred to often by Maj.-Gen. Walter Semianiw, chief of military personnel of the Forces. New recruits can combine a top level education in the field of their choice, paid for by the Forces, with the opportunity to serve their country, he said.

Semianiw made his pitch to the *The CJN* as the military ramps up its efforts to seek new recruits in the Jewish community.

That effort is just getting underway, and a complete marketing strategy hasn't yet been developed. But Semianiw expects the campaign will include advertising and personal appearances at synagogues and high schools.

The target market is 19-to-25-year-olds, but recruits in their late 40s are also welcome, he said.

The Forces will be expanding in the next few years and needs more people. As part of a $30-billion renewal, the military will expand to 100,000 soldiers, sailors and airmen, up from the current 89,000. Both the regular forces and reserves will grow. The regular forces will increase to 70,000 from 65,000, and the reserves to 30,000 from 24,000.

Reserves train on weekends and during the summer, and are posted within Canada, unless personnel volunteer for service abroad.

Semianiw, who calls himself the forces' CEO for human resources, said military recruitment within the Jewish community "is part of a broader effort as part of a diversity piece."

A "passionate" proponent of diversifying the Forces, Semianiw said the military ought to reflect the reality of Canadian society.

"The greatness of the country is its pluralism," he said on the line from Ottawa. "It is a mosaic, and by and large, people live peacefully together."

Canadians have an international reputation as an effective force, including in non-combat roles of reconstruction and negotiation. Semianiw attributes that to Canadians' comfort in dealing with people of different backgrounds, a strength that translates well abroad.

In preparing a pitch to the Jewish community, Semianiw sought the advice of Rabbi Reuven Bulka, co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress.

Rabbi Bulka said he was "delighted" at the interest shown in the Jewish community by the general.

"I'm a military man from way back," Rabbi Bulka said. "I appreciate it when people put their lives on the line to protect our freedom. You can't take that for granted."

Rabbi Bulka said Congress supports the Forces' recruitment efforts, and he expects to join Semianiw in presenting the virtues of military life.

"He wants to go on a road show together to speak to various and sundry Jewish audiences," Rabbi Bulka said.

The Forces don't currently possess a statistical breakdown of its ethnic composition, though that data might be gathered in coming years. "I can't tell how many Jews there are, but I know there are some," Semianiw said.

(The military has added two Jewish chaplains, even though Rabbi Bulka said there are hardly enough Jewish soldiers to warrant it. He called it a "visionary" development, especially in view of expected higher numbers of Jewish recruits.)

The Forces has lots to offer Jewish recruits, the general continued. At the head of the list is the opportunity to serve Canada as instructed by the country's political leadership. Jewish soldiers can do so knowing they need not compromise their unique identities.

Semianiw said soldiers' "hard [field] rations" are already kosher and providing kosher food for those who request it "is where we are heading." Soldiers will also be accommodated so they can observe Jewish holidays. Other religious requirements will also be respected, including religious clothing and the treatment of injured or killed soldiers.

Those accommodations are not limited to Jewish personnel. "It is about allowing individuals to practise their faith" and stepping away from "a cookie-cutter approach" towards military personnel, he said.

Then there are the educational benefits – "the big selling point," said Rabbi Bulka.

The Forces offers recruits the opportunity to pursue a post-secondary education and professional development at taxpayers' expense, Semianiw said.

Soldiers can take their degree at recognized Canadian institutions of higher learning, with the military underwriting a three or four-year degree and even post-graduate education, all the while paying recruits a monthly wage of about $700, he said.

In exchange, the military expects at least three years of service.

Once recruits join the regular forces, they are paid at competitive rates. Reservists, who work in their regular jobs during the week, earn a daily wage during weekend and summertime service. They include people in all sorts of professions, Semianiw noted, doctors and lawyers among them.

When a national emergency strikes, such as spring flooding in Winnipeg or ice storms in Quebec, the Forces dispatch reserve volunteers to assist.

And what about the combat role of the Forces? Or even jumping out of the back of an airplane, as is highlighted in recent Forces television advertising?

Recruits can apply to more than 100 jobs, among them the search-and-rescue crew, known as Sartech. Those are the guys seen in TV commercials parachuting out of a plane or being lowered out of a Cormorant helicopter on a rescue mission.

Semianiw said participating in combat missions is only one of many reasons Canadians join the Forces.

"At the end we want people to join who want to serve the nation,' he said.

"As part of serving the nation you develop a warrior spirit," and that includes "protecting, defending and upholding Canadian values," he added.

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U.S., Israel close to stopping Iranian nukes: Olmert

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WASHINGTON — After meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush in Washington last week, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the end of Iran's controversial nuclear program was approaching.

"With every day that passes, we are getting closer to stopping Iran's nuclear program," he said, adding that substantial steps are being taken to handle the Iranian threat in "a more effective manner."

Olmert added that, as a result of the hour-long meeting with Bush, there were fewer question marks between the two allies concerning the means, time constraints, and level of U.S. determination in dealing with the Iranian nuclear program.

"Naturally, the Iranian issue was central to our talks, and our shared point of departure is the need to deal with Iran before it manages to acquire non-conventional capabilities," Olmert told reporters.

He said the two leaders also discussed the talks with the Palestinians and Lebanon, and Bush asked to be briefed on developments with Syria, with whom Israel recently re-started peace talks.

"Every day that goes by we are making significant steps in dealing with this problem [Iran]. We, with the world under American leadership, are dealing with it in an effort to reach the goal which is to prevent Iran from acquiring [nuclear] arms," Olmert said.

Asked about Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama's speech last week to the AIPAC conference, in which he vowed that Jerusalem will forever be Israel's undivided capital, Olmert said he did not hear the speech himself, but that "from what I heard, [Obama, U.S. Senator Hillary Clinton and Republican presidential nominee John McCain] had impressive performances [at AIPAC] and I am very impressed by these declarations. I will speak with all of them by phone."

Iran is an "existential threat to peace," Bush told Olmert.

"It is very important for the world to take the Iranian threat seriously, which the United States does," Bush said as he began White House talks with Olmert, who was visiting amid a corruption scandal at home that could drive him from office and disrupt the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

The Washington talks came a day after Olmert issued his toughest warning yet to Tehran, saying Iran's nuclear program must be stopped by "all possible means."

Israeli Prime Minister Olmert chats with U.S. President George W. Bush. [Isranet photo]

Bush assured Olmert of the U.S. commitment to Israel.

Olmert, at Bush's side in the Oval Office, agreed that Iran poses "the main threat to all of us."

Olmert also told Bush that Israel appreciates the comments he made during his visit to Israel last month, when he participated in celebrations of the country's 60th anniversary. Olmert told his host that Israel values his friendship and commitment to its security.

Israelis continue to offer aid in Burma

Continued from page 1

They have also dispatched medical specialists to train 500 local doctors to deal with large-scale disasters.

"They are not used to dealing with massive natural disasters, so our teams went into a couple of hospitals in Yangon and trained them on how to deal with massive casualties, [sharing] the expertise that our doctors gain in Israel because of suicide bombings," Zahavi said.

IsraAID has been gaining recognition and respect in the region because of the success of its efforts.

Last month, Israel was one of about 50 countries invited to attend the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) conference, which was held to raise funds for disaster relief.

Dr. Ephraim Laor, an IsraAID representative, was asked by Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join Israel's ambassador to Yangon to attend and present an overall plan to assist the population affected by the cyclone.

Zahavi said that permits to enter villages in the Delta region were hard to get, but because of the connections IsraAID made with local officials, it was able to obtain government approval to enter them.

Speaking last Thursday, he said that members of the third Israeli relief team had been in Myanmar for the previous two weeks, and he said he hoped they would soon be replaced by another team.

He said the amount of time that IsraAID spends in Myanmar will depend on the funding it gets.

Israeli medical professionals who volunteered with IsraAID in Myanmar led a class to train local doctors and nurses how to deal with large-scale disasters.

[Photo courtesy of IsraAID]

Zahavi said he is looking into establishing a long-term medical rehabilitation program and has approached some of IsraAID's donors in Israel and North America, including UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, for funding that would allow IsraAID to remain in Myanmar from six months to a year.

"Currently, with the funding that we have from the Jewish federation of Toronto and a couple other federations and private donors, I think we'll be able to work there for the next month or month-and-a-half," he said.

Federation president Ted Sokolsky said he is pleased to have established a relationship with IsraAID.

"Whenever there are these kinds of disasters and relief efforts, we always think of IsraAID first, because we really trust their ability to get into troubled areas of the world effectively and efficiently," Sokolsky said.

The $20,000 that the federation donated last month went entirely to fund IsraAID's mission, and it has since donated another $20,000, Sokolsky added.

"There is a double benefit. Obviously, the good work that they do is really important, but we also back them because we think it's great for these parts of the world to get another view, a positive view, of Israel and Israelis."

Zahavi said that he is thrilled about his connection with the federation.

"I can tell you for a fact that they're one of the few federations that really understand the basic need to respond immediately to these disasters... They also understand the concept of international aid and using Israeli expertise," Zahavi said.

"We really see this as a fruitful partnership, and we're overwhelmed with the support of the Jewish community there."

Few Jordanians will mention 'Israel'

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to The CJN

AMMAN, Jordan — As Israel celebrates its 60th anniversary, it is difficult to find people on the streets in the cities of Jordan who are willing to utter the word "Israel."

For the majority of Jordanians I spoke to, all of the land between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River is "Palestine," notwithstanding the existence of a 1994 peace agreement between Israel and Jordan.

In the small, remote village of Umm Qais, Ibrahim Al-Arousan, 37, sat in the Resthouse Restaurant, which has a commanding view of the Kinneret, the Golan Heights and the Galilee. Al-Arousan has a degree in conservation and heritage management from Yarmouk University in Irbid, Jordan.

Looking toward the Kinneret, Al-Arousan said, "There is Tabariyyeh [Tiberias], and Lake Taberiyyah [the Sea of Galilee] in Palestine… Before the occupation in 1948, my father and uncle used to travel back and forth with their caravan of camels from Taberiyyeh to Um Qais."

In Um Qais, where few Westerners ever visit, virtually none of the villagers will use the word "Israel." Shopkeepers Omar and Salam Malkawy told visitors, "You must go to the [Resthouse] restaurant to see the view of 'Palestine.'"

When Mustafa Mahmoud, who is studying accountancy, was asked whether he would like to visit Lake Taberiyyah, he answered, "No, don't want to go. War," he said, gesturing as if he is holding a gun.

Mahmoud's friend, Hammad Ibraham, from Amman, looked toward Israel and said, "It's dangerous." He added that he is afraid to go to Israel, since he would be shot at there.

In Madaba, outside of Amman, Esau Amjad, a university-educated tour guide, refers to a mosaic map of Ashkelon as "Ashkelon, Palestine."

In the village of Pella, Adnan Matar, a wealthy building contractor, looked out past the Jordan valley and said, "That's Palestine, occupied Palestine." When asked what he sees beyond the West Bank, he refused to say "Israel," but answered, "That's west of Palestine."

Bob, an American archeologist, who wouldn't give his last name, recalled that he once used the word "Israel" when in a taxi in Amman, and he said he could feel the tension afterward. As a result, he tells friends who visit not to use the word.

In Amman and it's environs, many tourist shops sell coffee mugs with a map of the West Bank and Gaza, as well as Israel proper, with the word "Palestine" on it. The map has the Israeli cities of Tel Aviv and Netanya marked on it. There are also gold necklaces with the same map, marked Palestine, for sale.

Abdullah Aloush, of Um Qais, who speaks English fluently, made a distinction between Jews and Israelis. "There's no problem, for Jews coming here. Even if the villagers know they are Jewish, nobody will be against them." But when asked about Israelis coming to visit, Aloush will not use the words "Israel" or "Israelis."

In the five-star Royal Amman Hotel, Mohammed Alkalq, who is studying hotel management and was raised in Jenin, in the West Bank, said he left Jenin because of the economic stagnation there. "There is no tourism in Palestine, because of the war there."

When asked who the war is between, he answered, "Between Palestine and the Jews." When asked if he means that there is a war between Palestine and Israel, he refused to use the word "Israel." He answered, "No, between Palestine and the Jews."

Erin is an American who lives in east Jerusalem and was travelling in Jordan. She refused to give her last name. "I was surprised at how many Palestinians I met used the word 'Jew' but not the words 'Israel' or 'Israelis,'" she said.

About 60 per cent of Jordan's population is made up of Palestinians who fled, mostly from the West Bank, during the wars of 1948 and 1967 and after the Gulf War in 1991.

The relatively few Jordanians I encountered who were willing to use the word "Israel" are not of Palestinian origin.

For example, at the Pella Resthouse, built in 1992 by U.S. aid, manager M.E. Deeb Hussein said, " I have been to Israel four times. I studied archeology in Jordan and Israel. I have been to the Weizmann Institute in Rehovot and to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem… Everyone is welcome here. "

Mohammad Janajrah, a driver for Payless Car Rentals in Amman, who recently retired from the Jordanian army after 18 years of service, said he wants to go to Israel.

"My parents went to Tel-Aviv and liked it, and some day I, too, will go."

A juice stand in Jordan

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YESHIVA UNIVERSITY'S SY SYMS SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
are saddened by the passing of our esteemed friend

Morris Kerzner ז"ל

a highly respected Jewish communal leader in Toronto,
he was the brother of the Vice Chairman of Yeshiva University's
Sy Syms School of Business, Dr. Joseph Kerzner.

Heartfelt condolences are extended to **his beloved wife, Miriam, their children: Lana, and Sheldon and Angie, and his dear siblings and their spouses: Gerty, Joseph (and Lisa), Anne Zaretsky, Louis (and Helen), Max (and Dolly), Albert (and Anita), and Elayne (and Rabbi Barry Greenstone), as well as his many devoted nieces and nephews.**

May the entire family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

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MORE ISRAELI AID FOR CHINA: A second load of humanitarian aid to help victims of last month's earthquake in China's Sichuan province gets loaded onto an El Al cargo plane at Ben-Gurion Airport last week. Some 90 tons of medicine and medical equipment, as well as water purification kits, generators, tents, sleeping bags, and clothing for earthquake survivors was sent to the region by Israel's Ministry of Defence and the Israel Defence Forces, in co-ordination with the Chinese government. [Israel photo]

American Christian builds Jewish library in Lithuania

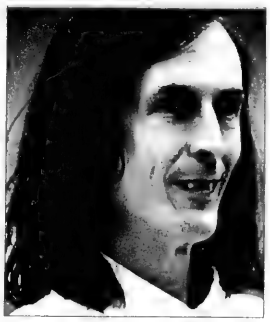
By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

An American Christian of British and Irish descent has embarked on an ambitious project to create a Jewish library in Vilnius (Vilna), whose legendary Jewish community was virtually wiped out by the Nazis in Lithuania.

Wyman Brent, a 45-year-old Baptist originally from Lynchburg, Va., is using his own funds to build the library, but his project is backed by a corps of supporters ranging from British historian Sir Martin Gilbert to the co-founder of the National Organization for Women, Sonia Pressman Fuentes.

"I've always loved libraries and I'm fascinated with Jewish culture," said Brent, who hopes to have the library up and running by 2010, the 65th anniversary of the end of World War II.

If all goes according to plan, it will have a collection of 100,000 books, CDs and DVDs, and will serve as a venue for concerts, art exhibitions, poetry readings and lectures.



Wyman Brent

The proposed library will be nothing if not eclectic.

"If the book is by a Jewish author, it can be on any topic, whether it has a Jewish theme or not," Brent said in an interview from San Diego, Calif., where he currently lives. "If the book is by a non-Jewish author, whether it is fiction or non-fiction, the topic must have some Jewish connection as long as it is not anti-Semitic."

All books will be in English so as to draw in the greatest possible number of users, he explained.

"It will attract locals who are looking to improve their English. The idea is to make the library the largest source of English language material in Vilnius. The study of English is very popular in Lithuania now that it a member of the European Union.

"And if they gain some familiarity with Jewish culture and shed some prejudice along the way, all the better," he added. "What better legacy to leave than a place of learning and education dedicated to fighting prejudice and intolerance?"

Brent, who has been working on the project since 2004, has collected 4,000 books so far, mainly at his own expense.

"While I am like Tevye in that I am not a rich man," he said in a reference to the fabled dairy farmer in *Fiddler on the Roof*, "it has been a pleasure spending what little money I have in buying books for the library."

Still other books have come from the Vilnius Jewish community and Hillel, the North American Jewish student organization.

As well, the musician Janis Ian has donated CDs and the painter Judy Chicago has promised artwork once the library opens.

"Sir Martin has agreed to donate a signed copy of each of the 79 books he has written or edited," Brent noted.

Brent, an online merchant, chose Vilnius as the site of the library after falling in love with the city on his first visit in 1994. He went to Lithuania in the first place because of his fascination with the republics of the former Soviet Union.

"I returned in 1995 and lived there for a full year, both in 1996 and 1997 and 2001 and 2002. This year, I lived in Vilnius for over two months.

"Another reason for choosing Vilna is that it was a centre of Jewish culture and learning [in the first three decades of the 20th century]. There is a good reason it was known as the Jerusalem of Lithuania. With more than 100 synagogues and prayer houses, and with so many Jewish newspapers, it was a city which spread Jewish thought around the world."

Brent intends to launch the project by opening a small version of the library next year. "Vilna will be the cultural capital of the European Union in 2009 and thus will be the focus of media attention. It will be a perfect time to open up something Jewish. Then I hope to open up a permanent location in 2010."

He is being assisted by a Lithuanian Christian, the proprietor of a chain of hostels who believes in his project and is currently looking for a proper site, probably on Pylimo Street, where a synagogue and three Jewish museums are located. "Non-Jewish Lithuanians have voiced interest in and support for the library," Brent said.

Nevertheless, he pointed out, there is an undercurrent of anti-Semitism in Lithuania today.

Jewish institutions in Vilnius have also rallied behind the project.

"The staff of the Vilna Gaon Jewish Museum, the Vilnius Yiddish Institute, the Jewish Culture and Information Center and the principal of the Jewish school have expressed support. And so has the Israeli Embassy."

Brent conceived the project after one of his friends wrote an article on Jews in Tijuana, Mexico.

His immersion in Jewish culture per se, however, began when he started reading books about World War II and the Holocaust.

A high school graduate who has been a voracious reader all his life, Brent is an agnostic who respects all faiths and has a special admiration for and affinity with Jewish culture.

"I am not the king of the world and I can never end anti-Semitism, but if I can open a few minds to the beauty of Jewish culture, I will have done my part to make the world a better place."

Israel Briefs

Shelling kills Negev man

An Israeli man was killed and four other people were wounded last Thursday when Palestinians in the Gaza Strip fired a mortar shell into Kibbutz Nir Oz in the western Negev. Amnon Rosenberg, 51, a father of three from nearby Kibbutz Nirim, was killed when the shell hit outside the paint factory at Kibbutz Nir Oz, southwest of Sderot. Three of the casualties were moderately wounded and the fourth sustained minor wounds in the strike. All the victims were hit with shrapnel from the shell. Not long after the mortar shell strike, Palestinian doctors said a four-year-old girl was killed and her mother wounded by an Israel Air Force attack on Gaza.

Abbas wants Hamas talks

Mahmoud Abbas called for reopening dialogue with Hamas. In a televised speech last Wednesday evening to the Palestinian people, the Palestinian Authority president offered no details about future talks. In his address, Abbas criticized Israel for continuing to build in the settlements and he pledged to call for new presidential and parliamentary elections if the dialogue with Hamas is successful, Associated Press reported.

Israel identifies remains

Israel confirmed that body parts received from Hezbollah belong to Israeli military servicemen killed in the Second Lebanon War. Military sources said that DNA testing performed on human remains repatriated from Lebanon determined that they came from a four-man air crew whose helicopter was shot down by Hezbollah during the 2006 war and an infantryman hit by a missile in a separate battle. Hezbollah handed over the body parts June 1 after Israel freed a Lebanese-born Jew who had completed a prison term for spying. Nine soldiers killed in the 2006 war were not buried intact, Israeli sources said.

More houses for Jerusalem

Israel announced plans to build hundreds of new homes in Jewish neighbourhoods of eastern Jerusalem. The Housing Ministry said June 1 that it would invite construction bids for 763 new housing units in Pisgat Zeev and 121 in Har Homa. The projects, Housing Minister Zeev Boim was quoted as saying, are part of the Israeli government's effort to "bolster" the capital. Pisgat Zeev and Har Homa are on land that Israel captured in the 1967 Six-Day War and where Palestinians want to found a state, though they are included in Jerusalem municipal limits. The Palestinian Authority denounced the new housing plans, saying they contravened the U.S.-sponsored "road map" peace plan that requires a freeze on settlement construction in the West Bank.

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U.S. presidential nominees address AIPAC

Israeli, U.S. safety essential, says McCain

BY RON KAMPEAS
JTA

WASHINGTON — No religious group rejects the Iraq war more than American Jews do. But in a bit of political jujitsu, John McCain is making the policy his own in his plea for Jewish votes.

The Republican presidential nominee made headlines – and drew heavy fire from Democrats – for launching this year's American Israel Public Affairs Committee conference on June 2 with an attack on Democratic nominee Barack Obama's Iran policy.

But more remarkable was how McCain, an Arizona senator, chose to close his speech: defending his commitment to an unpopular war by casting it as important for Israel's safety.

"Another matter of great importance to the security of both America and Israel is Iraq," he said. "You would never know from listening to those who are still caught up in angry arguments over yesterday's options, but our troops in Iraq have made hard-won progress under Gen. Petraeus' new strategy."

McCain was referring to the troop escalation that he advocated a year ago, and that was carried out under the command of David Petraeus, the top U.S. commander in Iraq.

John McCain

"It's worth recalling that America's progress in Iraq is the direct result of the new strategy that Senator Obama vehemently opposed," McCain continued. "Allowing a potential terrorist sanctuary would profoundly affect the security of the United States, Israel and our other friends, and would invite further intervention from Iraq's neighbours, including a very much emboldened Iran. We must not let this happen."

The line earned applause at the AIPAC policy conference – the lobby's membership skews more hawkish on foreign policy than the wider Jewish voting public – but how it will play with the broader American Jewish public remains to be seen.

Jews and black Protestants oppose the war in greater numbers than any other religious group – more than 70 per cent, according to some polls. That and McCain's commitment to conservative social mores – particularly his anti-abortion positions and stated admiration for recent GOP judicial nominations – would apparently make him a difficult sell to American Jews.

But recent polling has shown McCain – in a race against Obama – faring much better among Jews than any Republican candidate has since former president Ronald Reagan. In a Gallup poll of Jewish voters last month, McCain garnered 32 per cent again Obama's 61 per cent, substantially better than the 24-75 oreak President George W. Bush earned in 2004.

McCain's backers credit a "straight talk" strategy, which would explain McCain's tack at the AIPAC conference: they say voters favour a candidate who says what he means even when they don't agree with him, the backers say.

"What is most strikingly different from other candidates is that he is strongly principled and an independent thinker," Lew Eisenberg, a McCain campaign national finance co-chairman, told JTA. He cited McCain's backing for the surge a year ago and his backing for an unpopular immigration reform bill around the same time.

Democrats are not allowing McCain's "straight talk" reputation to go unchallenged. In his AIPAC speech, McCain targeted Obama's signature foreign policy distinction – his willingness to directly engage with the leaders of pariah nations, including Iran.

"The Iranians have spent years working toward a nuclear program, and the idea that they now seek nuclear weapons because we refuse to engage in presidential-level talks is a serious misreading of history," McCain said.

That sparked a long, detailed reply from the Obama campaign outlining the Illinois senator's advocacy of tough Iran sanctions bills and resolutions. The statement also continued a Democratic plan to associate McCain with Bush, the most unpopular president in polling history.

"John McCain stubbornly insists on continuing a dangerous and failed foreign policy that has clearly made the United States and Israel less secure," the Obama statement said. "Here are the results of the policies that John McCain has supported, and would continue. During the Bush administration, Iran has dramatically expanded its nuclear program, going from zero centrifuges to more than 3,000 centrifuges.

"During the Bush Administration, Iran has expanded its influence throughout a vitally important region, plying Hamas and Hezbollah with money and arms. During the Bush Administration, Hamas took over Gaza. Most importantly, the war in Iraq that John McCain supported and promises to continue indefinitely has done more to dramatically strengthen and embolden Iran than anything in a generation."

In a recent interview with the *Atlantic*, McCain showed a willingness to chart his own course, even while echoing much of Bush's thinking on Iran and Iraq. In particular, he signalled a commitment to playing a more active personal role in Israeli-Palestinian talks.

"I would have a hands-on approach," McCain said in the interview, in sharp contrast to the current president's much-noted reluctance to play such a role. "I would be the chief negotiator. I have been there for 30 years. I know the leaders. I know them extremely well. [Israeli Defence Minister] Ehud Barak and I have gone back 30 years. I knew [Prime Minister Ehud] Olmert when he was mayor of Jerusalem. I've met many times with [Likud leader Benjamin] Netanyahu. I've met with [Palestinian Authority President] Mahmoud Abbas."

Republicans' foreign policy has hurt Israel, says Obama

By AMI EDEN
JTA

WASHINGTON — After months of seeking to paint each other as opposites on Mideast policy, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton were on the same page June 4 at the AIPAC policy conference as they ripped into the Bush administration and Republican presidential candidate John McCain on several fronts.

In back-to-back speeches a day after Obama clinched the Democratic presidential nomination, the two U.S. senators eschewed any attempt to differentiate themselves. Instead, they both argued that the Bush administration's policies on Iran and Iraq have hurt U.S. and Israeli interests.

They also sought to paint McCain as bent on carrying out those same policies if he wins the presidency.

Obama began his remarks with praise for Clinton and her candidacy, and the New York senator returned the favour, assuring the thousands of delegates at the annual policy forum of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee that Obama would be a dependable ally in the White House.

Barak Obama

"I know Senator Obama knows what is at stake here," Clinton said of her colleague from Illinois, adding, "Let me be very clear: I know Senator Obama will be a good friend to Israel."

Jewish Democratic insiders said the speeches not only signalled a rapprochement between the candidates, but reflected the emergence of a wider, more aggressive party strategy for fending off Republican efforts to peel away Jewish votes and contributions.

A few years ago, many Democratic activists and lawmakers would have been content to stick with the line that both parties were equally strong on Israel. Now as Iran pushes ahead with its nuclear program, support remains low for the Iraq war and Israel continues to face Hamas rocket attacks, Jewish Democrats see an opening to rebut the Republicans' claim to be the party that's best for Israel.

"This is a new approach," said Steve Rabinowitz, a Democratic consultant whose communications firm also does work for many Jewish organizations. "Two years ago, many thought it would be difficult to persuade people that [President] George W. Bush had not been good for Israel, even dangerous to try it. It's not only a case that can be made now, it's also true."

Rabinowitz said many Democrats feel emboldened to push that argument given the Republicans' harsh rhetoric about Obama and Israel. McCain, an Arizona senator, has portrayed Obama as a Hamas-supported candidate, and Bush delivered a speech at the Knesset last month that many observers viewed as an attempt to tag the Illinois Democrat as an appeaser.

In his own speech to AIPAC on June 2, McCain said Obama's plan for a phased Iraq pullout would create a "potential terrorist sanctuary" that would profoundly "affect the security of the United States, Israel and our other friends, and would invite further intervention from Iraq's neighbors, including a very much emboldened Iran."

But Obama fired back, painting Republicans as advancing a reckless foreign policy that has hurt Israel.

"I don't think any of us can be satisfied that America's recent foreign policy has made Israel more secure," Obama said. "Hamas now controls Gaza. Hezbollah has tightened its grip on southern Lebanon and is flexing its muscles in Beirut. Because of the war in Iraq, Iran – which always posed a greater threat to Israel than Iraq – is emboldened, and poses the greatest strategic challenge to the United States and Israel in the Middle East in a generation.

"Iraq is unstable, and Al Qaeda has stepped up its recruitment. Israel's quest for peace with its neighbors has stalled, despite the heavy burdens borne by the Israeli people. And America is more isolated in the region, reducing our strength and jeopardizing Israel's safety."

"Senator McCain refuses to understand or acknowledge the failure of the policy that he would continue," he said. "I refuse to continue a policy that has made the United States and Israel less secure."

In a conference call immediately after the speech, McCain's highest profile Jewish supporter, U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman, rejected Obama's arguments, saying he was wrong to blame Iran's resurgent power on the Iraq war.

"If Israel is in danger today, it is not because of American foreign policy," Lieberman told reporters. "It's because Iran is a terrorist, expansionist state."

For most of the speech Obama voiced unabashed support for Israel. At one point, though, he did say that Israel could do more to ease Palestinian suffering and live up to prior commitments to refrain from building new settlements. Obama also stressed the need for a two-state solution, adding that Israel must remain a Jewish state with secure borders.

Obama also made several points more often associated with his hawkish Jewish critics: he insisted that Jerusalem must remain Israel's undivided capital and stressed his willingness to resort to military force if diplomacy failed to thwart Iran's nuclear ambition.

"I will do everything in my power to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon," he said. "Everything."

Obama also appeared to hedge on what some saw as an openness to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

Though Clinton appeared to draw a warmer reaction, Obama received several standing ovations, including when he spoke of Judaism's commitment to social justice and the importance of forging strong ties between the Jewish and African-American communities.

1948...They Were There

In Jerusalem, 'it was a miracle they got through it'

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Canadian Miriam Beckerman, who made aliyah to Israel in 1947 and stayed for five years, said that people who come to Israel today have no idea what the pioneers did and tend to take the existence of the country for granted.

Beckerman, 80, an award-winning Yiddish translator, experienced the highs and lows of living in Israel before, during and after Israel's War of Independence, and she recalled a time when the country was established by Jews dedicated to founding a Jewish state.

Miriam Beckerman today

As a teenager living in Toronto, Beckerman was a member of Habonim, a Labour Zionist youth group.

"People like [Israel's first prime minister David] Ben-Gurion used to come to Canada – we had a real Zionist education – and we were asked to join *Hechalutz* [a Zionist group that operated agricultural training farms] and go to Israel, and I took it seriously," Beckerman said.

"But a lot of people aren't aware that a Canadian Jew in 1947 could not go legally to live in Eretz Israel... European [Jews] had a chance if they could get a certificate, the DPs, but they weren't going to give certificates to Canadians or Americans, because there was no urgency there."

But she explained that at the time, Canadians were British subjects and had British passports, so she was given clearance to go to Palestine, since it was then ruled by the British Mandate.

She said before making aliyah, she and all the other Zionists were sent to *hachsharot* (agricultural training farms).

"People who were waiting to go to Palestine, the Zionist youth groups would go to *hachshrah*, where they would live and work communally and learn a little about farming and agriculture, to prepare you for working the land [in Israel]."

By 1947, Beckerman was prepared to make aliyah, and she travelled to New York with a friend named Harry Berstein where they boarded the Marine Carp.

"It was converted from a wartime ship – it wasn't like the luxury ships. It must have been a troop ship," she said.

"I had heard stories about immigrants when they came to Canada, how rough the trip was and how they suffered. The first three days out of New York were very stormy and rough, and I thought, 'Oh God, how am I going to get through this?' But after three days it was OK," she said, adding that the journey lasted two weeks.

She said that representatives from the *Sochnut*, the Jewish Agency, were on the ship, because although the British ruled Palestine then, the *Sochnut* was in charge of Jewish immigration.

Beckerman said that when she was given her identity card, she was asked for her passport.

"Being very naïve, I handed over my passport. They said, 'When you get to the kibbutz, you'll get your passport back.' When I finally got it back, I realized that they had used it to bring in people from the DP camps. How do I know? Because it had a stamp on it from Italy, and I knew I had never been to Italy. They had taken out my picture and used it to bring in other immigrants."

She said she assumed it was the work of the *Bricha*, the illegal immigration movement founded in 1945 that brought European Jews, Holocaust survivors, to Israel.

She said she was 19 when she arrived in Kfar Blum, a kibbutz in the Upper Galilee, in 1947.

"Kfar Blum is in the Hula Valley, and all around were hills. The hills were bare and you couldn't see beyond the hills, so it was like you were buried in a hole. It was so depressing. It wasn't as though you were close to any city," she said.

"The thing about arriving in Kfar Blum was that I had no family, I didn't know the language and it was not easy."

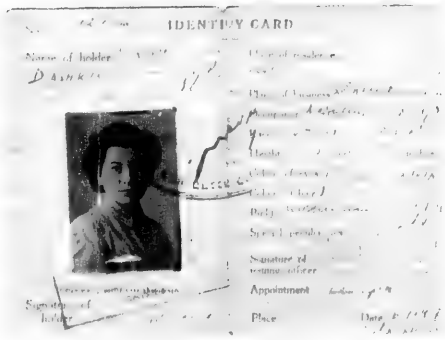
She stayed in Kfar Blum for about three months, until her friend, Berstein, told her that he would be relocating to another kibbutz, Ramat Yochanan, and she decided to go with him.

"They had a group of youth aliyah there from Italy... They had a Palmach group [the Haganah's fighting force] there and there you could get the feel of the country because it was near Haifa... It was within walking distance of Kfar Attah."

She said that when she went on a tour to visit another settlement called Ma'ayan Baruch, she decided to relocate once again.

This is where she met her late husband Moshe Beckerman, who passed away in 1993.

He was a sabra who had been with the British eighth army from Palestine. He served under the British in the battle for North Africa, but spent most of the war years in a POW camp, she said.



Beckerman's identity card

After they married in October 1947, they moved to Tel Aviv, where her husband was originally from, and he worked as a foreman for the boats in the Tel Aviv port, where he supervised the loading and unloading of ships.

Beckerman recalled a night when her husband came home very late from work.

"They were bringing in *neshek* [weapons] from Czechoslovakia and it was hidden underneath sacks of onions and at night, in the dark, they would toss the onions into the Mediterranean and dig out the weapons."

She said that her husband was secretly working for the Haganah, the underground Jewish defence force.

"In those years, everything was very secret. So, when I met him, he didn't talk about what he was doing there in the kibbutz, but actually, he was training the Palmachnikim," she said.

"Of course no one talked about what they were doing. It was all very quiet, hidden."

Beckerman said that when Israel gained independence in 1948, there was great rejoicing, but it was bittersweet because of the war that followed.

"Everything was strictly rationed. You had to stand in line for everything. You got maybe three eggs a week per family and meat was really, really rare. I remember we used to buy a chicken on the black market and share it between two families. People can't imagine how scarce everything was," Beckerman recalled.

"I remember being out on the [balcony] and all of a sudden seeing planes overhead... There would be sirens going on to go down. There were no [bomb shelters] in those years, so we used to go down to the first floor of the apartment that was considered the most secure place in the building," she said.

"Everyone was affected. We knew people who were living in Jerusalem, and after the war we visited there and they told us horrendous stories... In order to get heat – because it can get quite cold in Jerusalem in the winter – they had to burn furniture... They suffered terribly in Jerusalem. It was a miracle that they got through it."

In 1952, the Beckermans decided to move to Canada together.

"When we came to Canada, we had to go to London, England, to get a visa so they checked his records and... in 1952 he received all the medals that were awarded to him [by the British]," she said.

"One of the medals is so ironic. It is for serving in Palestine from 1945 to 1948, when he was fighting the British men."

Since moving back to Canada, she's been back to Israel about a dozen times.

Beckerman still has family there, including her daughter and four grandchildren, and she also has two sons and two grandchildren in Toronto.

But despite having moved back to Canada, Israel will always be special to her.

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By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

"While I don't turn down money, it's the idea of making a large-scale difference that inspires me the most," says 33-year-old Harley Pasternak.

Perhaps one of the most sought-after personal trainers by celebrities all over the world, Pasternak preaches a message of healthy living that is indeed spreading at a rapid pace.

One of many artists who credits Pasternak's 5-Factor Diet with her elite fitness level is singer Alicia Keys. "With Harley's plan, the focus is not on starving yourself but on healthful living, so you don't feel like you're missing out on the foods you love," she reports on his website (www.5factordiet.com). "Once you get started, you get addicted to looking, feeling, and living your best."

A personal trainer with a celebrity clientele, Harley Pasternak has become a bit of celebrity himself, with appearances on *Oprah* and *The Today Show*.

Along with Grammy Award-winner Keys, Pasternak has worked with celebrities such as Halle Berry, Kanye West, Jessica Simpson, Miley Cyrus, Orlando Bloom, John Mayer, Katherine Heigl, Eve, Benjamin Bratt, LL Cool J and Adam Brody.

In fact, on the same day Pasternak granted *The CJN* an interview, Eva Mendes, Jeff Goldblum, Common, Paul Rudd, Jonah Hill and Ellen Page strolled through Pasternak's Los Angeles-based studio.

"Just when I think I've worked with someone in amazing spirits, I get the chance to work with someone else," says Pasternak.

Growing up in Toronto, Pasternak began to discover his niche in fitness as a hockey player. He started working out at a nearby Y in order to enhance his on-ice performance and became intrigued by the results.

"I loved that by doing a certain activity in the gym, it would change how I looked and felt," says Pasternak. "I became fascinated with fitness."

And when both of his brothers were diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, nutrition became of paramount concern to his family.

"I tried to instil in my brothers the importance of eating well and staying fit to keep them healthy."

Pasternak's line of work requires a constant balancing of physical training with nutrition, and he describes the two domains as inseparable.

"They're equally important. You can't have one without the other. There is a synergy that occurs with both of them."

After graduating from York Mills Collegiate in Toronto, Pasternak went on to pursue an honours degree in kinesiology at the University of Western Ontario and a master's of science in exercise physiology and nutritional sciences at the University of Toronto.

He is a member of the American College of Sports Medicine and the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology.

While enrolled in university, Pasternak began a small personal-training business out of Bally Total Fitness, at the age of 18. "I never thought it could be like this," he says. "It wasn't the typical Jewish boy's professional path."

While operating his business, Pasternak was struggling to obtain a high score on his MCAT (medical college admission test) in an attempt to pursue a more tried-and-tested option. "I was failing to get into medical school, but my business was growing. I didn't realize that my career was right in front of my eyes," he says.

As his training business blossomed, he and his staff began to work with actors who came into Toronto to shoot their films. Among his first clients were Peta Wilson, star of the 1997 to 2001 TV series *La Femme Nikita*; Dennis Quaid and Juliette Lewis on the set of *Cold Creek Manor;* and Jennifer Lopez and James Caviezel during the production of *Angel Eyes*.

Concurrently, Pasternak was researching the effects of nutritional supplements on the strength and endurance of soldiers, at the Defense and Civil Institute of Environmental Medicine, for his master's degree. During his research, he noticed the bodies of the subjects began to develop following relatively brief workouts of 15 to 20 minutes. Intrigued by the concept of short and intense workouts, Pasternak introduced them to his fitness clients, scheduling workouts at the same time as 25-minute lunch breaks on set. His clients were happy with the results of the program, which was divided into five five-minute phases.

"I got a reputation as being able to get people into great shape in short periods of time," said Pasternak of his growth in popularity among celebrities with tight schedules.

What is now known as Harley's *5-Factor Diet*, a book he wrote in 2006, calls for eating five meals a day, shifting one's eating pattern from what he refers to as "gorging to grazing."

The inspiration for the diet came from studying under U of T professors whose research found smaller and more frequent meals to be ideal for facilitating healthy blood sugar and appetite control.

The final component of the regiment is the five-minute preparation of dishes with just five ingredients, something that Pasternak developed on the job while he prepared meals in his clients' trailers with limited time and resources.

His big break came when Don Carmody, a major Canadian film producer, invited him to work with the cast of a movie, which was to star Halle Berry.

Despite having to cover his own expenses, Pasternak pounced on the chance to work with her. He reduced her daily workouts from 1½ hours to just 30 minutes and got the opportunity to prepare her for the *Catwoman* movie.

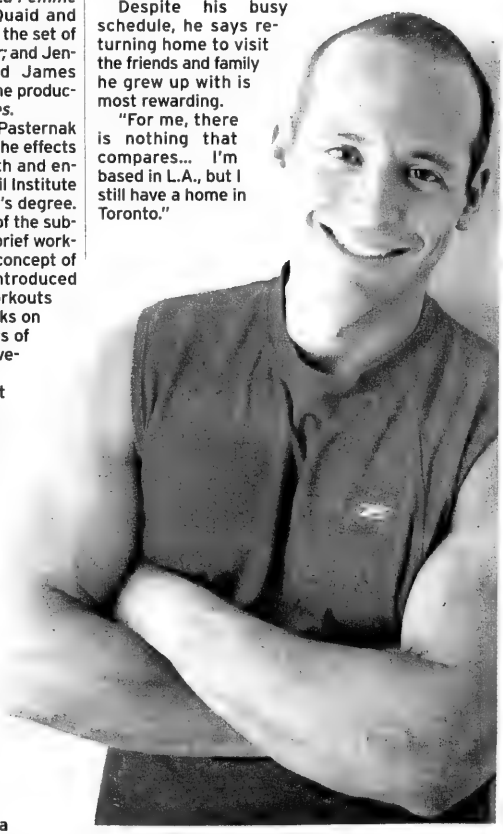
"Getting Halle in shape for *Catwoman* got me attention and on *Oprah*... things just blew up after that," Pasternak says. In addition to being featured on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, Pasternak has become a regular on NBC's *The Today Show*, having appeared once a month for the past 10 months.

He has also made television appearances in slightly less professional capacities. His Los Angeles home has been explored by MTV's *Cribs*, a reality television program that features tours of the houses and mansions of celebrities, and he has appeared on *America's Next Top Model*, *Access Hollywood* and *VH, E!*.

In addition, Pasternak has worked closely with Nintendo Wii to produce Wiifit, an interactive video game that promotes activity and exercise in its users.

Despite his busy schedule, he says returning home to visit the friends and family he grew up with is most rewarding.

"For me, there is nothing that compares... I'm based in L.A., but I still have a home in Toronto."



Tulchinsky's history of Canada's Jews is an impressive work

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Gerald Tulchinsky, professor emeritus of history at Queen's University in Kingston, has just produced his magnum opus in the form of a new 630-page book, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey*, published by the University of Toronto Press in both hardcover and softcover.

Gerald Tulchinsky

"I wanted to describe and analyze the significance of the transitions that Jews in Canada have experienced over 240 years," Tulchinsky said in an interview, in explaining the ambitious sweep and range of his book. The product of decades of intense research, the book is an amalgamation and expansion of two previous works – *Taking Root*, which told the story of Canadian Jewry from the 1760s to the 1920s, and *Branching Out*, which continued the story into the 1990s.

As the title suggests, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* is what academics might call a "demotic" history because it focuses primarily on "the common people" rather than exclusively on the popular leaders or the nobility. Its pages abound with diverse cameos of ordinary folk, engaged in their everyday lives, whose individual activities and situations help to illustrate the larger tale. As for source material, Tulchinsky seems to have left few stones unturned, and is likely the first published writer in Canada to utilize some particularly rich archival resources, as described in this article. (Genealogists, take note.)

The story is told in four main sections. The first part begins in 1768 with the rise of the colonial era, outlines a century of "pedlars and settlers on the urban frontiers," then details the rise of a significant urban Jewish presence in Victorian Montreal and the push westward by immigrant Jews to Toronto, Winnipeg and other settlements.

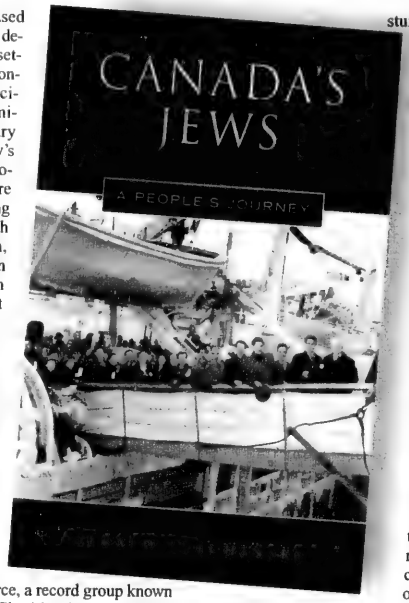
Numerous Jewish pedlars fanned out along the Upper Canadian frontier and provided "agencies of retail and wholesale commerce" to the wider populace, Tulchinsky writes. Many kept drifting until they prospered, but few established permanent roots, since their children or grandchildren typically moved back to the big cities in search of greater opportunities.

With few exceptions, Jews were not major players in the dynamic economic and industrial growth in mid-19th-century Canada. To fill in the business picture, Tulchinsky peered into Dun & Bradstreet records. This fascinating business-oriented material was previously accessible through Harvard University – "I made a special trip down to Harvard to look at it," he said – but has since been acquired on microfiche by Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa.

The laws of lashon hara prevent me from repeating the name of the Polish-Jewish merchant who opened a millinery and clothing shop in London, Ont., in the 1850s, about whom D&B circulated the scurrilous information that he was "not safe: not a man of principle, a Jew of a third-rate stamp… a rascally Israelite and not to be trusted on any acc[oun]t." Such was the treatment accorded to many Jewish merchants; Jews with good credit, however, sometimes managed to sidestep the company's habitual bigoted disdain.

Most Jewish merchants were "petty and transitory retailers or pedlars" in this era, Tulchinsky writes. "Butchers, bankers, agents, restaurateurs and auctioneers were also included among the peripatetic penny capitalists who drifted into Canada's cities and towns for a few years and then, blown over by a bad season or two, moved on to try their luck elsewhere – though never far from the scrutiny of R.G. Dun and Company's assiduous sleuths."

Part 2 – titled *Emergence of a National Community* (1890-1919) – describes an era of increased urbanization, detailing such diverse developments as Baron de Hirsch's settlement activities, the rise of new congregations and mutual benefit societies, and the unabashed anti-Semitism of Toronto's celebrated literary lion, Goldwin Smith. Tulchinsky's roving eye consistently ranges geographically from one Jewish centre to the next, as he presents a passing parade of statistics, stories and fresh topics: homegrown anti-Semitism, the Quebec school question, Jews in the garment trade and Canadian Zionism (significantly more potent than the American variety).



Part 3 focuses on the interwar period, 1919-1939; Part 4 on the *The Second World War and Beyond* (1940-2008). *Into Battle*, the chapter on how Canadian Jews responded to Hitler, offers surprising evidence that not all Canadian Jews understood or sought to mobilize against the Nazi menace in the late 1930s and the early war years.

This section relies extensively on another apparently wonderful and little-utilized archival resource, a record group known as the Canadian Jewish Congress Charities Committee National Archives. Housed at the Canadian Jewish Congress National Archives in Montreal, this material apparently contains a diverse assortment of letters exchanged among and between Canadian soldiers, their families, and the various Jewish chaplains stationed in Europe. It is deeply personal and moving stuff that offers a true flavour of the war as anxiously experienced by these various players.

Tulchinsky comes upon his broad nationalistic scope honestly. Born and raised in Brantford, Ont., where he got to experience the closeness and limited possibilities of small-town Jewish life, he studied briefly in Israel in 1952, then at major universities in Toronto and Montreal. He spent time in the Maritimes, the Prairies and "out West" before settling professionally in 1966 at Queen's University – where, 42 years later, he is still employed. He seems at home in each place he writes about, whether Montreal or Toronto or Edenbridge; his observations rarely seem forced.

It must be noted, however, that his prose does not always ring with the clarity of a well-considered thesis amply borne out by a clever array of facts and evidence. Tulchinsky is no Edward Gibbon or Howard Sachar, and he often seems more adept at uncovering bibliographic resources than turning a memorable phrase. Still, *Canada's Jews: A People's Journey* can only be regarded as a noteworthy achievement and an impressive work of scholarship.

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Filmmaker raises awareness about social issues

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

When Deepa Mehta's Oscar-nominated film *Water*, which told of a young widow shunned by Indian society in 1938, raised questions about widowhood in India today, Mehta had to respond.

She and her collaborator Noemi Weis created *The Forgotten Woman*, a documentary about the plight of widows in India now.

"Deepa, her brother Dilip [Mehta] and David Hamilton, producer of *Water* decided to make a documentary, so when she approached me, I thought it was a fascinating topic," said filmmaker Noemi Weis on the phone from her home in Toronto.

The Forgotten Woman tells of millions of Indian women, some marrying as young as six months old, who become the property of their husband's family. Ancient religious customs dictate that when her husband dies, the widow is blamed. Rural women are cast aside with no means of food or shelter – leaving many to beg or pray at ashrams to atone for their "sins" for a bowl of rice or a rupee.

Widows become the property of their husband's family.

Middle-class women are more fortunate, although the stigma remains. One of the men interviewed offered this comparison: "Women are like flowers – once you have a flower you can't offer that flower again."

Support groups reach out to some. Weis interviewed Burlington-born activist and widow Ginny Shrivastava, who has lived in India for 36 years, runs a shelter for displaced widows and heads an association that empowers women through education and training, and Dr. Mohini Giri, an advocate of widows' rights and founder of Amar Bari's shelter, who came to Toronto for the film's world premiere at the Hot Docs festival in April.

Weis, an Argentine-Canadian has been in the production business for most of her life. Her international production company, Filmblanc, branched out four years ago to create documentaries that raise awareness.

The first, *Gloriously Free*, about gay immigrants living in Canada, was made for Omni Television.

"We've travelled the world with this film. It's now playing in Israel. A U.K. lawyer used it as a tool to defend a case in the U.S. That's the satisfaction I'm getting," Weis said.

Shortly after making *Gloriously Free*, Weis began working with Deepa Mehta. "Before *Water* got accepted into the Toronto International Film Festival, we produced *Let's Talk About It*," an award-winning film on domestic violence seen through the eyes of children. "After creating the concept and researching, I asked Deepa to direct it – she was the perfect ambassador for that film."

Late in 2005, Weis and Dilip Mehta, the director, cinematographer and editor of *The Forgotten Woman*, travelled to India. Dilip,

Noemi Weis

a renowned photojournalist, shot his first cover for *Time* magazine at the age of 24. His work appears in *National Geographic*, *Newsweek* and the *New York Times*.

"Initially we planned to go with a full crew and Dilip was going to direct," Weis said. "On a research trip, I recommended taking a camera, because in documentaries, you never know what you'll find. He never used a video camera before. It was a different medium since he had been a photojournalist all his life, so we rented one. He took a crash course of half an hour in a basement in Delhi and off we went."

After the first day of filming, Weis was amazed at the sensitivity of Mehta's work. That evening, she suggested that he be the cinematographer, but he declined, since it was his directorial debut and didn't think he couldn't do both. But after seeing the outstanding footage, he finally agreed.

As Mehta captured the images, many women with little or no education proudly told their stories. "It was part of the healing process to have the opportunity. They are in a state of poverty, but they got up in the morning with a smile – their strength was incredible. It's a message to the west, to so many cultures: What is sufficient? What do we need to live happily? When one woman in the shelter sings, 'I am happiness,' that's an inspiration to us all," Weis said.

The Forgotten Women recently finished its run in Toronto. It is playing in Waterloo, Ont., and Regina this month, and in Montreal in July.

For more information, go to www.filmblanc.com.

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Hill 24 Doesn't Answer is a cinematic blast from the past

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer, the first English-language movie ever to be filmed in Israel, has been released as a DVD by Ergo Media in the United States.

Since Israel is marking its 60th anniversary this year, this is a particularly auspicious occasion to see it.

Released in 1955, less than a decade after Israel's birth as an independent nation, it tells the story of four young Zionists, three men and a woman, who are assigned to protect a strategic hill near Jerusalem during the War of Independence.

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer, directed by Thorold Dickinson, is sometimes stilted, didactic and campy, but it is interesting from a historical point of view.

Featuring a credible cast of actors, it is intensely patriotic, a tone rarely evident in Israeli films today.

The chief characters are as different as night and day.

James Finnigan (Edward Mulhare) is an Irish police officer in Palestine, while Yehuda Berger (Arieh Lavi) is a Haganah commander. Howard Goodman (Michael Wagner) is an American Jewish volunteer and Miriam Mizrachi (Haya Harari, who would star opposite Charlton Heston in *Ben-Hur*) is a Yemenite Jewish fighter.

Their respective stories unfold through flashbacks and converge in a dramatic scene in which their unit is dispatched to Hill 24, which guards the dangerous road to Arab-besieged Jerusalem.

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer, written by Canadian Peter Frye and Israeli Zvi Kolitz, opens as a new batch of illegal Jewish immigrants land by boat in Haifa and are immediately caught by the British.

The scene then shifts to the British pursuit of Berger, a Holocaust survivor. In an attempt to apprehend him, Finnigan, the British detective, shadows his friend, Miriam, .

Improbably enough, and much to his boss' annoyance, Finnigan falls in love with Miriam. In a conversation with her, he pleads, "Can't we forget our differences and talk like human beings?"

Miriam has no illusions. "I'm a Jew and you're a British policeman, a Christian," she later counters in a Druze village. "I don't want to live without you," he says, his heart obviously aching.

Finnigan leaves Palestine, but returns after the proclamation of Israel's statehood to fight for the Jewish side.

The segment on Howard Goodman, a Jew from New York who takes part in an attack on the eastern half of Jerusalem, also stands out.

As street fighting rages, he is wounded. Resting in a makeshift clinic and complaining about his decision to join the Jewish army, he is comforted by a rabbi. Before he can regain his composure, the building is surrounded by Arab fighters.

***Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* is intensely patriotic in tone.**

The film winds down as a Jewish soldier captures a wounded Egyptian, who turns out to be an ex-SS man. He pins the German to the ground, but debates whether to kill him.

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer, a cinematic blast and a relic from the past, generally presents Israel and the brave men and women who fought for its survival in golden hues and in a heroic light.

In pumping up Israel's image, it portrays Israel as a hard, underdeveloped land teeming with selfless idealists who are ready to sacrifice their lives for a noble cause.

In this contemporary age of cynicism, an earnest and outspokenly Zionist film like *Hill 24 Doesn't Answer* might be curtly dismissed by some as an anachronism, but no one can deny that it is straightforward in its intentions, genuine in its ideology and sometimes moving in its emotions.

***

Hill 24 Doesn't Answer can be ordered from Ergo Media Inc in Teaneck, New Jersey. The e-mail address: ergo@jewishvideo.com

TV miniseries *Holocaust* released on DVD

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

In 1978, hot on the heels of the successful miniseries *Roots*, NBC broadcast *Holocaust*, a four-part saga that won Emmy Awards and earned a 50 per cent market share, something unheard of today.

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of its television debut, the 7½-hour series is now available on DVD for the first time on three discs. *Holocaust* follows the stories of two Berlin families caught in the saga of the Holocaust.

It begins with the marriage of Karl Weiss, a Jewish artist played by James Woods, to Inga Helms, a Catholic German played by the burgeoning Meryl Streep.

It also follows the rise of the fictitious Erik Dorf (Michael Moriarty), a Nazi civil servant who, guided by his wife's ambition, rises to be Reinhard Heydrich's second-in-command and a key player in the execution of the Final Solution.

Through Dorf, the story follows the evolution of the Holocaust from Kristallnacht and the Wannsee Conference (Heydrich was the chair of the conference) to the use of gas showers and crematoria at Auschwitz.

The members of the Weiss family, (Dr. Josef Weiss, his wife Berta, brother Moses and children Karl, Rudi and Anna) meanwhile suffer the full range of the Holocaust. Josef, Moses and Berta are sent to the Warsaw Ghetto, where Moses participates in the Ghetto Uprising after Josef and Berta are sent to Auschwitz. Karl is sent to the model camp in Theresienstadt and then to Auschwitz, Anna suffers a nervous breakdown after she is raped by Brownshirts and is sent to a treatment centre, where she is killed. Only Rudi (Joseph Bottoms) manages to escape Berlin and joins the resistance in Ukraine, where he witnesses – and narrowly escapes – the massacre at Babi Yar.

James Woods plays Karl Weiss, a Jewish artist.

Directed by Marvin Chomsky (who also did Roots), *Holocaust* was not without criticism. Author and human rights activist Elie Wiesel called it "untrue and offensive." Others criticized NBC for trivializing and making money from the tragedy.

The very nature of television probably did mute the harsh reality. Certainly, watching it now for the first time since I was 12, it does seem that the Warsaw Ghetto is rather clean and tidy, devoid of starving and dead bodies, unlike, say, the ghettos of Steven Spielberg's *Schindler's List*.

Even Auschwitz seems relatively sedate. The women in *Holocaust* all seem to have full heads of hair as they are led to the showers.

But that TV limitation aside (and it is brave enough to show the execution of naked men at Babi Yar, something networks would probably shy away from these days), *Holocaust* is very well done.

It takes its time building up the characters and then marches to its drastic conclusion. Dorf's transformation from kind lawyer to Holocaust henchman is believable.

It's certainly not as stark and foreboding as *Schindler's List*, but that's an unfair comparison.

In hindsight, for a 1978 miniseries, it's well ahead of its time. And, arguably, American network television has not run anything quite as powerful as *Holocaust* since.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

ISRAEL'S MOSH BEN ARI COMING TO MOD CLUB FOR SDEROT BENEFIT

Israeli roots-soul-reggae star **Mosh Ben Ari** makes his North American debut in Toronto this Sunday in a benefit concert in aid of the community of Sderot, Israel. Lead singer of the famed group **Sheva** and composer of the hit song *Salaam*, Ben Ari and band are performing at a downtown venue on College just west of Bathurst.

Born in Israel in 1970, Ben Ari has become one of Israel's most popular creative musicians. Released in 2006, his third album *Massa Umatan* (Go Giving) has become one of the country's best-selling albums. Of Yemenite and Iraqi background, he has been influenced by traditional religious chants, as well as the music of India and North Africa.

Besides guitar, he plays the Indian sarod, Persian tar, Turkish jumbush and Moroccan ginberi. His music has been described as "a celebration of groove and spirit, seamlessly blending rock, soul, reggae and world music, all sung with his rich unique voice."

Toronto is the first stop in a three-week tour that also includes Montreal, Miami, Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York City. $25, $35 at the door, VIP tickets $65. The Mod Club, 722 College St., Sunday, June 15. Doors open 8 p.m. www.ticketweb.ca

* * *

Music Notes

• **The Sisters of Sheynville**, Toronto's own all-female swing-klez Yiddish-English sextet, perform an NXNE (North by Northeast Festival) showcase at Clinton's, 693 Bloor St. W., on June 14, 11 p.m. Tickets at nxne.com. Also hear their special Father's Day presentation at the Rex Hotel and Jazz Bar, 194 Queen St. W., Sunday, June 15, 12 to 3 p.m. They're also at the Toronto City Roots Festival in the Distillery District, Sunday, June 29, 1 p.m.

• **The Flying Bulgars** perform an NXNE showcase, consisting of one 40-minute set. Clinton's, 693 Bloor St. W. Saturday, June 14, 12 midnight. www.nxne.com

• Jazz @ the J, featuring the **Ron Davis Sextet**. Al Green Theatre, Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. $15, $24, $28. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• **Barenaked Ladies** frontman **Steven Page** performs *Songbook II*, new arrangements of popular songs by **Elvis Costello**, **Leonard Cohen**, **Paul Simon**, **Rufus Wainwright** and others, accompanied by **Phil Dwyer**, **Rafael Hoekman**, **Joseph Phillips**, **Rob Piltch**, **Steven Sitarski** and **Andrew Burashko**. Enwave Theatre, Harbourfront Centre, June 20 & 21, 8 p.m. $36, $25. 416-973-4000, www.artoftimeensemble.com

Steven Page

• Boldly going where no symphony has gone before, the **Toronto Symphony Orchestra** performs *Star Trek: The Music*, with guest conductor **Erich Kunzel**. All phasers and recording devices will be confiscated. $33 to $98. Roy Thomson Hall, June 20 & 21, 8 p.m. 416-593-4828, www.tso.ca

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Author **Shirley Kumove** speaks on the topic "About Yiddish Folk Sayings" at 55 Forward for Active Seniors. Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Thursday, June 12, 1:30 p.m. Phyllis Fien, 416-924-6211, ext. 155

• *Jerusalem Is Proud to Present* is the title of an outspoken documentary about events surrounding the World Pride Conference in Jerusalem in 2006. The film relays the struggle of the planners and the individuals who were intent on marching in holy Jerusalem's first gay pride parade. Free admission, discussion to follow screening. Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC. Wednesday, June 25, 7:30 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org

• *Pokeroot and Mistletoe*, a play by Anna Standish about some teenaged high-school angst mixed with devilry, is directed by **Sarah Miller-Garvin** and stars **Charlotte Klein** and **Joshua Korngut**. A runner-up in last year's Fringe 24-hour playwriting contest, it is being performed at the Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse, July 4, 8, 11 & 13. Tickets $10. 416-966-1062, www.fringetoronto.com

* * *

At the Galleries

• The grand opening of Galleria 814, a new gallery that specializes in fine art acquisitions and framing, takes place June 18, 6 to 10 p.m. 814 St. Clair Ave. W. at Atlas Ave. 416-658-8814

Dining Pleasures

Novelist Morley Torgov breaks new ground with murder mystery book

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Award-winning Canadian memoirist and novelist Morley Torgov has launched a murder mystery fiction series.

With *Murder in A-Major* (Napoleon and Company), Torgov has broken new ground in his second career as a writer.

Published last month in Toronto, *Murder in A-Major* is set in 1850s Germany, populated by real-life figures such as the musicians Robert and Clara Schumann and features Torgov's newest character, the Dusseldorf police inspector Hermann Preiss.

The dust jacket describes the plot as "a delightful historical mystery with a light touch" in which "the reader is led into the world of mid-19th century music, where classical composers were stars and their egos were just as monstrous as the rock stars of today."

In fleshing out the story, Torgov explores the rivalries, love affairs and infidelities of the period, throwing in blackmail and murder to spice things up.

"The reason I wrote this book is twofold," he explained last week. "Firstly, I have been hooked on classical music since I was a very young child. Secondly, I have long been intrigued by the fact that so many creative geniuses of that time were so entirely screwed up in their private lives."

The idea came to him some years ago, but he did not get down to work on it until his young adult novel, *Stickler and Me*, was published in 2005.

It was an arduous process. Torgov produced five drafts before he and his editor were completely satisfied with the manuscript.

A lawyer by day, specializing in corporate and commercial law, real estate, estate planning and trademark law, he admits he became a professional writer rather late in life.

Born in Sault Ste. Marie in 1927, he was always drawn to the written word.

At the age of 12, he wrote a Boy Scouts column for the local newspaper, and at 16, he became a reporter for the *Sault Daily Star*.

Yet he did not follow his dreams.

Nudged by his father to study medicine, Torgov resisted his entreaties.

"Law was a compromise," he said. "In retrospect, I have no regrets. I do believe that a career in law has the benefit of honing one's skills in the use of language and, to some extent, one's ability to see life through a sharper prism."

MorleyTorgov

Before entering Osgoode Hall Law School, Torgov finished a BA degree at the University of Toronto.

"I majored in gin rummy, canasta, the revelries of fraternity life and eating at the Crescent Grill, near the corner of Spadina and College," he recalled. "My other major source of enjoyment was attending classes in English literature."

"All the rest is forgettable," he added.

Looking back, Torgov says that his delay in becoming a writer of books was understandable.

"For the first 15 years after I graduated from law school in 1954, I was too occupied in building a law practice to devote much time to writing, although I did turn out several produced television plays and various print articles."

With the death of his father in 1965, he finally felt free to write "frankly and fully" about his youth in Sault Ste. Marie and its Jewish community.

Having been liberated from his inhibitions, he wrote his first book, *A Good Place to Come From*, which was published in 1974 and won the Leacock Medal for Humour.

The CBC subsequently transformed it into a mini TV series, while American playwright Israel Horovitz adapted it into three plays, which are still staged at regional theatres in North America.

Torgov's other novel, *The Outside Chance of Maximillian Glick*, which was eventually published in several languages, won the Leacock Medal as well and was made into a Canadian feature film and a 26-part CBC TV series.

Torpov has also written *The Abramsky Variations*, *St. Farb's Day* and *The War to End All Wars*.

These days, when he is well into a new project, Torgov writes for several hours every evening after dinner and on Saturday and Sunday mornings and during holidays at his cottage in Haliburton.

"I tend to be very self-disciplined about this process, so that even after a full days' work at my office, I manage to fulfill that evenings agenda at the typewriter."

An old-fashioned man, he eschews computers. "I work on an Olivetti manual typewriter purchased in 1957. Being a Luddite, I leave it to my longtime legal assistant and secretary, Joanne DeLio, to do the final draft on a computer."

Currently, Torgov is working on a sequel to *Murder in A-Major*. "This one will be centred around the brilliant and infamous composer Richard Wagner."

The tentative title is *The Mastersinger from Minsk*.

Students' films reflect their Jewish heritage

By REVA KAISER WEIN
Special to The CJN

More than 400 people recently packed the Sheppard Grande theatre to view three short films made by film students from the Ma'ale School of Television, Film and the Arts in Jerusalem.

Ma'ale trains filmmakers to produce work inspired by and linked to their Jewish heritage. The school aims to build bridges between Jewish tradition and social experience, as well as between the religious and secular worlds.

The sold-out June 2 event was hosted by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Jerusalem Foundation in honour of Yom Yerushalayim.

Ranging from 14 to 25 minutes in length, the films amazed the audience with their professionalism and poignancy.

The Orthodox Way

"It was inspiring," said Esty Edell, who attended the event with family members. "We're faced with issues like those [in the films] all the time – they took people's struggles and showed us how they dealt with them. And they focused on subjects that are relevant to all Jews and Israel."

Cohen's Wife, directed by Nava Nussan Heifetz, is an intense, fictional drama about a young, haredi married woman who is raped and then must await the rabbinical court's decision to find out whether she can remain married to her husband.

The Orthodox Way, directed by Ilan Eshkoli, is a comedy about a hilarious blind date with unexpected twists and misadventures.

A Jerusalem Tale, directed by Torontonian Tehila Wiesenberg, is a bittersweet story about a financially strained Breslever chassid whose philosophy that life must be lived completely in joy is challenged when he is faced with a difficult dilemma.

Films made by Ma'ale graduates have been screened at Israeli and international film festivals, earning praise and winning awards. What distinguishes the films produced by Ma'ale is that they are expressions of the students' Jewish values.

Although the films may feature modern-day controversial issues, they reflect the students' love and respect of their Jewish heritage and their deep connection to Israeli culture and society. Powerful and real, the films and their messages go straight to the hearts and souls of their audiences.

"The reach of these films is just amazing," said Katie Green, director of public relations and special projects for Ma'ale. "The films strike a chord with audiences of all ages and backgrounds… The students are fearless and address many of the burning issues facing all Jewish communities.

Cohen's Wife

"Through the films, they are saying, 'This is my life, these are my traditions, these are my dilemmas.' People feel the genuine emotions that lie behind the films. This is their great appeal."

Indeed, the films captivated and impressed the audience, some of whom were surprised at how well they could relate to the characters and the situations in the films.

"This was how I grew up," said Haim Riback, an Israeli expatriate. "I really identified with it."

Ian Leventhal, the Jerusalem Foundation's of Canada's executive director, said: "Ma'ale has a special, unique focus – to promote Jewish values. Being Diaspora Jews, we wanted to invest in something that promotes Israel in a positive light and is respectful of Jewish tradition."

Israeli Consul General Amir Gissin addressed the audience between films. He stressed how important it is to show the world another perspective of Israel – the talented arts and cultural side – and how the evening was a perfect example of that.

Rachel Corrie a one-sided but powerful look at intifadah

By DAVID SILVERBERG
Special to The CJN

Review

At first glance, a play about Rachel Corrie could be seen as a defence of the Palestians during the second intifadah.

But *My Name Is Rachel Corrie*, being presented by Theatre Panik at the Tarragon Extra Space in Toronto, is more of a tale of courage and passion than a Middle East politics lesson. It doesn't matter what side of the argument you sit on; this one-woman show is a tour de force of emotional peaks and powerful sentiment.

Bethany Jillard

Rachel Corrie was crafted from diary entries and e-mails from Corrie, a 23-year-old American who was killed in March 2003 by an Israeli bulldozer while protesting the razing of a house in the Gaza Strip.

If there's ever been a play that's faced a bumpy ride to reach international stages, it's *Rachel Corrie*. Two theatre companies in Toronto and New York dropped the play last year, reportedly because of the controversy surrounding what detractors see as its one-sided critique of Israel.

Edited by British actor Alan Rickman and journalist Katharine Viner, the script is a collage of Corrie's diary, offering tidbits from her childhood and gradual growth. We learn how she noticed "a fire in the belly" and why she wanted "to fight monsters." The precocious youth is soon bombarded with activist options when she attends university. It's almost too much for her.

Corrie's character is fully fleshed out in the 100-minute show, thanks to the incredibly adept acting of Bethany Jillard. In a sparse set, Corrie talks about what motivates her to stand up against U.S. foreign policy. She learns about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict slowly, telling herself how it's necessary for her to fight global injustices. The audience senses the belly fire blazing higher with each diary entry, knowing all too well where she will inevitably end up.

In the first half of *Rachel Corrie*, the meandering spoken thoughts turn to teenage whims, personal mottos and idealistic opinions. The pacing may not be quick enough to hold everyone's attention, but the play is building up to a journey Corrie is practically itching to take. Jillard gives Corrie a playful, saucy attitude that slowly fades to wide-eyed fright when she travels to Israel as a member of the International Solidarity Movement.

The second half throws in some facts about the suffering faced by Palestinians, from the Palestinian point of view.

This is the story of one peace activist's passionate mission to right the wrongs as she sees them. She doesn't present both sides of the conflict, because her sympathies tend toward the Palestinians, whom she sees wallowing in poverty every day.

Jillard does a masterful job in showing us the arc in Corrie's life, from her fun-loving dancing-in-her-room days to the protester who admits how frightened she has become. The monologues, almost poetic in their descriptions of Palestinian landscapes, are only half the appeal. Jillard is able to use her expressions and body language to illustrate the fear, disgust and courage Corrie experiences in her final activist mission.

Corrie says at one point, "The Palestinians show dignity even in the constant presence of death." And *Rachel Corrie* – a play fraught with controversy from its inception – shows dignity in the face of backlash.

A different production of *Rachel Corrie* played in Montreal and Vancouver recently, and it has been staged in Britain and the United States, including off-Broadway, and at the Contemporary American Theatre Festival in West Virginia.

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Family life infused with music and art

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Lena Karpinsky's paintings have taken over her house. Colours pop out from the upstairs hallway, petals peek out from the basement, and painted sunflowers dance from the walls. But the paintings that best represent her life are the ones filled with instruments.

"My whole life was spent around music," Karpinsky said in Russian. "I always had a relationship with [it.] My grandfather was a professor of the Moscow Conservatory of Music. My childhood was spent [playing] under the grand piano," she said.

Karpinsky, a Russian-born artist who sells her paintings through eBay, transformed her love of music into a love of painting. Cellos, saxophones and pianos appear throughout her art, with string instruments dominating the canvases.

"String instruments have a lot of beautiful colours and shapes," she said.

While Karpinsky no longer plays an instrument, her grandfather's talents have been inherited by her son, Eli.

At the age of three, while living in Israel, Eli stumbled upon a keyboard belonging to his father, who enjoys playing but is not a professional musician. By nine, Eli was asked to perform at the Moscow Conservatory of Music. Now 12 years old, he is studying with a Julliard teacher once a month in New York. He has also won several competitions, including a third place in the Canadian Music Competition.

"I used to come up to [the keyboard] and play some notes," he said of his first experience with the piano. "At some point, my dad played three notes and I played the exact notes back."

As Eli got older, it became obvious that he had a natural talent for music.

"When I first play a piece, I can just feel what the music's supposed to sound like," he said. "I have a musical family. I think that's where I got my talents from."

Eli and Lena Kaprinsky at their home. Lovers of art and music. [Rita Poliakov photo]

Her son began taking lessons in Toronto, and Karpinsky started painting.

"I painted in Russia, but my serious work was in Canada. When I came here, I saw all the beauty of Canada. It made me want to paint," she said.

It was her husband's idea to sell the paintings.

"He brought some friends over, they saw [the paintings] and thought they were really interesting. Then my husband thought of selling them on eBay," she said.

It took five years for her paintings to take off, but Karpinsky is now a recognized online artist who can paint some two to three pieces a day.

Like her work, Karpinsky's studio is an explosion of colours.

Bright reds burst from the walls, soft blues hide behind flecks of yellow, and splashes of orange jump out from the paintings that line her floor.

"It seems to me that the colours [I use] are very warm. It's nice to put that up on your wall. It's pleasant," she said.

"[When I start to paint], I look at the blank canvas and I think about what I want to see on it. I paint the colours first, and then the forms and shapes."

When painting, Karpinsky needs to be in a certain mood.

"I don't paint when I'm angry or upset," she said. "To paint, you need to give yourself up. If you think of something bad, it's reflected in the painting."

Often, when Karpinsky paints, Eli is upstairs playing the piano.

"It helps me when my son is playing. When I hear music, it's easier to work."

Both Karpinsky and her son enjoy Chopin's music.

"I enjoy playing practically everything of Chopin," Eli said. "I really like him because Chopin has a lot of pedal. It's smooth and romantic."

While Eli likes the piano, he doesn't necessarily like practising.

"I usually practise two to 2½ hours a day," he said. "It gets boring, you have to repeat the same thing over and over again."

As an incentive, Eli's parents pay him $10 for every time he plays in front of a new audience. So far, he has earned $30.

"He doesn't like to work, he's a kid," Karpinsky said of her son. "But he loves playing new pieces. [Music] is part of his life."

When not practising, Eli spends his time playing computer games, watching TV or painting.

"I don't have any talent [for painting], but sometimes my mom lets me and a friend paint," he said. "I paint stuff that comes to mind, like snow or space."

Although Eli and his mom excel in different disciplines, Karpinsky insists that their talents are connected.

"I think that painting and music are very close things. When you hear music, you feel good, and when you look at paintings, it makes you feel good. It's about emotions," she said.

John Miller wins fiction prize with second novel

Continued from page 1

Father and daughter co-authors Mayer Kirshenblatt and Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett won the prize in biography and memoir for their gorgeous and glowingly received coffee-table book *They Called Me Mayer July: Painted Memories of a Jewish Childhood in Poland Before the Holocaust* (University of California Press). The book is filled with Kirshenblatt's naive folk art paintings of remembered scenes from his beloved Polish hometown before World War II, with a text his daughter assembled from many interviews with him.

Looking very much in the pink and still actively painting at 92 years of age, Kirshenblatt was perhaps this year's most senior award recipient.

Henia Reinhartz won the Yad Vashem Award in Holocaust Memoir and Literature for *Bits and Pieces,* a book published by the Azrieli Foundation that contains "bits and pieces" of her gruelling story of wartime survival in the Lodz Ghetto and other Nazi settings, as well as her life after the war. Reinhartz, a sister of novelist Chava Rosenfarb, told *The CJN* she hoped the award would draw readers to her book.

Rabbi Tina Grimberg won the prize for youth literature for *Out of Line: Growing Up Soviet* (Tundra Books), a poignant memoir of her childhood in Soviet Ukraine in the 1960s and '70s that is suitable for all ages. Rabbi Grimberg, spiritual leader of Reconstructionist Congregation Darchei Noam, has written what the jury described as "an eye-opening account of Jewish family life against the backdrop of a drab, often hypocritical and sometimes overtly anti-Semitic Communist society."

John Miller, winner of the award in fiction, together with the award sponsor, Beatrice Fischer.

The prize for poetry went to Ruth Panofsky for *Laike and Nahum: A Poem in Two Voices* (Inanna Publications), a long narrative poem that captures the voices of the author's grandparents, who were Russian-Jewish immigrants to Montreal in the early 1900s. Panofsky, who teaches at Ryerson University, is an authority on Canadian novelist Adele Wiseman and previous author of *The Force of Vocation: The Literary Career of Adele Wiseman.*

Continuing on the theme of immigration, author Marc Miller won the Yiddish literature prize for his English-language study *Representing the Immigrant Experience: Morris Rosenfeld and the Emergence of Yiddish Literature in America* (Syracuse University Press). Miller was unable to attend the awards ceremony in person.

The award for scholarship on a Jewish subject went to James A. Diamond for *Converts, Heretics and Lepers: Maimonides and the Outsider* (University of Notre Dame Press). The work focuses on Maimonides' appropriation of marginal figures who, in the great Jewish philosopher's hands, become a metaphor for larger, more substantive theological and philosophical issues.

Committee chair Edward Trapunski paid tribute to committee member Adam Fuerstenberg, a professor emeritus of English at Ryerson University, who has been a pivotal figure in the awards since their inception 20 years ago. "Jewish culture in Canada owes him an enormous debt," Trapunski said. "Without Adam Fuerstenberg, there would be no Jewish book awards."

Toronto author Michael Wex, who won an award in 2007 for his book *Born to Kvetch* but was in Europe at the time, made up for his previous absenteeism by delivering a short talk on the impossibility of conveying good news in Yiddish, a topic that elicited sustained howls of laughter.

Wex's specialty is understanding the psychology behind the Yiddish language, thought and expression. To "kvell" with pride, he explained, means to swell up or expand with pleasure, which a person does "because he's not letting it out where somebody can get hold of it and cast an evil eye on it." A person may kvell to the point of bursting, and then they "plotz," he explained.

A relative paid him a supreme compliment by telling him his book was so good he hoped his enemies would never experience the pleasure of reading it, Wex said.

"I'd like to tell all of tonight's winners, I want their enemies to read their books and to be jealous in spite of themselves," he quipped.

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62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
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85 APARTMENT WANTED
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115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
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123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
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240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
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Canadian pastime an antidote to stressful Israeli life

By SHLOMO FELDMAN
Special to The CJN

METULLA, Israel — It's a distinctly Canadian picture – youngsters skating around an ice rink, slapshots reverberating through an arena, white powder flying off blades after a hard stop. Israel Spodek knows this, and even after he made aliyah nearly eight years ago, the spirit of this Canadian pastime is alive and well in the native Torontonian's heart.

As an antidote to the high-stress Israeli lifestyle and to give hockey-playing olim a taste of home, Spodek co-founded the Israel Recreational Hockey Association (IRHA) in 2005. Located at the Canada Centre in Metulla, the league is comprised primarily of other ex-Torontonians, as well as players from Montreal, Winnipeg and Ottawa, with a handful of Americans. The league meets twice a month for a friendly game of non-contact pickup hockey. The result: the tension of a modern-day, hectic schedule melts away, if only for a few hours.

Spodek admits it can be quite a commute for players who drive out to the northern tip of the country for a hockey game, but it's well worth the extra couple of hours to enjoy the experience.

"There's not a lot of downtime here," he said from his home near Haifa. "Life is pretty intense. There are no weekends like in Canada. The Thursday night game is basically an escape from reality for everyone. You take eight hours out of their month and it's like you're back to Canada. You completely forget about the fact you're in Israel when you're playing hockey."

Not that it was always like this, of course. When the Israel Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) was created in the late 1980s, the only hockey played was three-on-three. By the mid '90s, the members were predominantly Russian olim with hockey backgrounds. In addition to being comprised of seasoned veterans of the sport, the IIHF met only once a week on Fridays, making it difficult for shomer Shabbat individuals to have access to the ice.

When Spodek made aliyah in 2000, he made it his goal to find a venue that would cater to his vision – a hockey league for people who want to pick up and play. By 2005, he had secured the Canada Centre rink and began recruiting via e-mail and word-of-mouth.

Spodek's persistence paid off, and today the IRHA has had more than 300 players participate in at least one event, with an average of 25 players per game. All are between the ages of 18 and 65 (the average is 45), and participants are welcome regardless of skill level or gender. The atmosphere is reminiscent of the games Spodek remembers from back home: fast-paced and competitive, but in a relaxed and supportive social environment.

"We get beers after the game" he said. "We sit around in the Jacuzzi, we go out for shawarmas.

"A lot of people have come over and thanked me, not just for organizing all this, but for allowing them to cope with the stresses of living in Israel.

In late January, the IRHA played a two-day, four-game tournament against Israel's national league, with three games going into overtime and the league team coming out on top. It was the IRHA's second annual tournament and the turnouts for the games have remained strong, with the players' on-ice skills vastly improving. Although it is a strictly recreational league, the IRHA is already meeting more often than Israel's national league and Spodek believes that, if it weren't for the commute, they would probably have four or five teams skating twice a week. His long-term goal is to have a game going every week, something he sees as possibly happening a couple of years down the road when the sport finally breaks through into mainstream Israeli culture.

"I think it's a sport that's very attractive to Israelis if they ever really sat and watched it," he said. "It's physical and aggressive [and speedy]. Roller hockey has become pretty popular. I see kids playing roller hockey all over the country, it's really caught on.".

For now, though, Spodek's goal "is to have our group and keep going. I want to be playing hockey when I'm 60 years old, so if I could keep playing once a week, that would be amazing."

Tryouts on tap for Jewish Under-18 team

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Playing hockey in Israel with a big maple leaf on your chest holds plenty of allure for today's Canadian youngsters.

That no doubt explains why there are no places left for the junior team tryouts for next summer's World Jewish Junior Hockey Championship in Metulla, Israel.

All 60 spots have been assigned and the overall quality of the players is quite remarkable, said Alex Voihanski, a member of hockey operations of the Israel Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF), the tournament and tryout organizers. The tryouts are scheduled to run June 22 to 24 at the Pavilion Arena in Thornhill (130 Racco Parkway), and spectators are welcome to take in the competition.

Most skaters hail from Toronto and are of AAA and AA calibre, with futures in U.S. college and Canadian junior ranks, Voihanski said. A good number will be making the trip from other Canadian communities. Eight are expected from Montreal, six from Ottawa, five from Winnipeg and a couple from Vancouver.

They're paying their own way for the chance to compete in next year's event, which is a follow-up to the 2007 World Jewish Hockey Championships that was won by the United States. That tournament was aimed at adult players from Canada, Israel, the United States and France, but interest was so high that organizers decided to expand it to include a junior component. The under-18 event, which will run from July 5 to 17, 2009, is geared to youngsters born between 1992 to 1994. The tournament will coincide with the Maccabiah Games, which get under way on July 12, but are not part of that event, Voihanski said.

Most skaters are attracted by the opportunity to play in Israel and to represent their country doing so. In recruiting players, many were giddy with the prospect of playing summer hockey in the Holy Land, he said.

The tryouts will also give IIHF organizers the opportunity to scout potential players for the Israeli national junior team. That squad relies for the bulk of its hockey talent on skaters playing in Canada who are eligible for the Israeli team.

Sidney Greenberg, head of the IIHF, said, "I want the Jewish community in Canada to see the quality and talent level of the young Jewish hockey players in this country.

"In the process of getting players to try out, we were fortunate enough to find elite level players with Israeli passports who will hopefully one day play for Israel's national teams."

IIHF execs expect the airlifted players will strengthen the Israeli team at International Ice Hockey Federation tournaments while the the Israeli body develops sabra players in Israel.

Doing so is a lengthy process whose first step is to put in place programs to train Israel-based coaches.

Sherry Bassin, the owner of the OHL's Erie Otters who also runs the IIHF's hockey operations, will spearhead that effort.

With trained coaches on hand, the task of developing Israeli players through quarterly training camps and by recruiting players from Israel's popular roller hockey league will continue. In the end, that grassroots initiative is the best way to create a foundation for future Israeli hockey teams, Voihanski said.

Bassin will also organize the Pavilion training camp and will model it on OHL camps. Players can expect OHL and NHL-level coaching.

For more information, visit the IIHF's Web site at www.israelicehockey.com.

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Finding my inner Carrie Bradshaw

Sandie Benitah
20Something

We've been talking about it for months and the moment has finally arrived. *Sex and the City* is here, and it doesn't matter how old you are. This is a momentous occasion.

Like a wise older sister, the TV show has given me some sound advice and has led me through some challenging times in my twenties.

It doesn't matter that the girls were in their thirties and forties. Their tales of elusive men, hard-fought career victories and fabulous friendships never lost their relevance for my friends and me.

But it's much more than girl power that makes this show special. It's probably the only movie that my mom and I are equally excited to see. In fact, I know one girl who is going to the movie with a bunch of her friends, her mom and her mom's friends.

I never thought I'd see the day when we could enjoy sex and our mothers in the same room!

Someone asked me recently what it was about the movie that I was most looking forward to. Was it the commitment between Carrie and Mr. Big? Was it the baby that Charlotte is finally carrying?

It's none of that, I answered. In truth, I don't even care about the plot.

To me, the show has always been about becoming a lady with grace. These women – witty Carrie, independent Miranda, vampy Samantha and demure Charlotte – have handled every challenge thrown their way with such honesty and such incredible senses of self.

There were no apologies for their neurotic behaviours, no excuses for their mistakes, no regrets about their decisions.

I think about how many times I've gone over the things I've done and wished that I'd done them differently, about how many moments I've spent agonizing over things without trusting my instincts.

That's what becoming a fabulous woman is all about. It's about getting to know yourself and, more importantly, trusting yourself.

Growing up, my parents have always encouraged me to take responsibility for my actions. But it wasn't until I was in my twenties that I learned that I had no choice but to own each decision that I make.

They haven't all been right – not by a long shot – but watching these older, wiser women move on from their experiences has made me realize that mine were all decisions worth making.

I've come a long way since I first started watching the show.

SATC's fab four are like the Spice Girls for adults. As a kid, I would always play Baby Spice. As an adult, not much had changed, it seemed, as my friends nicknamed me Charlotte for my prudish ways.

But lately, my friends have said I've graduated to a Carrie.

In an article I once read, Carrie was described as the woman who views the world with her eyes wide open, never shutting them no matter how scary it gets. She's a woman who seeks honesty and truth in each moment of life.

In fact, there's one quote of hers that I have always felt described me exactly: "I will never be the woman with the perfect hair, who can wear white and not spill on it," she said once on the show.

It is what it is, but what a great thing that is.

Being a Carrie is something great to aspire to.

But watching the show, and now the movie, has inspired me to appreciate and accept exactly what it means to be a Sandie.

ROASTED BROCCOLI WITH RAISIN VINAIGRETTE

- 1 1/2 lbs. broccoli, stems removed, tops cut into large florets
- 2 tblsp sherry wine vinegar
- 6 tblsp olive oil, divided
- 1/2 tsp ground cumin
- 1/2 c raisins
- 1 tblsp water

Preheat oven to 400°F. Place broccoli on large rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle with 3 tblsps olive oil; sprinkle with salt and pepper; toss to coat. Roast broccoli until tender, about 25 min.
In the meantime, combine 3 tblsp oil, vinegar, raisins, 1 tblsp water and cumin in processor. Blend until raisins are finely chopped, about 30 seconds. Season vinaigrette to taste with salt and pepper.
Transfer broccoli to large bowl. Add vinaigrette and toss to coat. Serve warm or at room temperature.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

I am back in the dating world after finishing exams for the last time. A couple of months ago, my friend set me up with a great gal. She's not only gorgeous, but she has brains, too. I would venture to say that this might even go past my usual three-month stint, but only if she stays away from my things!

Let's just say I am very territorial. We have gotten fairly comfortable with each other, and she now feels free to eat food off my plate, sometimes using her fingers instead of a utensil. She stays over at my place, and in the morning showers and puts on my robe. She checks her e-mail on my computer just as I am about to do the same. I have kept my mouth shut, but I am seething inside every time she invades my stuff. We have to fix this before I boot her out the door. It would be too bad, because this one could really be a keeper. Any suggestions?

What's Mine is Mine

Dear What's Mine is Mine,

Relationships require communication and work. You need to know how to share and how to set boundaries. I understand that you are protecting your territory and feel like she is all over your things, but if you want the relationship to grow, you have to grow, too. Not everything of yours needs to be hers as well, but you need to relax a little.

Perhaps one of the boundaries you set will be for her to ask if it's OK before she touches something that is clearly yours.

What you need to remember, though, is that you are cultivating a relationship, and one of the fundamentals is trust. Trust happens when you both open yourselves up to each other; when you find that you want to make your partner happy by giving and sacrificing; and when you crave the feeling of being as one. Then you know you are in a loving, growing relationship.

You aren't there yet.

Granted, this can be done slowly, but in the long run, if you really want this to work, you are going to have to lighten up. Examine what it is that makes you so territorial and see if you can work through it.

In the end, it's about communication. If you can't get past this, then at least give her a fighting chance. Let her know how you feel. Maybe she will care enough to respect the time you need to adjust to being a couple.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.*

Strengthening our integrity

LIFE COACH CORNER
By JUDY SIBLIN-LIBRACH

Impeccable integrity is something I have witnessed from the time I was a little girl. My father is a man of great integrity. He taught us all the reasons to act and live with integrity in all that we do.

Living an ethical and compassionate life, with integrity, is a way to teach a beautiful lesson your children, and indeed trust and integrity are the cornerstones of all healthy relationships.

So what do you do when you encounter people who don't live with that kind integrity, who want to undermine you or betray your trust and your confidence?

Narcissism, according to Barbara Killinger in her book *Integrity: Doing the Right Thing for the Right Reason,* is the antithesis of integrity. There are people who have lost integrity, and there are many reasons for this.

"Often the need to belong and be accepted is unfulfilled and so it is difficult for us to develop trust and self-respect and to gain competence. When children are constantly criticized and rarely praised, they are left with "a legacy of self-doubt and seriously impaired social skills, Killinger says. "Their alienation becomes a breeding ground for future resentment and distrust."

We need to safeguard this value and help improve our level of integrity, personally, professionally, within the community and the world that we live in.

So how do we do it?

"We can strengthen our integrity by making a conscious decision to follow an understanding path rather than a judgmental one," Killinger says. "Integrity should be integrated into our character, beyond choice. This means honouring our highest values and resisting temptation, striving for a more balanced psyche and being more appreciative of what we already have.

"Integrity is a personal choice, an uncompromising and predictably consistent commitment to honour moral, ethical, spiritual and artistic values and principles."

The elements of integrity always include honesty, empathy, compassion, sympathy, fairness and co-operation, just to name a few. How do we foster it?

One way is to teach our children respect for rules and traditions, laws and regulations. Also, ask yourself what words would help you to be more gracious or diplomatic in a difficult situation. Try to listen more carefully and to put love in your heart in all of your dealings with people in your life. Notice who lives with integrity in your life and use them as a role model, and a reminder of how you want to live. Ask yourself if you are compassionate and trustworthy, and if you make the people you know feel important and accepted.

"There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience," as the proverb goes. The good news is that integrity can be taught to anyone.

In Hal Urban's book, *The Ten Commandments of Common Sense,* he writes that integrity brings peace of mind, builds character, cements relationships, makes people complete, promotes good health and helps us to be authentic. "Integrity is an inside job. It begins by being real, genuine, authentic, sincere. When we're true to ourselves, we'll be true to others, too."

As Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "the time is always right to do what is right."

When I see my dad walking jauntily toward me, with a jovial smile on his face, I feel a sense of peace because I know that he is the embodiment of a man of integrity – a great role model who is ethical, honourable, trusted and respected in all that he does. And I know that his integrity is the light that guides his way and all those who are fortunate to have him in their lives.

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@ican.net.

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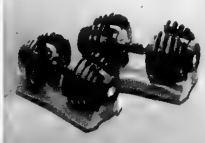

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This Week

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National

Police survey shows Jews most targeted religious group. *Page 3*

Beth Chabad honours two men for service to Israeli community. *Page 6*

Heebonics

McGill student navigates labyrinth of the business world. *Page 24*

Arts & Travel

I.B. Singer remembered at Luminato Festival. *Page 38*

Barry Manilow shares his vulnerability. *Page 40*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions.....10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 14
According to Reports 17
Health & Lifestyles.....18
Yiddish Corner 22
Heebonics.....24
Family Moments 25
What's New 26
Obituaries and Notices.....28
On Campus 29
Food, Scrumptious Food.....30
Israel & the Jewish World 33
Arts & Travel.....38

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Ethiopian children, whose roots trace back to Judaism, look out of a window at Beta Israel school while awaiting immigration to Israel in Gondar last year. While more than 17,000 Ethiopian immigrants have come to Israel since 2003, the mass aliyah appears to finally be at its end. *[RNS/Reuters photo]*

Funds for Ethiopian aliyah exhausted

By URIEL HEILMAN
JTA

NEW YORK — With the final planeload of Ethiopian immigrants scheduled to land in Israel early next month, advocates of Falash Mora aliyah are hoping a last-ditch intervention by Israel's prime minister will extend immigration rights to thousands more.

Former Israeli Supreme Court justice Meir Shamgar held a closed-door meeting with Ehud Olmert in late May in a bid to convince the prime minister to order the immediate screening of an additional 8,500 to 8,700 Ethiopians for immigration eligibility.

Also, a coalition of advocates is petitioning Israeli Knesset members, rallying American Jews and filing lawsuits to force Israel to take in thousands more Ethiopian immigrants.

"Experience teaches us that when the Israeli government says no, when we, the members of the community, do not give up, we prevail," said Avraham Neguise, an Ethiopian aliyah advocate and director of South Wing to Zion, an Ethiopian-Israeli group. "There are 8,700 Jews left behind. I hope that the prime minister will check this situation and make the right decisions, and not make another mistake."

The campaign, launched several months ago, has taken on renewed urgency following several court rulings rejecting the advocates' petitions, the termination of United Jewish Communities (UJC) funding of aid activities in Ethiopia and the imminence of the planned end of mass Ethiopian aliyah.

With more than 17,000 Ethiopian immigrants having come to Israel since former prime minister Ariel Sharon's government decided to expand mass aliyah from the country in 2003, the aliyah appears to finally be at its end.

Israel's Interior Ministry, which was responsible for determining who was eligible for immigration, several months ago finished going

Continued on page 33

Soldiers may be freed soon

© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — The father of abducted Israel Defence Forces soldier Eldad Regev said Monday that his family and that of Ehud Goldwasser, the other soldier kidnapped by Hezbollah, have been informed that a deal for the abductees' return to Israel has been finalized.

"Ofer Dekel told us, speaking generally, that there is going to be a deal – and that's it," Zvi Regev told Israel Radio. Dekel is Israel's chief negotiator for securing the release of abducted IDF soldiers.

Hezbollah guerrillas kidnapped Goldwasser and Regev in a 2006 cross-border raid that sparked the month-long Second Lebanon War.

Zvi Regev also told Israel Radio that the medical condition of his son and of Goldwasser is still unknown.

"Actually, no one knows. If they received treatment [after their abduction], they survived. If they didn't – then we just hope they did, and it appears that Udi [Ehud] and Eldad are returning… We are aware of the worst [possibilities], but we hope for good tidings in any event," Regev said.

The IDF soldiers were believed to have been badly wounded during their abduction, and Hezbollah, the Lebanon-based militant group, has offered no proof that they are alive.

Continued on page 34

Eldad Regev and his father in happier times

Shlach
Candlelighting: 8:45
Havdalah: 9:51

Greater Toronto Area

Hamas releases letter from Schalit — please see page 34

The News In Brief

CANADA

Apology Praised

TORONTO — Canadian Jewish Congress lauded Prime Minister Stephen Harper for his apology last week to Canada's Aboriginal Peoples for the "national shame" of residential schools. "Prime Minister Harper announced in last year's Throne Speech that an official apology for this dark period of Canadian history was forthcoming to Canada's First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and he has made good on this pledge. We commend his inspired leadership in fulfilling this promise," CJC co-president Rabbi Reuven Bulka said.

Rubin Back In Mtl.

MONTREAL — Benjamin Rubin will play hockey in his hometown next season. Rubin, 19, has been acquired by the new Montreal Juniors club of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League (QMJHL). A graduate of Hebrew Academy, Rubin broke into the QMJHL with the Quebec City Remparts in 2006. An observant Jew, he couldn't play or travel on Shabbat or Yom Tovs, which limited his ice time, since the league plays most Friday nights. Last season, the forward was traded to Gatineau, with the proviso he play full time, except on High Holy Days, but he spent the end of the year with the triple-A St. Jérôme Panthères. The QMJHL returns to Montreal after a five-year absence with the purchase and relocation of the Fog Devils of St. John's, Nfld., by local businessman Farrel Miller.

T.O. Students Win

TORONTO — A Toronto student placed first out of 160 North American students in a Yeshiva University Talmud contest, and his sister won the Diaspora portion of this year's International Bible Contest. Yisrael Mordechai Witty, in Grade 12 at Yeshivat Or Chaim, won YU's Bekiut contest, in which participants study Gemara for the sake of learning. Rivka Witty, in Grade 10 at Ulpanat Orot, placed first in the Diaspora in the Chumash quiz, held in Israel.

WORLD

Books Endangered?

NEW YORK — An Egyptian Jewish group has asked the United Nations to help recover the community's historic archives. The Historical Society of Jews from Egypt says Egypt won't release the documents for fear of restitution claims, the *Jerusalem Post* reported. The society has written to UNESCO asking it to intervene. The letter was prompted by comments from Egyptian Culture Minister Farouk Hosni, who said last month that he "would burn Israeli books myself if found in Egyptian libraries."

Ruling Upheld

PITTSBURGH — A U.S. appeals court revoked the citizenship of a man who was an SS guard at Nazi concentration camps. The June 10 ruling affirmed one by the U.S. District Court in Pittsburgh revoking the citizenship of Anton Geiser of Sharon, Penn., who admitted that during most of 1943, he was an SS guard at Sachsenhausen near Berlin. He also admitted to being a guard at Buchenwald. While he was at Sachsenhausen, more than 3,000 prisoners were murdered or died from brutal treatment. Geiser, 81, came to the United States from Austria in 1956 and became a U.S. citizen in 1962. Efforts to denaturalize him began in 2004.

Envoy Slams British Anti-Israel Bias

Ron Prosor

LONDON — Israel's ambassador to London came out against what he called widespread British bias against the Jewish state.

"Britain has become a hotbed for radical anti-Israeli views and a haven for disingenuous calls for a one-state solution, a euphemistic name for a movement advocating Israel's destruction," Ron Prosor wrote in a June 10 *Daily Telegraph* opinion piece.

"Israel faces an intensified campaign of delegitimization, demonization and double standards," he added, noting that British traditions of fair-mindedness apparently no longer apply when it comes to Zionism.

Prosor, who took office in November pledging to promote Israel and confront pro-Palestinian apologists, aimed special criticism at British academics who want their Israeli counterparts boycotted, and at British media coverage of the Middle East.

The article was published as British Foreign Secretary David Milliband wrapped up a visit to Israel.

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Jews second most targeted for hate crimes

Highest rates in Calgary, Kingston, Ottawa

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A survey of police-reported hate crimes released recently by Statistics Canada showed that in 2006, Jews were Canada's most targeted group by religion and second only to blacks as the most victimized group overall.

Of 220 hate crimes motivated by the victim's religion, 137 were aimed at Jews, or almost 63 per cent. Muslims were the next most affected religious group, with 46 incidents (21 per cent) reported, followed by Catholics, who experienced 13 incidents (six per cent).

Overall, blacks were the most targeted group, whether considered on racial, ethnic, gender or religious bases. Some 238 hate events were reported involving blacks out of a total of 892 incidents. Blacks were victims in 27 per cent of all occurrences, Jews in 15 per cent.

The data were obtained from the Hate Crime Supplemental Survey, a study of hate crimes reported by police departments across Canada that cover 87 per cent of Canada's population. Statistics Canada reported that the number of hate crimes "accounted for less than one per cent of all criminal incidents reported to police."

The study showed that half of all hate-motivated crime concerned property offences, while one-third involved violence. The highest rates of police-reported hate crime were in Calgary (9.1 per 100,000 residents), Kingston (8.5), Ottawa (6.6), London (5.9) and Toronto (5.5). "Hate crimes were most likely to involve young people, both as victims and accused persons," the report stated.

"Most violent hate crimes are committed by strangers rather than persons known to victims. In 2006, 77 per cent of victims of police-reported hate crime did not know their perpetrators, compared to 33 per cent of victims of other violent crimes."

The national hate-motivated crimes statistics parallel findings by the hate crimes unit of the Toronto Police Service. In its 2006 report, the unit found that Jews were the second most victimized group, behind blacks.

Jews continue to be subjected to anti-Semitic vandalism.

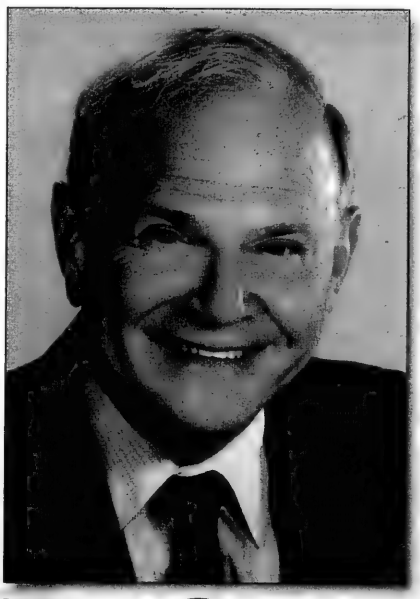
Twenty-eight of 162 incidents were aimed at Jews (17 per cent), while 15 incidents (nine per cent) targeted Muslims. Blacks were singled out in 30 per cent of occurrences.

Const. Wendy Drummond, a spokesperson for the Toronto Police, said the most recent data for 2007 again showed that Jews were the second most targeted group, behind blacks. Altogether, Jews were affected in 29 per cent of incidents, while blacks were targeted in 33 per cent of events. Gays were next at 13 per cent, followed by Muslims and Pakistanis at nine per cent each.

Police also recorded a "multi-bias" category – where the motivation involved more than one type of animus, such as a black and gay – in which Jews were the second-most-targeted group, she said.

Wendy Lampert, national director of community relations for Canadian Jewish Congress, said the findings are consistent with long-standing patterns.

"Historically, we have been targeted," she said. "We really have to remain vigilant as a community and take appropriate measures to secure our facilities going forward."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Greater Toronto Area

The museum soars

From the editor's desk

It is a sorrowful tranquillity, but a tranquillity nonetheless that one finds at Yad Vashem on the Mount of Remembrance in the western slopes of Jerusalem.

Like Mount Herzl, which it abuts, where many of Israel's founding generation are buried, the Mount of Remembrance is a large pine-filled, rolling peak with vast green vistas toward the valleys to the north and the south.

One arrives at Yad Vashem, as we did last Friday morning, by leaving the noise and the turmoil of the city's congested, busy roads, curling westward on a narrow winding road around Mount Herzl into the sheltered, sylvan space of the Mount of Remembrance.

Past the visitors' reception centre is the new museum designed by Moshe Safdie. It is a long, horizontal three-cornered slice of concrete and glass that is literally wedged from south to north into the mountain. The modesty and humility of its shape gives it an immediate credibility. Its esthetic impact is, refreshingly, a statement about the building's purpose, not about its designer.

It is made entirely of smooth-faced concrete and glass. The grey concrete is effectively a spike into the mountain, an affront of sorts to its integrity.

The glass is the portal of light into the museum. It is also, we were told, a very deliberate reminder of the fact that there were indeed many windows onto the deranged world of the Holocaust. But most men and women refused to peer in.

Those who did, and those who acted because of what they saw, were righteous. And thus, the Avenue of the Righteous Among the Nations is the very first path of the entire museum complex. To date, more than 21,000 individuals have been officially acknowledged and honoured by Yad Vashem as righteous among the nations.

To get to the museum from the visitors' centre, one walks across a wooden bridge suspended in the air by wires and steel braces. The feel of the bridge underfoot is somewhat shaky, as the planners and architects intended.

The entry to the museum is near its southern end, which the visitor immediately notices is windowless, thus foreclosing the possibility of any view from there to the outside world.

The museum itself comprises nine galleries, each leading one to the other in chronological step through the 1930s and '40s. The displays in the galleries include personal artifacts, photographs, original artwork and survivor testimonies.

In 2007, more than one million people visited Yad Vashem. We were told it is the most visited museum in Israel.

Yad Vashem's mission is to vividly recall, if not "bring back," the civilization that the Nazis and their collaborators tried to destroy. Thus, over the past decade, Yad Vashem has evolved into an institution that is far more than a museum. Its mission rests on four pillars: commemoration, documentation, research and education.

As a result of its reinterpreted, expanded mission, some seven million visits from 215 countries were recorded on Yad Vashem's website last year, an increase of 54 per cent from the previous year. The institution also introduced an online mini-site in Farsi in January 2007, which received about 90,000 hits during the year, including more than 22,500 from Iran.

The last of the galleries in the museum is the Hall of Names, a high, wide-diameter, conical ceiling of faces and names and testimonies that surround the visitor, about to leave the museum, entirely from above.

At the entrance to the hall is the following plea: "Remember only that I was innocent/ And just like you, mortal on that day,/ *I, too, had a face* marked by rage,/ By pity and joy,/ Quite simply, *a human face*." (My emphasis)

The passage was written by Benjamin Fondane, a passenger on the Exodus, who was killed at Auschwitz.

After more than two hours in the museum, drained by the constant tear of emotion, exhausted by rage and hollowed out by overwhelming sadness, the poignancy of the poem penetrates. The words of our guide, Edna Wilchfort, return to the mind with newer meaning.

"One of the key purposes of Yad Vashem," Wilchfort said, "is to give names to nameless victims – to restore the identities to the people whose identities were stolen from them. Yad Vashem has documentation that gives *identities to human faces*. These faces belonged to people who existed and who were human beings, too."

The photo, inset, shows the exit of the Holocaust History Museum as it bursts out of the Mountain of Remembrance. The openness on both ends creates a winged effect, which in turn suggests a soaring toward personal resolve and perhaps, as well, national redemption.

Every visit to Israel should include a visit to Yad Vashem.

– *MBD*

See JN CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

NETANYAHU THE PRIME MINISTER

Benjamin Netanyahu defeated Shimon Peres in the elections of June 1996 to become prime minister of Israel. Less than a month after the election, he addressed the joint houses of Congress in the United States.

[Israel and RNS photos]

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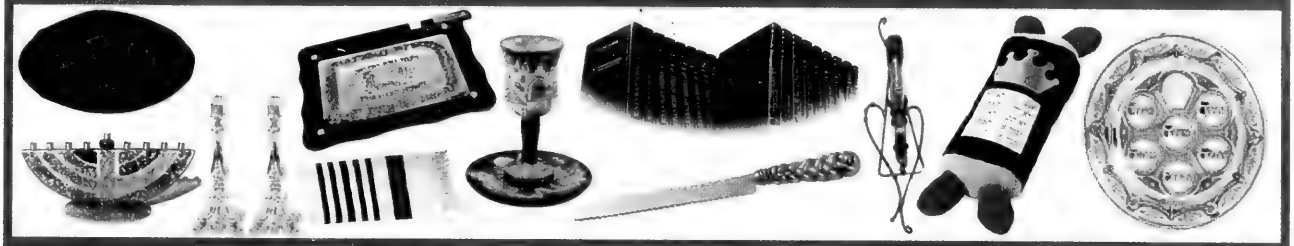

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Fisch, Ciccolini honoured by Beth Chabad

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Two people who have helped the Israeli community in Toronto were recognized at Beth Chabad's fifth annual Spirit of Community Dinner.

Attended by about 800 guests, the June 4 event, hosted by the Beth Chabad Israeli Community Centre, honoured York Region chairman and CEO Bill Fisch and entrepreneur and philanthropist Sam Ciccolini.

"[These individuals] ask not what everyone else can do for them, but what they can do for [their] fellow people," said guest speaker Rabbi Yossi Jacobson.

Fisch started off as the ward councillor for the town of Markham and is now in his fourth term as chairman and CEO of York Region. He received the community service award for his role in developing the communities of York Region, an area with a large Israeli population. Fisch played an important role in creating York Region's Viva Rapid Transit bus system and helped to plan two future subway expansions into York Region.

"Bill has established himself as a person who gets things done," said Markham mayor Frank Scarpitti. "He is an admired and respected community leader [and he] represents the long journey of creating one of the best regions in the country."

Fisch, who was born in a displaced persons' camp in Germany, spoke about York Region's diverse community.

From left are Sam Ciccolini, who received Beth Chabad's community spirit award; Rabbi Yisroel Landa of Beth Chabad; and Bill Fisch, also a recipient of a community spirit award. Below: Rabbi Landa with York Regional Police Chief, Armand P. La Barge. [Eli Amon photos]

"I take great pride that I, personally, played a small part in making our community such a great place to live in. Twenty years ago, I'm not even sure I knew where the region was, now it's Ontario's rising star. It has a vibrant economy, [it's] multicultural and ethnically diverse and its population is growing," he said.

Ciccolini, the co-owner of Masters Insurance Limited and a recipient of the Order of Ontario and the Order of Canada, was given the community spirit award for philanthropy. Ciccolini has supported Beth Chabad, as well as the Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, the Hospital for Sick Children and Youth Bocce Canada, which helps athletes with disabilities in the Greater Toronto Area and York Region.

"Sam is a highly regarded, successful entrepreneur, but with his busy day he still makes time to support [the community]," said Ciccolini's friend Bonnie Silver.

At the dinner, Beth Chabad raised about $250,000 for its community centre, which serves the Israeli and Hebrew-speaking population in Toronto and York Region.

After dinner, Rabbi Jacobson spoke about the importance of supporting the Jewish community.

"The human being wasn't created only for herself or himself, but for [others]," he said. "There's a mission statement behind each soul. Every individual is [here] to make a difference."

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A weary anniversary

A year ago this week, Hamas violently wrested control of the Gaza Strip from the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority of President Mahmoud Abbas. The fighting between the two Palestinian factions was vicious, furious and fast. In the end, the better-trained and probably more highly motivated Hamas forces of Ismail Haniyeh and Khaled Meshal carried the blood-soaked day.

Abbas called the Hamas takeover a "bloody coup." He referred to his Hamas brethren in highly unflattering terms. The inter-factional, intra-Palestinian hatred remains to this day. Since the coup last June, human rights groups report that some 118 Palestinians have been killed in inter-factional fighting in Gaza. Hundreds of Fatah members rot in Gaza jails, and arrests of Fatah supporters are carried out almost every day.

The public call last week by Abbas to pursue a dialogue of reconciliation with Hamas leaders fooled no one. He is vying for pre-eminence in the Palestinian "street." The appearance of bravely wanting to coexist with Hamas, affirming Palestinian solidarity despite the opposition of the United States and especially of Israel, is the emotional asphalt that paves that predictably unpredictable street with adulation and praise.

But Abbas also knew that apart from disappointing the Americans and the Israelis, which is a constant byproduct of his faux-posturing, he was risking very little with his gesture of equanimity to his Hamas enemies. For the main result of Hamas rule in Gaza these past 12 months has been the overwhelming poverty of the people who live there. Abbas' fellow Palestinians are drearily fatigued by it. About 50 per cent of Gazans have no work. Two-thirds live below the poverty line and need international aid to survive. Close to 90 per cent of factories are closed. There is hardly any new construction. And food staples are very expensive.

To be sure, the economic condition in Gaza is also a result of the economic blockade imposed by Israel and the financial blockade imposed by western countries. But that, too, is the plain and direct result of Hamas leaders choosing always and only the way of violence and hatred. They refuse to give up the goal of destroying Israel. They refuse to abjure violence. They refuse to honour former agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

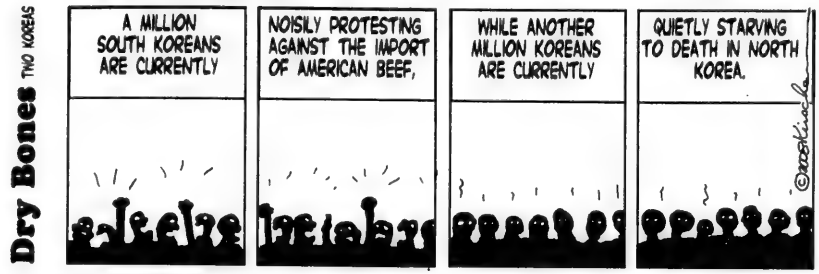
Under the circumstances, Israel's blockade is reasonable and necessary. Any other country facing the same situation would do no less – and very likely a great deal more.

Hamas' rule in Gaza has been decidedly bad for Israel. Rockets fall on Israelis who live near Gaza virtually every day. Gilad Schalit has been a captive for nearly two years.

But the real harm of Hamas' rule has fallen upon the Palestinians. Until and unless Hamas decides that Jews, too, have a right to live sovereign in the Middle East, the Palestinian people will be doomed to their wearying poverty and to more anniversaries of unfulfilled national aspirations.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Jordan's King Hussein imposed new restrictions on Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza. They could only enter Jordan via the Allenby and Damiya bridges, and the number of West Bank students attending Jordanian universities was limited. The king was said to be afraid that too large a Palestinian presence would destabilize his country.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Rachel Corrie is a blood libel

I expected to read positive reviews of *My Name Is Rachel Corrie* by gullible reviewers in the mainstream Canadian press. I did not expect the same from *The CJN* ("*Rachel Corrie* a one-sided but powerful look at intifadah," June 12). However "masterful" the production, this propaganda piece is nothing more than a blood libel, falling squarely within the time-honoured tradition that Jews kill non-Jewish children for sinister purposes. It is no accident that this play ends with an epiphany of Rachel's fifth-grade child-hunger speech, nor that the Toronto production closes with young Rachel on a swing.

Medieval Jews were accused of kidnapping the boy William of Norwich, draining his blood and mixing it into matzah. This play accuses the Israel Defence Forces of murdering Rachel. Medieval tradition sanctified the dead child as "St. William." Today's dead child is transfigured as a secular angel.

The blood libel has been useful to the Arabs in modern times, with accusations by King Faisal of Saudi Arabia in 1972 ("They have a certain day on which they mix the blood of non-Jews into their bread and eat it"). The most recent is the false accusation that the Palestinian boy Mohammed al-Dura was shot by Israeli gunfire. The success of *Rachel Corrie* is simply one more example of the utility of this slander.

Marjorie Gann
Toronto

* * *

Bullying at day schools

I believe bullying is one of the biggest problems facing our Jewish day schools ("The bullied day school student," *CJN*, June 5). The challenge, as always, is not only to deal with this issue, but to get our school administrators to admit there is a problem. All too often, principals and guidance counsellors blame the victim. This has made it impossible for bullied children and their parents to speak out.

Last year, I co-authored a book with Rachael Turkienicz titled *My Worst Best Sleepover Party*, which dealt with school bullying. The responses that have come in, including from Jewish day schools, have astounded us. Much needs to be done in our Jewish community schools and elsewhere to address these issues. The first step is, however, to shine a light on the problem and admit that it exists.

Anna Morgan
Toronto

* * *

Supports Israel's talks with Syria

I read with interest the editorial "Shocked and wary" (*CJN*, May 29), which is subtly, if not explicitly, critical of the Israeli government's peace talks with Syria, on the basis of returning the Golan Heights. The Israeli peace camp, security establishment and most of the international community – but not the United States – back this move. Whether or not it is a distraction from Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's legal difficulties, it may well bring tangible gains toward a stable region.

This diplomatic activity is happening quite against the will of the United States. In fact, many analysts have pointed out that U.S. President George W. Bush's recent chutzpadik words about appeasement while speaking before the Knesset were not simply aimed at U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama, but at Israeli policy. It is puzzling, and ironic then, that the same folks who label criticism of Israel's hawkish policies as irresponsible, if not anti-Semitic, or "self-hating," are glad to be critical of a move that may well deprive the region of a significant source of tension. Perhaps the Golan is more important than a regional entente to this crowd. To boot, Olmert has the support of much of the Israeli security establishment, according to *Ha'aretz*, and if he doesn't have the support of the majority of the population, neither do many leaders who make tough decisions.

As a longtime critic of Israel, I am surprised I am defending Israeli policy from allegedly "pro-Israel" voices.

Jordy Cummings
Toronto

* * *

CIC reflects diversity of opinion

While we agree that Peace Now has played an important role in the public policy debate in Israel – and within the pro-Israel community here in Canada – the Canada-Israel Committee takes exception to Sheldon Gordon's misleading assertions regarding Peace Now's inclusion within the CIC or its Quebec affiliate, the Quebec-Israel Committee ("Peace Now made the 'unthinkable thinkable,'" *CJN*, June 12).The appointments to both boards are *ad persona* and no organization is represented as such. That said, the CIC has always succeeded in ensuring that the widest possible range of perspectives are given a voice around the table, including those that reflect the positions advocated by Peace Now. The pro-Israel community benefits greatly from the diversity of opinion that is found within the CIC board – Jewish and non-Jewish, right wing and left, and young and old – as well as geographic and gender balance.

Moshe Ronen
National Chairman
Canada-Israel Committee

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Will Obama be good for Israel?

By LESLIE SUSSER
JTA

Although Israeli officialdom is not commenting on the possibility of Barack Obama being the next U.S. president, in private some officials in Jerusalem are expressing mixed feelings about the prospect.

Some in government quarters are concerned that Obama, the Democratic nominee, might be soft on Iran, pressure Israel to make concessions on the Palestinian track and even change the tenor of the strategic relationship between Israel and the United States.

Yet Israeli Foreign Ministry experts on U.S. foreign policy say no American president, Obama included, would adopt an overtly anti-Israeli posture.

Israel's left wing hopes that an Obama administration will be more hands-on in Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking, perhaps even pressing the parties into a mutually beneficial deal. By the same token, the right wing fears that an Obama administration and the Israeli government could be on a collision course, especially if Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu wins the next Israeli election.

Obama's powerfully expressed commitment to Israel at the annual American Israel Public Affairs Committee policy conference June 4 in Washington went a long way toward assuaging Israeli fears.

Israeli officials noted Obama's readiness to use force against Iran if necessary, his promise to maintain the Israel Defense Forces' qualitative edge, his support for isolating Hamas and his commitment to Israel's Jewish character, with Jerusalem as its undivided capital.

But the officials also offered two caveats.

Although Obama, an Illinois senator, is saying all the right things, there is no way of knowing what he would actually do in office. Unlike his Republican opponent, Arizona Senator John McCain, Obama cannot boast a long, unwavering record of support for Israel.

Second, some pundits argued that his commitment to a united Jerusalem was so obviously over the top that it cast doubt on the rest of what he had to say on June 4.

Following harsh Palestinian reaction to his comments on Jerusalem, Obama clarified his remarks the next day, telling CNN that the fate of the city would be up to Israel and the Palestinians to discuss.

The main worry in Israel is over Obama's readiness to talk to Iran. Israeli officials and pundits are concerned that the Iranians will play the Americans for suckers, building nuclear weapons under the cloak of ongoing negotiations.

In late May, the Foreign Ministry's research department convened a meeting of ministry and outside experts to discuss "American foreign policy after Bush," including the possible implications of an Obama presidency. The conclusion: Israel has no reason to worry, regardless of who wins the White House.

The consensus was that because support for Israel is so strong in both Congress and American public opinion, no president would take a radically different tack.

Pressure on Israel is unlikely, the experts said, since the main focus in the Middle East for the new U.S. president will be Iraq and Iran, not Israel and the Palestinians.

Says Jerusalem's status is up to Israel, Palestinians

On Iran, any U.S. administration will try diplomacy before using force, the experts agreed, including McCain. They also saw merit in Obama's argument that if the United States negotiates with Iran in good faith and fails, it then would have far more moral justification if it resorts to force to destroy Iranian nuclear installations.

"I don't think diplomacy and even direct negotiations are necessarily a sign of being soft," one of the experts, Alon Pinkas, a former Israeli consul general in New York, told JTA. "I think it's an avenue that if successful could be beneficial to Israel, especially since he's not taking the military option off the table.

"I am not sure that Rambo – let's bomb them back into the Stone Age – is necessarily a better policy."

Pinkas noted two more reasons why Israel has nothing to fear from Obama. One, after the staunchly pro-Israel Clinton and Bush administrations, the classic conflict between pro-Israeli and more "even-handed" American policy is a thing of the past, he said. Two, Obama almost certainly will appoint an overwhelmingly pro-Israel cabinet.

"I just cannot see Obama deviating from that general pro-Israeli position," Pinkas said.

Where Pinkas does see a possible change in U.S. policy under Obama is on the Israel-Syria peace track. He thinks an Obama administration might make the Syrians an offer they can't refuse, coaxing them to leave the Iranian axis and join the moderate pro-western Arab coalition.

"If this is part of a grand U.S. strategy to isolate Iran, then it could be very much in Israel's interest," he said.

On the Israeli right, however, suspicion of Obama remains strong. Likud hawks are still seething over remarks Obama made to a group of Jewish leaders in Cleveland.

"I think there is a strain within the pro-Israel community that says unless you adopt an unwavering pro-Likud approach to Israel, then you're anti-Israel, and that can't be the measure of our friendship with Israel," Obama said in March.

Likudniks recall the severe strains in relations between Israel and the Clinton administration when (then Israeli prime minister) Benjamin Netanyahu refused to make concessions to the Palestinians. They fear Netanyahu and Obama could be on the same kind of collision course, but with worse consequences, especially if it turns out that Obama doesn't share Clinton's profound commitment to Israel.

Pinkas points out that the Clinton-Netanyahu tension resulted from Netanyahu's allying with Newt Gingrich, the Republican speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, against the administration. Netanyahu has not made the same mistake this time, having taken pains to establish good relations with Obama.

Perhaps more than anything else, the question of how the next U.S. president will relate to Israel may rest on another as-yet-unknowable factor: who will be Israel's next prime minister.

He would benefit Jews, candidate's half-brother says

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The half-brother of U.S. Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama, Malik Obama, told Israel Army Radio last week that Obama would make a good president for Jews.

Malik Obama, a Muslim who resides in a small village in western Kenya, also requested to send a special blessing to the Jewish people around the world from the Obama family in Kenya.

The Obama brothers' father, a senior economist for the Kenyan government who studied at Harvard University, died in car crash in 1982. He left six sons and a daughter. All of his children, except Malik, live in Britain or the United States.

Barack Obama grew up in Hawaii with his American mother after his parents divorced and did not meet his brother Malik until 1985.

Opinions

Happiness is being content

Last month, I briefly discussed the notion of the tension between a forward-looking perspective versus a focus on the present. I would like to add to that with a further reflection on an appreciation of the present moment.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

We are perhaps by nature forced to look to the future – to plan for our next move, to think about what will happen soon and what we will do about it, to try to improve.

Evolutionary theory reinforces the notion of constant change: survival requires that we attend to the changing world with a positive disposition to the future. We try to progress.

Additionally, as Jews, we have learned not to take the future for granted and to work hard for its treasures. But we can't ignore the present. There is a well-known statement from Pirkei Avot that says, "Who is wealthy? One who is happy with their lot." That sentiment speaks directly to the point I am developing.

The personal perspective is essential. Any appreciation of the current moment must also involve, or rest on, our ability to be satisfied with our own existence. The word "lot" can refer to wealth, destiny or character, so the phrase is rich in potential meanings.

I believe our sages were trying to turn us away from prioritizing material wealth. Being rich and having many physical goods does not make one happy. In fact, wanting more material goods, the basis of consumerism, is seen as a negative attribute. But the value of contentment is satisfaction with one's own allotment in life.

That element speaks more to one's natural attributes and one's heritage – genetic, familial and communal. The intent of the statement, it seems to me, is to warn us to be personally gratified with who we are. It's about our destiny in some ways, but more importantly, it's about our character, and the values and qualities we live by.

It's not about over-confidence, nor a signal for arrogance, to be sure.

These sentiments were brought home to me at my grandson's bar mitzvah. The rabbi used this aphorism to explain to Avi that he should understand and appreciate his rich birthright and his wonderful character. It was an ego boost of the best sort – an attempt to give confidence to a young Jew at precisely the right instant, for precisely the right reasons.

It was also a wonderful praise for the present moment. Live for now. Be content. That is happiness. Don't look to others' riches. Learn to appreciate your own – those of your own personality, your family, your community and your people.

With that kind of view, we can see how very rich – read: blessed – we truly are.

Jews should stand with First Nations

Our family's recent visit to newly renovated Quadra Island First Nations' Nuyumbalees Cultural Centre reminded us that, in the living memory of many, the cultural genocide practised on them resonates harshly today.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Beginning in the 19th century and continuing well into the 20th, federal Indian agents and Christian missionaries despoiled the physical and cultural legacies of Canada's First Nations. There were specific ways in which this was accomplished.

First, missionaries decided to recreate the "pagan Indian" in their own white and Christian image. They did this by various means, but the one that struck us most forcefully was the creation of communities like Metlakatla, near Prince Rupert, where the indigenous people were taught to forsake their hunting and fishing ways – and, not incidentally, to shed their attachment to feasts, potlatches and story-telling through mask dances, all the trappings of an un-Christian life. Then they would be turned into proper farmers and seamstresses.

One photograph shows a row of native women sitting primly behind sewing machines, forlorn and lost souls. By taking them away from their villages, the missions prepared their charges for a new and civilized way of life. By moving them away, they destroyed vital links to a past and a culture,

The second blow was a concerted and sweeping effort by Indian agents to confiscate regalia of the ceremonial dances that anchored each family and clan in a total worldview, giving them a past and a place in the culture. Thus they were robbed of ways to tell their foundation stories. That precious regalia as begun to return to the bands, as museums and private collectors around the world find their consciences and return the masks, rattles, screens and story poles to their rightful owners.

The most well-known way in which this cultural – and at times physical – disfigurement was accomplished was the practice of forcing children into residential schools, where they were beaten, raped and deprived of any meaningful family life. We see the results of this horror on our streets daily, as a new generation struggles to recover their equilibrium.

I must also mention one other factor that strikes a chord within our own community. First Nations, at least here on the West Coast, were matrilineal. When the British came, they mandated in law that "Indian status" was to be determined by patrilineal descent – based on their own perception of the way things should be. With the stroke of a pen, they rearranged an entire cultural base.

Over the centuries, we, too, have been often despoiled of our most precious objects and forced from our homes. Talmuds were burned in the fires of the Inquisition, along with their scholars. Entire populations faced conversion or death. Most recently, our European experience turned to smoke. Matrilineal descent has been central to our identity for 2,000 years. How would we feel if we were forced by the state to abandon it?

How would we feel if we could no longer read our foundational stories from our printed texts, or if we could no longer celebrate our festivals – most notably Pesach – with the Haggadah and the ceremony of the seder? Or if we had our children taken from us (shades of the czar's conscription gangs)?

Yet let's not kid ourselves. Today First Nations' image of Jews and Israel may not be so favourable. It's easier to relate to the Palestinian image of a displaced and persecuted people than it is to understand the complex set of circumstances that created Israel, and the convoluted battles between Palestinians and Israelis.

Being guided through the Quadra museum by a First Nations young woman (who is studying criminology at university), I meditated on the shared experiences of our peoples struggling to preserve our most precious legacies, and how difficult it is for us to understand and speak to each other's stories of destruction and redemption.

Had there been no North American democracies to receive Jewish refugees in the past century, we would have lost many millions more people.

We benefited from a safe haven, while the First Nations have suffered from the destruction of their cultures.

We owe it to Canada's First Nations to stand with them as they reclaim their heritage.

Courts, tribunals will advance 'reasonable accommodation'

The phrase "reasonable accommodation" has been in the news lately. "Reasonable accommodation" is a legal concept designed to eliminate discrimination and achieve equality by respecting and taking into account the sensitivities of various minorities, including religious and cultural groups.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

The issue recently came to the fore in the province of Quebec as a result of various minority assertions, including some from members of Montreal's chassidic community.

Over the past 25 years, the concept of accommodation has arisen in a number of cases. In the Multani case, the Supreme Court of Canada recognized, in 2006, that school board officials in Quebec must permit Sikhs to wear their kirpans (ceremonial daggers) to school as part of their religious obligations.

This decision ignited the debate on reasonable accommodation in Quebec. The debate was exacerbated by the attitudes of certain politicians, including Action Democratique leader Mario Dumont, and was strongly fuelled by the press. Reasonable accommodation dominated Quebec's public discourse for months.

In response, the government of Quebec created the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, formally known as the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices related to Cultural Differences. This commission was mandated to study and make recommendations concerning the application of reasonable accommodation in addressing minority issues.

The Bouchard-Taylor Commission held public hearings, reviewed more than 900 briefs and conducted four province-wide forums. The various town hall meetings provided venues for the occasional rant by individuals who expressed intolerant, prejudicial attitudes. The issues were also debated on phone-in radio shows and other forums, at which people expressed less-than-accepting attitudes toward minorities. In addition, the town of Herouxville and its biased code of conduct for newcomers – that included banning the covering of faces – attracted considerable national and international attention.

The commission issued its report in May. It contains a series of rather benign and generally acceptable recommendations, some of which attracted immediate public attention. For example, the report recommended the removal of the crucifix in the Quebec legislature, a recommendation already rejected by the Quebec government.

The Bouchard-Taylor report recognized that Quebec, a multicultural mosaic, is not a racist society and acknowledged that respect and accommodation of minorities is the norm to be incorporated into Quebec life and society. However, there is a growing view that Quebec ought not to embody traditional multiculturalism as we know it, but rather should opt for the notion of "interculturalism," in which the various diverse components of Quebec society would establish a special bond and relationship with the mainstream French reality that defines Quebec life.

In a sense, interculturalism is a rejection of traditional multiculturalism in favour of a duality consisting of mainstream French Quebec together with the diversity that defines modern Quebec demographically. Interculturalism encourages the use of French "as the common language of intercultural relations" and "cultivates a pluralistic orientation." It encourages the notions of both interaction and integration.

Interestingly, the report included a small section on anti-Semitism and the Jewish community in Quebec. The commission's work was commended in a press release issued by the Quebec region of Canadian Jewish Congress. It was also generally applauded in newspaper editorials and commentaries.

What is the significance of the Bouchard-Taylor report? What benefits will flow from the $3.7 million report?

For the most part, the Bouchard-Taylor report will be minimal in its impact and its work will likely fade from the public eye. Predictably, the recommendations will be placed on the back burner of Quebec politics. Rather, it is likely that our courts and anti-discrimination tribunals will continue to render decisions that will advance the notion of reasonable accommodation in order to protect the needs and aspirations of the diverse minority segments of society. In that way, the march toward a truly multicultural society – whether it is described as traditional "multiculturalism" or as Quebec "interculturalism" – will continue to be fostered, if not by governments, then likely by the courts.

Reasonable accommodation, as a legal and moral norm, will continue to re-define Quebec and Canadian society, reflecting the demographics of modern diversity. It is a norm that will predictably benefit Jewish and other minorities and will lead to a less insular and more accepting Canada.

The Kirshner File

Palestinian factions struggle for dominance

Exactly a year ago, following months of intense bickering, armed clashes and a string of broken ceasefires, the Palestinian national movement splintered into two bitter rival factions as Hamas, an Islamic fundamentalist organization backed by Iran, seized control of the Gaza Strip from Fatah, a secular group supported by Israel and the United States. Coming just 18 months after Hamas trounced Fatah in Palestinian parliamentary elections and only four months after Fatah and Hamas formed a national unity government in the wake of a summit in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the fighting reached its climax when Hamas captured the last bastion of Fatah's authority in Gaza, the headquarters of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Responding to Hamas' swift military victory and coup, which resulted in the deaths of more than 100 fighters and civilians, Abbas declared a state of emergency and disbanded the government, firing Ismail Haniyeh, the Hamas prime minister, and replacing him with Salam Fayyad, an economist. Fatah also raided Hamas institutions in the West Bank, which remains under Fatah's control.

Observers were less than surprised that their power-sharing arrangement dissolved in an orgy of bloodshed. Fatah, once the kingmaker in Palestinian politics, could not adjust to its diminished role as junior partner in a government in which Hamas held most cabinet seats. And Fatah was angered by Hamas' refusal to accept Israeli and international conditions to end the boycott of the unity government: recognition of Israel, renouncement of terrorism and acceptance of previous accords signed by Israel and the Palestinian authority.

Omar Suleiman

One year on, with Hamas and Fatah still at loggerheads over these fundamental issues, the prospect of a rapprochement appears dim.

But as far as Israel is concerned, the status quo is just fine. Israel's position, as enunciated by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, is that Hamas should be left out in the cold. In line with this view, Israel has branded the Hamas regime in Gaza "an enemy entity" and has continued to blockade it.

At the moment, there is only a slim chance that Hamas and Fatah will hug and make up, judging by the lingering tensions and an ongoing war of words. Indeed, the two sides are at knife's edge, having clashed in Gaza since last June.

Abbas, having branded Hamas' takeover of Gaza as "a grave crime," has urged Palestinians to "topple this gang." He has insisted that Hamas must relinquish its grip on Gaza and agree to fresh elections before reconciliation talks can take place. But last week, in a startling reversal of policy due to his pessimism regarding the state of current peace negotiations with Israel, he called for a renewal of dialogue with Hamas.

Abbas has also called on Israel to lift economic restrictions on Gaza and allow the flow of food, gas, electricity and medical supplies into that impoverished enclave. Tacitly, however, he has co-operated with Israel and the United States in efforts to isolate Hamas and close off Gaza.

Prior to Abbas' latest conciliatory statement, Fatah and Hamas conducted preliminary discussions to heal their rift, but these sporadic talks have failed to ease mutual animosities. Last November, after Haniyeh hinted he might be ready to cede Gaza to Fatah, Abbas met a group of Hamas leaders in the West Bank town of Ramallah. The meeting was described by Fatah as an effort to wean so-called Hamas moderates away from radicals. It was followed by two Fatah-Hamas "fraternal dialogues," the first in Sanaa, Yemen, and the second in Dakar, Senegal. Both were aimed at ironing out "divergences" and "reconciling the Palestinian family."

Mahmoud Abbas

In practical terms, these summits have changed nothing on the ground. Hamas has tightened its hold on Gaza and conditions there have deteriorated alarmingly.

By one estimate, the unemployment rate hovers around the 50 per cent mark, with 80 per cent of Gaza's residents being dependent on food aid.

School buses have stopped running, water and sewage systems are close to collapsing, hospitals suffer from power cuts of up to 12 hours a day, and illnesses such as diarrhea are on the increase.

Yet the suffering that ordinary Palestinians endure has not dented Hamas' popularity in Gaza. According to a survey released by Arab World for Research and Development, Haniyeh would defeat Abbas if an election were held today.

Although the Palestinians are fed up with Israel's siege, which enables the Israeli armed forces to control Gaza's border, air space and coastline, they feel that the Palestinian Authority has not been sufficiently tough in current peace talks with Israel.

As well, many Palestinians believe that Fatah has not cured itself of corrupt practices, examples of which abound. The former speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council and Abbas' adviser, Rouhi Fattouh, has come under suspicion for having smuggled thousands of cellphones into the West Bank from Jordan. In addition, the former Palestinian prime minister, Ahmed Qurei, has been accused of depositing $3 million (US) in PLO funds into his private bank account.

The appalling humanitarian situation in Gaza and the lack of progress in Israel's peace talks with the Palestinians has damaged the prospects of a two-state solution, says United Nations Middle East envoy Robert Serry.

Tzipi Livni

Nevertheless, the majority of Palestinians still support peace negotiations, even though the chances of an agreement have receded since last year's conference in Annapolis, Maryland. Two weeks ago, Qurei, the head of the Palestinian negotiating team, said that no "tangible" results have been achieved, and that an agreement will not be reached this year.

In all likelihood, Israel and the Palestinians will make no further progress unless Hamas becomes part of the process. But the issue that most concerns Israel now is not a formal peace agreement with the Palestinian Authority but an informal ceasefire with Hamas.

Hamas, through the good offices of Egyptian mediator Omar Suleiman, has offered Israel a truce to end cross-border fighting.

Since 2001, and particularly since Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in 2005, Palestinian militants from Islamic Jihad, Hamas, the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade and the Popular Resistance Committees have fired nearly 8,000 Qassam missiles, mortars and Grad rockets at Israeli kibbutzim and towns, killing more than a dozen Israelis and wounding hundreds more.

By way of retaliation, Israel has launched air raids and armoured forays into Gaza, but to no avail. Israeli reprisals, which have caused unintended civilian casualties, have only emboldened Palestinian radicals. Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who is caught up in a major corruption scandal that may unseat him sooner rather than later, has threatened to invade Gaza. But he has held back, not being certain that an invasion could achieve the same striking results as Operation Defensive Shield, which was launched in the West Bank in the spring of 2002.

As Olmert contemplates the possibility of of an invasion of Gaza, he continues to make calibrated gestures and concessions to Abbas in a bid to strengthen him. Israel has handed over security responsibilities to the Palestinian Authority in Nablus and Jenin, removed roadblocks, released prisoners, transferred tax revenues, allowed the construction of industrial zones and permitted some Palestinian farmers to export crops. In the meantime, 87 donor nations, led by the United States, have pledged $7.4 billion in aid to Palestinians affiliated with the Palestinian Authority. Yet, as Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak warned recently, the day may yet come when Hamas will try to seize the West Bank – which Israel occupies – from Fatah.

That would spell disaster for Abbas and embroil Israel in new fighting with Hamas.

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Northland-B'nai Brith hosts first at-camp reunion

Traditional burning of the NBB to end gathering

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

For the first time in its history, Camp Northland-B'nai Brith is holding an at-camp reunion.

Northland has been located on Haliburton's Moose Lake for some 68 years. This year, as the Jewish Camp Council approaches its 100th anniversary, the camp has decided that meeting in Toronto isn't enough for its alumni.

"The reunion is all about memories," said David Berger, the president of the board of directors of the Jewish Camp Council of Toronto. "It's more nostalgic. People can say, 'This is where it was, look at what's changed.' They can reminisce."

The reunion will be held Sept. 7, on the camp's 750 acres. While it's a one-day event, guests can choose to come the night before and sleep over.

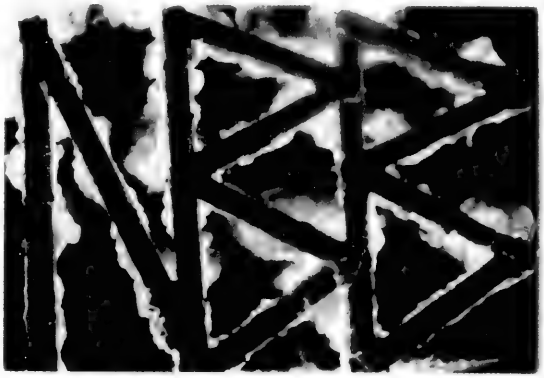
The reunion committee has been planning the event since last fall.

"The response has been good. There's a lot of interest and excitement," said Frank Tizel, chair of the reunion committee.

Ellen Nash, the executive director of the Jewish Camp Council of Toronto and the camp director, is expecting former campers and staff from the 1950s.

"A lot of people say they really want to come back," she said. "Anybody who was ever [at Northland] can come."

This year will be Nash's last as camp director, which is one of the reasons the camp isn't waiting until 2010 to hold the reunion.



The burning of the NBB is a tradition performed the last night of camp each session at Camp Northland-B'nai Brith.

"We had to do it now," Berger said. "Ellen's leaving, and we've had requests."

Like many alumni, former camper Mark Alexander, 37, hasn't seen the camp in years.

"I was 13 to15 [when I went to camp.] I really just want to see the place. I want to see the lake, go out on the dock. [Camp] is a whole other world," he said.

The last two reunions, one in 1990 the other in 2000, were held in Toronto. While Berger is anticipating a successful event, he realizes that fewer people may come.

"In 1990, we had a big event at the Sheridan with well over 1,000 people. The next [reunion] was a Sunday lunch. It was [also] a huge success. This one is different logistically. The community is in the GTA and the camp is 2½ hours north of here," Berger said.

Still, as the Jewish Camp Council prepares to celebrate its centennial in 2009, Berger is hopeful.

"We have a rich history of people attending. This year, [we're doing] something different," he said. "I think the most important thing is to reconnect. We want to continue to reach out to the community through another 100 years."

Since Northland is a sleepover camp, many campers forge lifelong relationships.

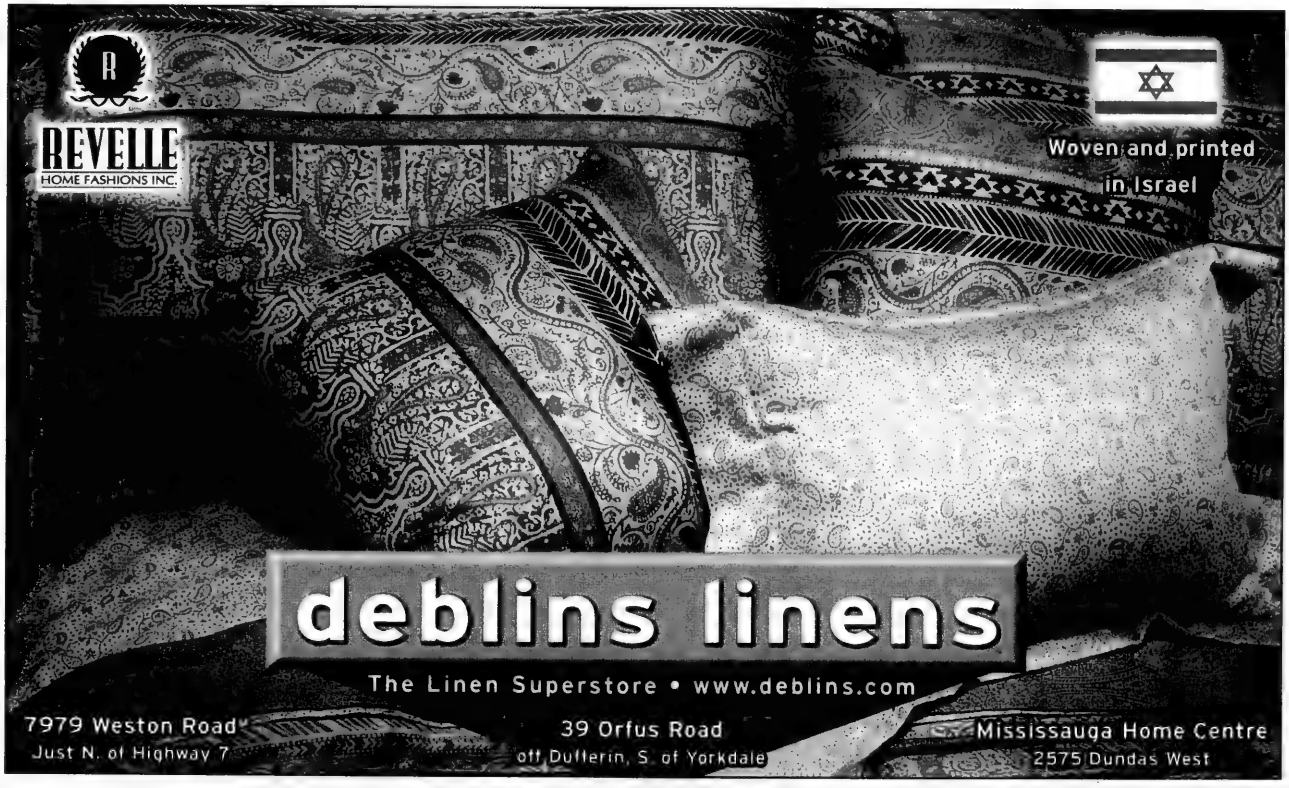
"My wife and I met at camp," Berger said. "I live on a street that's a block long and there are three longtime marriages from Camp Northland. It's an intense environment. Much deeper friendships [form] at camp."

While the upcoming reunion will have programs such as canoeing and swimming, its main purpose will be to allow alumni to see each other again.

"Programming is less important," Berger said. "When we first started [having reunions], we thought we needed programming, but some people never even left the lobby. They saw people they knew – they were too busy talking to pay attention," he said.

The reunion will end with the traditional burning of a wooden Northland-B'nai Brith sculpture.

"It's quite touching," Tizel said.



Holocaust Education Centre gets $10M donation

Holocaust survivor Michael (Chaim) Neuberger has donated $10 million to UJA Federation of Greater Toronto to build a new Holocaust centre.

The new centre will be part of the Sherman campus, the community services development currently under construction on Bathurst Street north of Sheppard Avenue on the site of the current Bathurst Jewish Community Centre.

Neuberger was honoured at a groundbreaking ceremony at the Lipa Green Building on June 16.

Neuberger's entire family – his parents, four brothers and one sister – were killed in the Holocaust. The 78-year-old builder made the commitment a few days after hearing about the plans to include the Holocaust Centre in the planned National Centre for Jewish Heritage on the Sherman campus.

To be renamed the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, it will continue to have an impact on the 60,000 people, many of them students, who visit the centre or attend its programs every year. The new centre will accommodate thousands more visitors a year.

"Educating people of all faiths about the Holocaust is so important to me" Neuberger said. "We want to build this centre so that all people, of all ages and all nationalities, will learn the truth, and learn from the lessons of the past."

Holocaust survivor Michael Neuberger gives gift

In addition to expanding its current programs to include interactive, high-tech exhibits and a multimedia learning centre, the centre will provide outreach and anti-racism training programs for community organizations and redevelop its museum.

"Mr. Neuberger's gift is a true inspiration. His personal journey from the horrific experiences of the Holocaust to a man who gives so generously to ensure that the past is never repeated will stand as a shining example for generations to come," said UJA Federation chair David Koschitzky.

Holocaust Centre of Toronto chair Lorraine Sandler said, "The generous, visionary leadership displayed by Mr. Neuberger is nothing short of phenomenal. Not only will the Jewish community in Toronto and around the world benefit from what will be an unprecedented centre of learning, engagement and culture, but so, too, will the community at large."

Established in 1985, UJA Federation's Holocaust Centre is committed to preserving the memories of the victims, honouring the legacies of those who survived and educating the community so that the Holocaust will serve as a warning to future generations about the dangers of anti-Semitism, racism, intolerance and indifference.

As part of its mandate, the centre reaches out to people from across Ontario every year – many of them non-Jews. Students who participate in field trips to the centre or in programs offered by the centre at schools across Ontario learn the lessons of the Holocaust and meet with survivors.

Among its programs, the centre is responsible for the annual Holocaust Education Week and the community's Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration. It also offers consulting services on Holocaust education programs in the public, private and Jewish school systems, as well as training for educators.

With an anticipated completion date of fall 2011, the Sherman campus will be home to Jewish organizations and agencies dedicated to building community through cultural, educational, athletic and recreational activities.

The campus is an initiative of the Tomorrow Campaign, sponsored by UJA Federation, which is building three community services complexes in the GTA.

The campus is being redeveloped by internationally renowned architects Sol Wassermuhl and Mansoor Kazerouni of Page+Steele Architects. The facilities will be fully integrated and linked with each other by open exhibition areas and gallery walkways, and are being developed as an extension of the lush environment of the ravine where the campus is located.

Jewish prayer to be part of Queen's Park rituals

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Jewish prayer is coming to Queen's Park.

After months of debate, a legislative committee looking into what Premier Dalton McGuinty calls "a more inclusive approach" to the daily opening ceremonies in the legislature decided last week not to do away with the Lord's Prayer.

Instead, the Ontario legislature will continue to commence each session with the Christian ritual. But starting this week, it will also be followed by a second activity that will include a rotation of different prayers from various faith communities in the province, including aboriginal, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, Baha'i and Sikh. Other options could be a special recitation or a moment of silence.

MPPs must ask Speaker Steve Peters to have other prayers added to the list, but Peters said last week that he will put that decision in the hands of an committee of elected politicians from all three parties, Canadian Press reported.

The legislature passed the motion supporting the move in a 58-0 vote.

In February, McGuinty sent a letter to the other provincial party leaders asking them to review the daily practice of reciting the Lord's Prayer at Queen's Park.

He also sought input from the province's Jewish and other faith communities.

At the time, the request sparked some outrage from Christian groups and the provincial Conservatives.

In response to McGuinty's letter, provincial Conservative leader John Tory – who unsuccessfully ran his 2007 election campaign on a platform of incorporating faith-based schools into the public school system – said the Tories would partake in the all-party committee, but not at the expense of the prayer.

In a statement last Thursday on the Liberal website, McGuinty thanked the all-party committee for its work.

"Ontarians have shown once again that with a spirit of co-operation and goodwill, we can resolve anything. And that's what has been done today," he said.

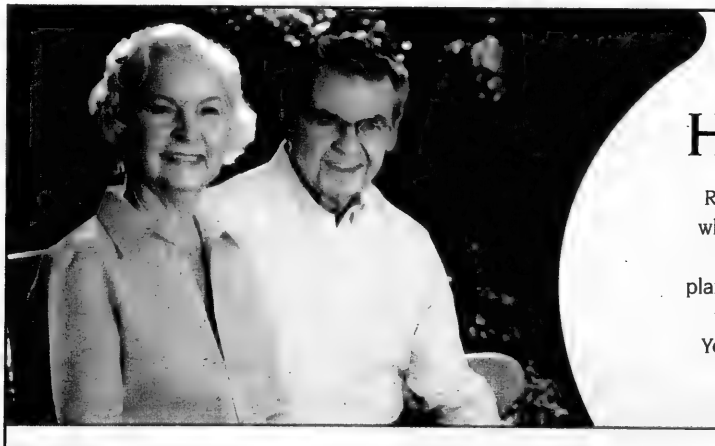
McGuinty added: "The legislature belongs to all of us, and now its practices will reflect a modern Ontario that is home to many faiths and creeds, and anticipates a future every bit as open, and compassionate and respectful as the Ontario we have built, together."

Canadian Jewish Congress praised the announcement.

"I think this is a very positive outcome," said Frank Bialystok, chair of Congress' Ontario region. "It is entirely appropriate that this diversity take its rightful place, along with the traditional reading of the Lord's Prayer, at Queen's Park."

The Jewish prayer to be used comes from Psalms 145 and Numbers 6: 24-26, combining parts of *Ashrei* and the Kohanic blessings.

Spokesperson Wendy Lampert said CJC was consulted by the committee on the issue, but said she didn't know how the prayers were chosen.



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'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

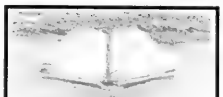
The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

Were they that bad after all?

By RABBI CHAIM YOSEF ACKERMAN



Rabbinic Reflections

"Why did you just do that?

"Why did I just do what?

Most often, if we were to question people about what they are doing, they would not even realize that there is anything to question. This is due in no small part to the fact that our routines become so much a part of our lives that meaning and reflection are difficult to come by. But the results of having such automatic routines can be devastating.

Rashi and the midrash point out that in Bamidbar, the Book of Numbers, the incident where Miriam speaks inappropriately about Moses immediately precedes the story of the *miraglim*, the spies who are sent to scout out the Promised Land.

For speaking against her brother, Miriam is stricken with a form of leprosy that lasts for seven days. When the *miraglim* return with a negative report about the Promised Land, all but two of them saying that it is too strong for the Israelites, the punishment is that their generation will die in the desert and only the next generation will get to enter the Promised Land.

The juxtaposition of the two stories, Rashi and the midrash explain, comes because the blatant example of HaShem's ability to reward and punish, as seen in Miriam's case, was intended to be taken to heart by all, but unfortunately, the spies failed to do this only a short time thereafter.

The obvious question is how could the *miraglim* possibly lose sight of God's ability to reward and punish justly? The midrash tells us that these were men of the highest order, those for whom Moses received HaShem's approbation of their worthiness to be tribal princes. If they didn't know of HaShem's justice, how could they have been so illustrious? And granting the possibility that they did not know, what would the example of Miriam have initiated in their minds? How could paying heed to that example have changed anything?

The conclusion we must draw is that the more deeply we focus upon the happenings around us, the more attuned we are to our goals in life. To stop and think about what is going on in the world and why these things happen is to avail ourselves of the wake-up call HaShem is constantly sending us.

The *miraglim*'s mistake lay in their slight laziness of thought. Had they reflected upon the incident of Miriam and its meaning to the Jewish people, they might indeed not have perpetrated their own misdeed.

It is important to realize that most of our mistakes are born out of simple ignorance, not bothering to contemplate what would be to our own benefit. Let us prepare to clearly know the answer to the question, "Why did you just do that?" answering proudly, "Because I know it was the right thing to do!"

Rabbi Chaim Yosef Ackerman is the assistant rabbi of Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation in Thornhill, Ont.

Missionaries on Ben Yehuda

IDEAS ON IDENTITY

By Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

I've had just about every experience possible in Israel. But on my most recent trip, I had a brand new one that I wasn't quite prepared for: Christian missionaries trying to convert me. Not just once, but twice. The first time was in the Galilee, and the second, of all places, was on the Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall in Jerusalem on a lively Saturday night.

My family likes to joke that if missionaries approach me, they better be prepared to be converted to Judaism by the time I'm done with them. I ask them if they can go verse on verse with me in the original Hebrew, and if not, to come back when they can.

When I got back on the bus from the first "good news" experience, I asked the members of my tour what they would have done or said. We Canadians are so polite. Most of them agreed that they would not have wanted to be "rude" and would have politely said, "No thank you," and moved on.

Not be rude? No thank you? Isn't the person who is interrupting your day, violating your privacy, monopolizing your time, disrupting your train of thought or conversation, and trying to get you to change your life without even knowing you the one being rude?

Those trying to convert you are not afraid of confrontation. They are afraid of knowledge, commitment and strength. They are looking for vulnerability and ignorance, for confusion, insecurity and "polite listening."

They are shocked when they meet a religious conviction as strong as their own.

I was sad to be proselytized in Israel, because missionaries find fertile ground there among sincere seekers as much as among the lost and lonely. Those seeking spiritual passion will often go looking for it in another faith before they start searching for it in their own, and until they do, they are moving targets.

I shared my answer to the missionaries with my tour group, and they asked me to reprint it here. I give you full permission to quote or edit it to however you would feel most confident saying it: "You have it all wrong my friend. I am so passionate, so strong, so clear in my Jewish faith that you can actually be inspired and influenced by me. You see, I've been given a great gift— the Torah. I continually unwrap that gift and use it, enjoy it and grow from it. I'd be happy to share it with you, but if you'd rather not, then you stay focused on what you believe your gift is, and I will stay focused on what I am sure my gift is, and we can live in harmony and use our different gifts to make this world a better place."

Because I felt particularly stunned to be proselytized in a place that I feel secure in as a Jew, I added this: "On top of that, you have chosen to come into my own living room to try and get me to move houses. This whole country is my living room. Israel is my home as a Jew and the only place I can be fully who I am without apology. Aren't you ashamed to come into my own house to convince me to change my house?"

By the way, I didn't end with "Thank you."

Jewish Life

Agriprocessors raises ethical issues

Money Matters

By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

The kashrut industry is about more than just food. In an industry in which sales reach into the billions of dollars, many of the continent's largest food companies have sought and received kosher certification, seeing it as a way to increase profits. With the ongoing U.S. federal investigations into the Agriprocessors meat processing plant in Postville, Iowa, we need to examine whether or not kashrut certification is also about more than keeping kosher.

Agriprocessors, the largest kosher meatpacking plant in North America (although the majority of the meat that it sells is actually not kosher) has been accused of a myriad of legal violations – ranging from unfair labour practices to safety issues and immigration fraud – and was recently raided by the U.S. government.

These accusations, if they're proven to be true, would represent the antithesis of anything "kosher," and they raise the crucial question of whether a kosher supervising agency should be supervising anything other than the actual kashrut of the food produced.

Jewish law demands absolute fidelity to all applicable local laws, not to mention the moral obligation to sanctify the name of God. However, whether enforcing such moral imperatives should come under the purview of rabbis, who may have very little training in these matters, is much less clear.

Such a question is really one of public policy and not one of pure Jewish law. Whether or not the food is kosher is a question of fact, unrelated to any other issues, serious though they may be. Kashrut supervision is only needed for those whose kashrut can't be trusted. One may rely on the kashrut of those who personally keep kosher. However, the complexity of the food industry, coupled with man's insatiable appetite for money and the need for sound social policy, have produced a situation in which the supervision of all commercial enterprises is needed.

Ironically, the difficulty of fully monitoring the goings-on in food production has led to a situation in which certain kashrut organizations will only grant supervision to ritually observant Jews – a tacit admission that such agencies are incapable of supervising all that goes on in the production of food. We thus, on some level, revert back to a system of trust, limiting such trust to those who take kashrut seriously.

Tragically, there is little correlation between kashrut observance and business ethics, and it's not uncommon to see people with ethics that are extremely wanting who nonetheless are meticulous observers of kashrut. While one can make a legitimate argument that no kashrut certification should be given to anyone unless all of a person's business practices are also certified "kosher," such an approach may be simplistic and counter-productive. While ethical business practices are, in the hierarchy of Jewish values, more important than kashrut, is taking away kashrut supervision the best way to ensure honesty among producers of kosher products? This would require careful analysis, recognizing that such action may cause people – especially those who are not meticulously observant – to opt to buy non-kosher meat.

And where would we draw the line? What if an owner smokes or gossips frequently? Might we add in a layer of social enforcement – say not granting supervision to a company whose environmental record is questionable? Should food that's high in fat content not be certified kosher?

If the goal is to increase the availability of kosher products at affordable prices, perhaps it's best to leave these issues to other agencies. Yet at the same time, we must be concerned with public perception – of being an accessory to wrongdoing, and of promoting the terrible misconception that kashrut is more important then ethics.

While there are no easy answers, it's important that that we continue to ask the questions, thereby sensitizing our ethical antennas.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Summer camp nostalgia, Pt. 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Last week we began our look at the mystique of summer camp by quoting from Allan Sherman's classic song *Camp Granada*, in which he pleads for freedom but then decides to give camp a second chance – and stay a second day. **[tinyurl.com/49az2d]**

Sherman has nothing on Rabbi Joshua Hammerman. Recently, he pulled out some of his camp letters from when he was 10. Here's one: "Dear folks, I *really* am sad now. I need more food because I haven't had anything to eat. My swimming teacher is making me jump into the water, but I don't want to. I'm scared of putting my clothes into the laundry because I'll lose them and they'll come back different colours. Send earplugs."

But then Rabbi Hammerman continues, "What's funny is that I actually loved camp – even that first year – because I discovered there what children have been discovering about summer camp for decades, and what Jews have known for millennia – when you leave home, you can reinvent yourself." He then draws the parallel of how Abraham had to leave his home in order to found a new faith. And later, when Jews were sent into exile in Babylon, they were forced to examine themselves and create new national institutions. **[tinyurl.com/5x8wbx]**

Those are big shoes for a summer camp to fill. But what Jewish activity has the greatest impact on campers? After interviewing more than 100 professional and lay leaders involved in Jewish camping, researchers Gary Tobin and Meryle Weinstein think they found the answer: Shabbat. Brian Greene of Camp Ramah in California agrees. "Beginning Friday afternoon, the camp is cleaned, and campers prepare themselves to put on their best. Our campers prepare 'Shabbat-o-grams,'" wishing one another a good Shabbat. "Our children are inspired by that and look for ways to take it home." **[tinyurl.com/6x7fbh]**

If you've ever spent a summer at camp and want to relive those long ago joys – and traumas – then don't miss The Girls of Summer by Geraldine Sherman. Sherman was a camper at Camp Kawagama in the 1950s in northern Ontario. Her story begins as she and her childhood friends attend the funeral of their beloved camp director. With the help of the girls of Cabin 22, she looks at how the time they spent at a summer camp almost half a century ago moulded who they are today. Even the picture on the website of Sherman and the Kawagamite girls in their plaid shirts, with broad grins on their faces, will bring smiles and a touch of melancholy to anyone who's been there and done that. **[tinyurl.com/2dbgav]**

What is it about Camp Kawagama that exercises this lifelong hold (or at least turns out some great journalists)? Sam Levene spent six summers there long ago, and after he grew up and became a producer at CBC Radio, he decided to try to understand the magic. You can listen in on his trek back to Kawagama Island (and other camps, too). **[tinyurl.com/4ueqdy]**

For Rebecca Ets-Hokin, memories of summer camp include a not-so-delicious recollection of summer camp meals. "My dining hall memories include rubbery scrambled eggs, warm Kool-Aid and unappetizing stews." Although food has improved considerably since then, its seems Ets-Hokin feels no generation should be deprived of the classics. So she collected recipes for campers' favourites such as Max's Meat Loaf, Tomato Sauce, Garlic Mashed Potatoes and Deborah Newburn's Fruit Crisp. You can rest easy if you don't have 400 mouths to feed in your dining hall. She's adapted the recipes to feed eight. **[tiny url.com/2ay2hj]**

How to wash all that down? "Bug juice," of course. Phyllis Wilson's recipe for the classic summertime beverage calls for flavoured drink mix, sugar and "red food colouring if you feel a little sadistic," but no bugs. "Serve over ice if you want it cold. Serve with fleishig sandwiches, either on a picnic table under a shelter [day camp] or at long wooden tables with benches in a room with a screen door leading to a flag circle [overnight camp]." **[tinyurl.com/2aflw3]**

To all campers – and former campers – have a marvellous and safe summer!

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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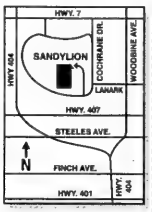

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Harper cancels first trip to Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Stephen Harper was supposed to make his first visit to Israel this week. Instead, he cancelled his trip on June 6.

Harper's four-day visit was to have run June 16 to 19, and would have brought him to Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority to meet with regional leaders.

Reports out of Israel said Harper decided to nix the excursion to keep a distance from embattled Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's ongoing corruption scandal, which has thrown the country's government into a state of flux.

Olmert is suspected of having illegally received hundreds of thousands of dollars from Jewish American businessman Morris Talansky. Talansky told a preliminary hearing at Jerusalem Magistrates Court that he gave Olmert $150,000 over a period of 15 years.

Harper's staff never confirms a trip until shortly before the PM leaves, so the change was not characterized as a cancellation, but the trip had been talked about publicly.

Calls to the Prime Minister's Office were not returned by *The CJN* 's deadline.

The Conservative party is considered very friendly toward Israel. In the recent past, both prime ministers have spoken to each other by phone – Olmert called Harper last December from the Annapolis peace summit to personally ask for Canada's help in the Middle East peace process – and, as reported by *The CJN* in March, the two countries signed a declaration of intent to co-operate further on security matters of mutual concern.

PM Stephen Harper

But the current political climate in Israel seems to have given Harper pause.

Norman Spector, a former Canadian ambassador to Israel and a chief of staff to former Conservative prime minister Brian Mulroney, said: "The domestic situation in Israel, quite frankly, is scandalous… Harper has no business being there when his counterpart is two steps away from the gallows."

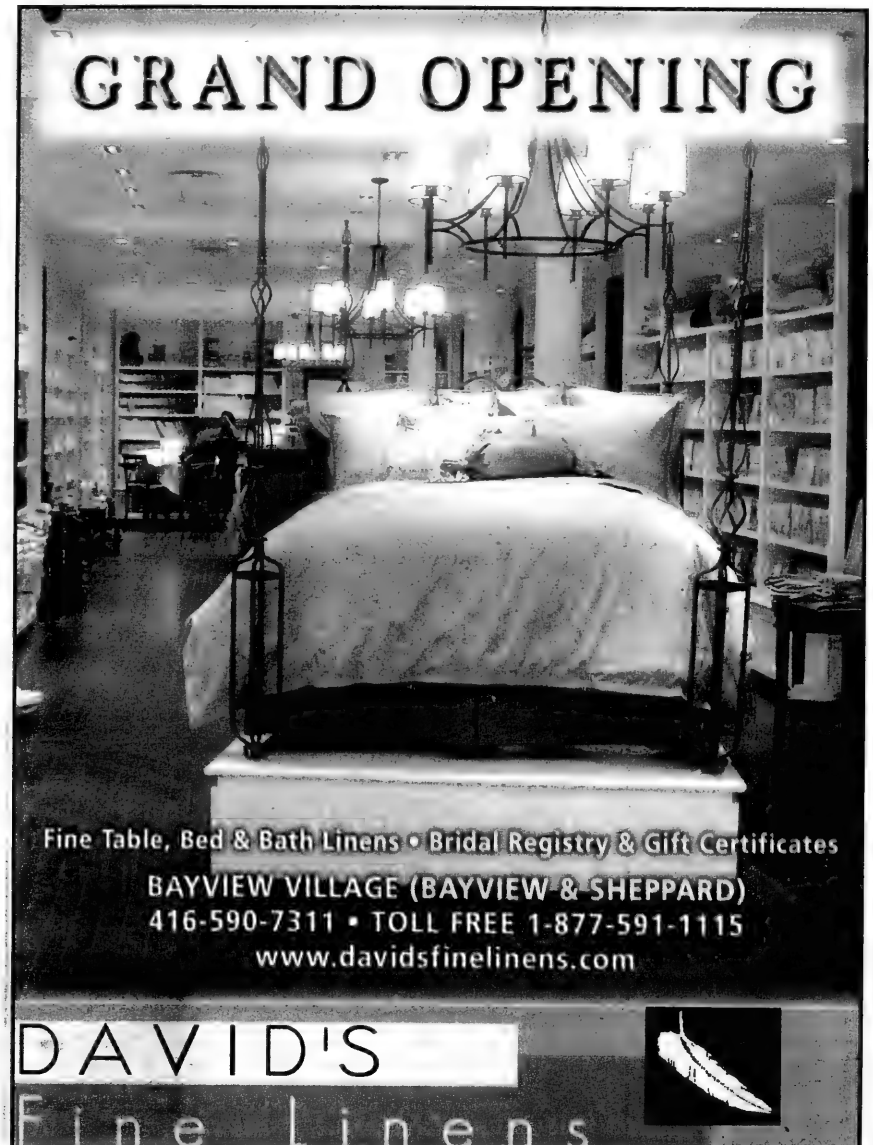
Moshe Ronen, chair of the Canada-Israel Committee, told *The CJN* his organization was informed by the Prime Minister's Office that Harper had contacted Olmert in advance to advise and "discuss" the cancellation.

He said the committee has since been in talks with the PMO to reschedule the visit for this fall.

"While we're disappointed that [Harper's] not going… we know that the trip had not been confirmed for a variety of reasons, some of which had to do with the PM's concern that he would land in a politically hectic and charged Israel," Ronen said.

He added: "That's the judgement call they made. But considering both the domestic reasons and some of the political considerations [for not going], that's a fair position. In our view, Stephen Harper does not have to defend his credentials on Israel. This is not a cancellation, it's a postponement. The PM very much wants to go to Israel."

With files from Ha'aretz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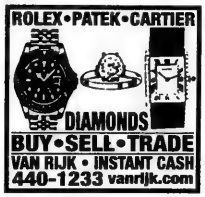

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Why Israel is a better bet than Iran

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Thomas L. Friedman's column "People vs. dinosaurs" (*New York Times*, June 9, reprinted in the *National Post*, June 10) is a must-read.

It's one of those rare, important articles that helps put things in perspective by focusing on the big picture, rather than looking through a narrow lens that too many journalists use.

So what's Friedman's big picture and why is it important?

Friedman's column poses the following rhetorical question: why, when Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad repeatedly threatens to destroy Israel is foreign investment flowing into the Jewish state?

As an example, Friedman cited famed American investor Warren Buffet's 2006 purchase of an 80 per cent stake in Israeli precision tool company Iscar, headquartered near the Lebanon border. Significantly, Buffet's investment, worth $4 billion (US), was his first overseas venture.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Friedman explained that the deal closed just before Hezbollah "attacked Israel in July 2006, triggering a month-long war."

Friedman asked Iscar chairman Eitan Wertheimer about Buffet's reaction to finding out he had bought a company that was coming under Hezbollah rocket fire.

"Buffett just brushed it off with a wave, recalled Wertheimer: He said, 'I'm not interested in the next quarter. I'm interested in the next 20 years.'"

Despite Israel's political problems, Buffet's strong confidence in the country's long-term future, explained Friedman, is based on Israel's having "a strong civil society. The economy is exploding from the bottom up. Israel's currency, the shekel, has appreciated nearly 30 per cent against the dollar since the start of 2007."

We rarely see this side of Israel. Most daily news reports focus on conflict-driven stories involving threats from Iran, from Iranian- and Syrian-backed Hezbollah in the north, and from Hamas in the south. This, undeniably, is part of the picture, but is not the whole, newsworthy story of Israel in all its complexity.

In broadening the scope of the story, Friedman wrote that Israel's knowledge-based, high-tech economy draws on a population "from 100 different countries, speaking 100 different languages, with a business culture that strongly encourages individual imagination and adaptation, and where being a non-conformist is the norm."

He added that Israel, with a population of seven million people, attracted almost as much venture capital in the first quarter of this year ($572 million US) as did China with a population of 1.3 billion ($719 million).

By contrast, Iran, according to Friedman, "maintains a welfare state, with more than 10 per cent unemployment."

Iran's economy is suffering, even though, as a major crude-exporting nation, it's currently reaping nearly $140 per barrel for its oil. But Iran uses much of that money to import technology – much of it with military applications – from abroad.

Friedman summed up the disparity between the two countries: "Iran's economic and military clout today is largely dependent on extracting oil from the ground. Israel's economic and military power today is entirely dependent on extracting intelligence from its people. Israel's economic power is endlessly renewable. Iran's is a dwindling resource based on fossil fuels made from dead dinosaurs."

So while Ahmadinejad threatens to "wipe Israel off the map," Friedman concluded that he's siding with Buffet's faith in Israel's long-term future: "I'll bet on the people who bet on their people – not the people who bet on dead dinosaurs."

And, in writing about Israel's remarkable economy, Friedman points the way to a larger picture of Israel that other journalists may want to explore.

* * *

Speaking about the bigger picture, in "Family brewery keeps head up despite political, religious obstacles" (*Toronto Star*, June 9), Oakland Ross reported from Taybeh, in the West Bank, about a little-explored corner of the Palestinian economy. "Starting up a brewery in a part of the world that's 98 per cent Muslim definitely seemed like a risky idea at the time," Ross wrote.

He profiled the Khoury family who, for the past 14 years, have run the Taybeh Brewing Company from this small Christian town of about 2,300 residents. As Christians, they are part of a "small and dwindling religious minority in the Palestinian territories," which are dominated by Muslims, for whom alcohol is prohibited. Yet their family business has been a rare success story, though far more successful during the optimistic days of the Oslo process until Palestinian violence erupted in 2000, resulting in a severe downturn in the overall economy.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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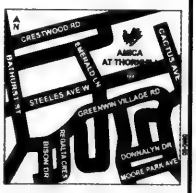

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Israeli youth mentoring group seeks Canadian support

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Yedidim might be little known outside of Israel, but Yvonne Margo hopes to change that.

Margo, a longtime staffer at the Israel Aliyah Centre here, said Montreal is in the preliminary stages of establishing a Canadian friends of Yedidim branch. Yedidim is an award-winning, non-profit organization in Israel that, among other things, provides peer mentorship programs for immigrant and marginalized children, youths and young adults in need of one-on-one support in the effort to deal with some of the social problems they face in the poorer areas where they live.

The peer mentors, all volunteers, are trained and supervised by Yedidim professionals to serve as essential role models and friends for those at risk.

Created in 1991, Yedidim, which means "friends," has won several prizes, including the President's Award for Excellence and Jerusalem's Distinguished Service Award. The Yedidim website states that 6,000 individuals in 46 Israeli communities currently benefit from Yedidim programs, with the help of 2,000 volunteers and 120 professionally trained co-ordinators.

"There are other programs in Israel for immigrant children at risk, but Yedidim allows them to stay at home with their families, which is very important," Margo said. "They can live at home despite whatever problems [there are]."

Margo, who is 58, describes Yedidim as one of Israel's "best-kept secrets," known and greatly valued in Israel but in need of public awareness elsewhere.

Although there is an American Friends of Yedidim support group based in California and chaired by Jewish entertainer Mike Burstyn, there is nothing similar based in Canada or any other country.

Margo has been to Israel several times, including last January, in connection with her own personal involvement in Yedidim, where her focus has been on helping immigrant Ethiopian teens complete their high school matriculation – *bagrut*, in Hebrew – as a step toward developing into well-adjusted and integrated members of Israeli society.

"Completing school means everything," Margo said.

She has close and endearing ties to Montreal's Ethiopian-Jewish community dating back to the late 1980s and early 1990s, when she performed yeoman's work in reuniting local Ethiopian young people with family members in Israel.

It was that connection that prompted Margo, along with Ruth Saragosti, a former Montrealer who worked in the Jewish community and then at Yedidim in Israel, to co-design a tutorial program in 2004, called Sayeret, specifically geared to allowing high-school-aged Ethiopian boys at risk of dropping out to use mentor tutors to complete their education.

Margo said that accomplishment remains key to young immigrant integration and responsible citizenship. Without it, she said, the road often leads to alcohol and drug abuse, crime and violence.

Sayeret began and continues in Be'er Sheva, which for years has been twinned with the Montreal Jewish community through FEDERATION CJA. Initially, Sayeret received support from the federation's Israel overseas program, Margo said.

Continued on page 23

CLASSY CHICKS: The junior kindergarten classes at Bialik Hebrew Day School were thrilled to announce the birth of their baby chicks and even more excited that all the eggs hatched successfully. The students studied the chicks as part of their farm unit. The kids are pictured with their teacher, Gala Erenberg, left, and teaching assistant, Kaeli Stein.

Children seized after swastika drawn on girl, 7

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — A two-year old boy and a seven-year-old girl have been removed from their home by Winnipeg Child and Family Services (CFS) after the girl went to school with a swastika and other white supremacist markings on her body.

CFS is seeking permanent guardianship of the children because of the fear that their father, an alleged neo-Nazi, has been brainwashing them with his beliefs, endangering their well-being, and that the mother has gone along with this. The man is the boy's father and girl's stepfather.

"The children may be at risk due to the parents' behaviour and associates. The parents might endanger the emotional well-being of the children," CFS said in a court affidavit.

"There are also concerns about parental drug and alcohol use in the home," the agency wrote.

Winnipeg Police spokesperson Const. Pat Chabidon said police became involved after school officials were alarmed to see the little girl with markings on her body reportedly made with permanent marker.

Chabidon added that the father "was a subject of interest in a hate crime-type investigation in 2005," but no charges were laid.

The children's mother, who by law can't be identified, has received advice and support from Paul Fromm, a disgraced former teacher in Ontario who was fired from his job in Peel Region in 1997 for links to neo-Nazi groups.

Fromm told *The CJN* he met the parents in Winnipeg last December at a group meeting focusing on Fromm's involvement in court cases in Alberta and B.C. about hate speech.

According to Fromm, "The children were kidnapped at the end of March [by the CFS] and it took almost three months before the first court hearing [this month]... I understand that the children are living at a relative's home and the mother is able to visit. I don't know if the father can visit... I advised the mother to get a lawyer."

Mother calls herself a 'white nationalist'

Fromm added: "I can see a school not wanting a child to be a political billboard. But that shouldn't be enough of a reason to take the kids away... There are many people who have views that other people think are crazy. A lot of people think Christianity or Islam is odd... But you shouldn't fear that you are going to lose your children because your beliefs are different than the mainstream."

Fromm added that this was not a case involving allegations of physical or sexual abuse. "The state should take away kids in only the most serious of cases. If the father made these markings on the little girl, it was unwise, but to say that the price of this lack of wisdom is to lose your child is horrible."

A CFS spokesperson said that a parent's beliefs may be harmful to a child when the belief includes taking actions that result in endangerment or abuse. The definition of abuse under the CFS Act includes acts or omissions that result in "emotional disability of a permanent nature in the child or [are] likely to result in such a disability."

The case, which is being heard in child protection court, has been adjourned to June 23 to give the children's mother time to retain her own lawyer, rather than be represented by the same counsel as her husband, court documents said.

She told *The CJN* that she is working out a deal with CFS to get the children back, and she's trying to get legal counsel.

She also said she kicked her husband out of the family home three days after seeing court documents outlining the Crown's case.

The mother said that she is "a white nationalist... but not a neo-Nazi skinhead."

She wears a necklace with a small etching of a swastika, but she told *The CJN* that for her, the symbol doesn't represent Nazism. "For me it represents my heritage and my belief and everything that is good about man."

She also identified her spiritual belief as "Odinism," which followers describe as a pagan religion that celebrates Norse and German mythology. Critics say Odinism is followed by some members of white supremacist groups, which use it to justify claims to power.

The mother said her husband is "a flamboyant bigot." He told the *Winnipeg Free Press* that "I have dedicated my entire life to being a skinhead."

The *Free Press* also reported that CFS is prepared to return the children to their mother and drop its bid for permanent custody in a deal that would involve sending the children home on weekends.

A CFS spokesperson wouldn't comment on the existence or non-existence of a deal.

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The graduation ceremony will take place on Monday, June 23, 2008 at 7:30 pm at Congregation Darchei Noam, 864 Sheppard Avenue West, Toronto.

Negev Dinner honours Hamilton's Shalom Village

By HOLLY GINSLER
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — Hamilton's Negev dinner this year honoured Shalom Village, a non-profit organization that provides services for older adults.

The Jewish National Fund annually honours those who have made a difference in their community while it raises funds for worthy projects locally and in Israel. Although the honorees are most often individuals, Shalom Village is a worthy recipient of this recognition for the difference it makes in people's lives.

Pat Morden, CEO of Shalom Village

The event, which took place at the Hamilton Convention Centre June 15, was hosted by comic actor and director Eugene Levy, a longtime friend and supporter of Shalom Village, and Rick Mercer, host of *The Rick Mercer Report* on CBC television.

Funds raised went to the expansion and improvement of a senior citizens park promenade in Kiryat Eliezer, a neighbourhood of Haifa. The existing promenade is popular but inadequate for the local seniors and will be upgraded, landscaped and equipped with park benches and picnic tables.

The funds will also go to the Shalom Village Possibilities Fund, to provide the resources and staff to help people get on with their lives when they move to the residence.

Shalom Village was created by people who really wanted to be sure that as their mothers and fathers aged, they could still be actively part of the community and get the support they needed to get on with their lives, chief executive officer, Pat Morden, said.

"We do everything we can to bring the community here and for us to go to the community," she said. "Our mission is also to help people feel at home here."

Shalom Village is an upbeat, busy home to more than 200 people and a home away from home to many more. Its services include 124 long-term care suites and 81 assisted living apartments; Goldie's Place, a day program for people with cognitive and physical impairments; and a health club, a well-equipped fitness centre for people over 70.

"Our health club is great for people who don't want to be in the day program but want to have a connection to Shalom Village," Morden said. "They come, work out and stay for lunch at Bubbi Bessie's Café."

In addition, the organization's convalescent care includes the Shalom2Home, which helps prepare people to return home after a stay in the hospital.

Shalom Village is affiliated with the McMaster University faculty of health sciences, and Morden said it is seen as a top provider of long-term care services in Hamilton. Its services also include palliative care, a movie theatre, a corner store, a hair salon and a woodshop where many residents have learned new skills and created beautiful objects.

It also reaches out in other ways. "We have the only kosher fine dining in Hamilton because we want people to see Shalom Village as a place they can come as part of the community," Morden said. "Our mission is to help people feel at home here, and for Shalom Village to be a part of the larger community."

Shalom Village asked Jewish groups in Hamilton if they would sponsor services in its synagogue. Once a month, with the help of volunteers, they set up for a Saturday kiddush. The sponsors help bring the residents and their families to the services, which are always packed. Children who are preparing for a bar or bat mitzvah have a chance to practise, and many get the opportunity to participate in services with their grandparents.

The 280 staff members at Shalom Village come from different backgrounds – only three are Jewish – but they are aware that they work in a Jewish organization.

"Each week we start our management meeting with a parshah," Morden said. "One person is responsible for discussing that week's parshah and its implications for their leadership."

The staff can consult with the organization's Rabbi Aaron Selevan to help prepare their parshah.

There is also a pastoral care committee for Christian residents, and church services run by a group of volunteers. Rabbi Selevan co-ordinates these services because he is in charge of all spiritual activities.

Shalom Village's health club

"When our Christian residents are sick and dying, or even if a resident just needs to talk, they often look to Rabbi Selevan for spiritual guidance," Morden said.

For the Possibilities Fund that benefits from this year's Negev dinner, there are wheelbarrows sprinkled throughout the courtyards and balconies of Shalom Village, filled with flowers planted by the residents. The centre thus brings the garden to the residents when they can't go to the garden, as a symbol of the possibilities that can be realized.

RIDING FOR A CAUSE: Some 200 members and friends of Yidden on Wheels (YOW), the Toronto chapter of the international Jewish Motorcycle Alliance, gathered at Earl Bales Park last Thursday for their 2008 Pebble Ride. The riders then headed to Trenton, Ont., in support of the Goodwin Learning Centre's Holocaust studies program. The private school aims to collect six million pebbles to honour the Jewish victims of the Holocaust. Each rider brought along 100 pebbles to contribute to the project and helped raise more than $25,000 for the cause, YOW spokesperson, Sid Rochberg, said. [Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

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UK to host conference on anti-Semitism

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Lawmakers from around the world will gather in London, England, next February to discuss the global growth of anti-Semitism.

The gathering, which is expected to serve as a "precursor" to the Durban II review conference, will be hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Coalition for Combating Antisemitism (ICCA) and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office of the United Kingdom, the country's foreign affairs ministry.

Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, co-founder of the ICCA, said the London conference will give parliamentarians the opportunity to consider several overarching themes connected to the modern rise of anti-Semitism. Among them are the emergence of "state-sanctioned genocide" advocated by Iran, the singling out of Israel for condemnation at the United Nations and the call for a boycott of Israeli products and people.

Cotler said 10 or more task forces will be set up to investigate these and other issues and report to the conference.

The reports will serve as a jumping-off point for parliamentarians' discussions, he said. The result will be sharing of knowledge, experiences, best practices and recommendations in ways to counter the anti-Semitic resurgence.

"This initiative's raison d'etre is the evolving, escalating, sophisticated and even virulent anti-Semitism, that's almost without parallel since the end of the Second World War," Cotler said. "That inspired the coalition to combat this radical evil. Silence is not an option."

Cotler, who has served as Canada's justice minister and attorney general, said anti-Semitism has evolved over the years. "The new anti-Semitism is singling out Israel and the Jewish people for discriminatory treatment in the international arena."

We are seeing "the emergence of Israel as the collective Jew among the nations," he said.

The genocidal manifestations of the new anti-Semitism are apparent in the anti-Semitic terror of groups such as Hamas, Iran's threats of genocide, fatwas issued by Islamic radicals aimed at Jews and the tarnishing of Israel with Nazi-era imagery, he added.

"Parliamentarians have a unique role and responsibility in combating this hatred, and the United Kingdom is to be congratulated on this historic initiative," Cotler stated.

British Labour MP John Mann, chair of his country's All-Party Parliamentary Group against Antisemitism and co-founder of the ICCA, said: "I am confident that this event will mark a new era of parliamentarians taking the lead in the fight against anti-Semitism."

Britain's minister for Europe, Jim Murphy, said in a statement that the conference "is a chance to discuss our work in fighting anti-Semitism with an international audience. The conference will involve parliamentarians from around the world. Parliamentarians have a unique role to play in persuading their governments to address anti-Semitism.

"The conference will be an opportunity not only to share our experience with international partners and learn from others, but also to add political impetus to the ongoing fight against anti-Semitism."

Leading members of the ICCA include German parliamentarian Gert Weisskirchen, U.S. Congressman Chris Smith and Israeli MK Isaac Herzog.

WALKING FOR A CURE:

Noah Ross, 11, left, and Jamie Ross, eight, joined their parents, Suzanne and Larry, and 4,000 other participants at the Telus Walk to Cure Diabetes, June 8 on the CNE grounds. The event raised more than $800,000 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. The Rosses were one of the Top 5 fundraising families in Canada, collecting more than $32,000.

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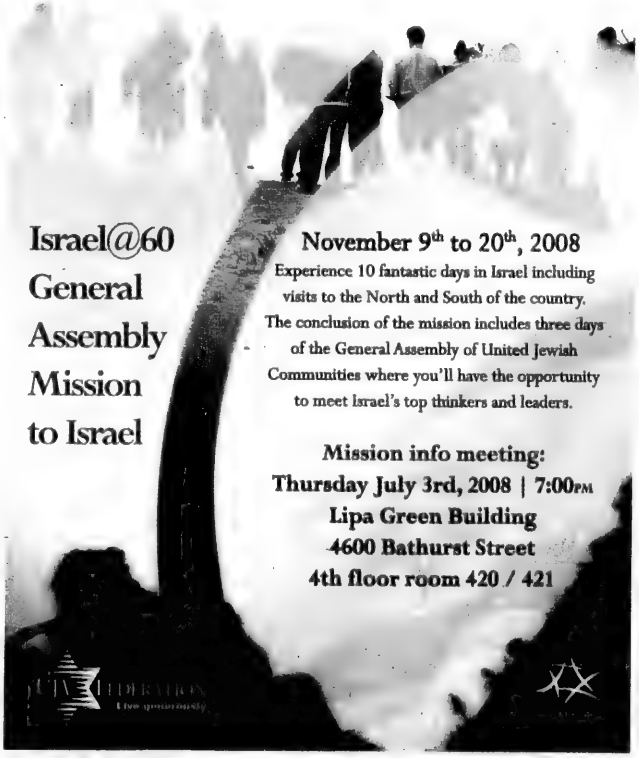
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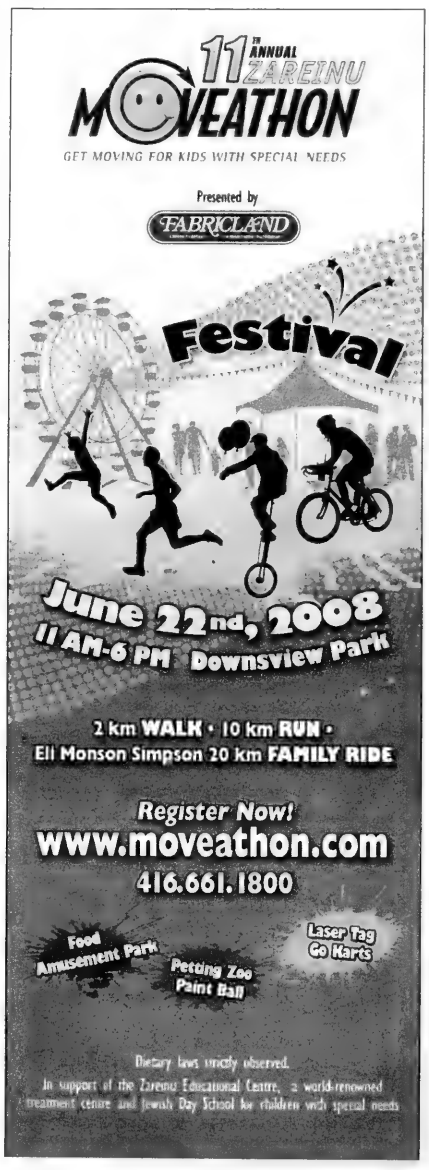
Coast to Coast

Court orders earlier trial in life support case

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The trial in the case of an elderly Orthodox Jewish man whom doctors have wanted to remove from life support since last fall is being moved forward at the request of the hospital where he is being treated.



Chief Justice Marc Monnin of the Court of Queen's Bench has granted a motion by Grace Hospital to move the trial in the case of Sam Golubchuk, 84, ahead to Sept. 15 from Nov. 24 – which would have been almost one year after his family initially obtained an injunction against removing Golubchuk from life support.

The hospital had asked the court for an earlier trial because one of its intensive care specialists, Dr. Anand Kumar, quit rather than continue to treat Golubchuk.

The hospital must treat him in accordance with a second court order issued last February that prevents doctors from removing his life support against his family's wishes and religious beliefs. His family is seeking a permanent injunction to keep him on life support.

In an affidavit, Kumar said he withdrew his services because it is "in violation of my medical ethics to continue [treating Golubchuk]." He also said he believes that the "services administered in accordance with the order are not of any medical benefit" and that "continued support of the patient is tantamount to torture."

Dr. Elizabeth Cowden, the hospital's chief medical officer, said in an affidavit that if other physicians withdraw services as Kumar has done, the facility's intensive care unit "may be forced to close."

Earlier this month, the hospital's lawyers said in court that Golubchuk is "barely above a vegetative state," and that nurses are also experiencing a great deal of stress in providing care that they believe is harmful to a patient's dignity.

In granting the hospital's motion for an earlier trial date, Monnin said that Golubchuk's "prognosis is not good… The medical evidence is strong that it is highly unlikely that he will ever be able to leave the ICU."

The lawyer for Golubchuk's family, Neil Kravetsky, has argued before Monnin that he is a sole practitioner who has another trial scheduled in September that would conflict with setting an earlier trial date in this case. Additionally, Kravetsky argued that although Kumar has quit, five intensive care specialists at the hospital are still prepared to treat Golubchuk. He also said that the complex case will involve bringing in out-of-town medical experts, and that he can't properly prepare for a trial on the earlier date.

In ordering that the trial date be moved, Monnin said that the "obvious solution to me would be for plaintiff's counsel [Kravetsky] to have the other trial [that he has scheduled in September] adjourned to the November dates which were previously set for this trial. Of course, this could only be done after obtaining the approval of his client and co-operation from opposing counsel or motions to adjourn if necessary. The court would be ready to assist in making those arrangements if counsel wish to do so."

Monnin ordered that the trial take place from Sept. 15 to Oct. 10, noting that the court would not "sit on those days which are viewed as religious holidays." The judge said the trial ought to be expedited "in the interests of justice."

Kravetsky said that Monnin's decision "is a terrible one. The family is an Orthodox Jewish family, and all of the witnesses we will be calling are Orthodox Jews. The medical evidence we will adduce is going to come from doctors who are out of town. It is going to be difficult for me to get Orthodox Jewish doctors to travel to Winnipeg, when it is around the time of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur."

Kravetsky said he may appeal the ruling.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פון: אַלעק סילווער

דערהאַלטן אַ ניי בוך פון שמחה סימכאָוויטש

פון אַלעק סילווער

אין זיין ליד „פּופּציק", אַרויסגענומען פון זיין בוך „דאָס נעזאַנג פונעם גלויביקן", פּרובירט ז. ווײַנפּער אונטערצופֿירן אַ סך־הכּל פון זיין דיסקוסיע־שטאַם אין זער שרייבט:

„געבענטשט זאָל זיין דער, וואָס איז אַ זינגענדיקער
נעגאַטיוון
אָן גייט מיט נעזאַנג אויף איצט.
עס האָבן זיינע נעזאַנגען זיך איינגעקריצט
אינעם האַרץ פון דער וועלט...".

דאָס איז אַ מאָטאָ צו זיין דורכשפּריינט די הויפּט־ווענען און אומרועגן פון זיינע שאָפונגען במשך אַלע יאָרן. דעם זעלבן מאָטאָ קען מען אויך צושרײַבן צום באַקאַנטן דיסקוסער שמחה סימכאָוויטש פון טאָראָנטאָ נאָכן אַדורכבלעטערן זיינע שאָפונגען במשך זיין ליטעראַרישן נאָמען.

איך שרײַב די דאָזיקע וועראַטער נאָך דעם, וויַ מיר האָבן ערשט דערהאַלטן זיין ניי בוך: „באַנד II" פון זיינע זאַמלונגען פון „קאָלעקטיוו פאָטעמעס" אין ייִדיש שפּראָך. וויַ עס שרײַבט דער מחבר אַליין: אַ גרעסערע צאָל פון זיינע פאָטעמעס זיינען געווען געשריבן אין ייִדיש און ערשט לעצטנס זיינען זיי איבערגעזעצט געווארן אין ענגליש. אַ צאָל ענגלישע פאָטעמעס זיינען געווען געשריבן אין דער אַריגינעלער שפּראַך און שפּעטער ערשט געווארן איבערגעזעצט אין ייִדיש.

דאָס איז שוין נישט דאָס ערשטע מאָל, וואָס איך שרײַב וועגן סימכאָוויטשעס ביכער און זיי האָבן מיר שטענדיק געגעבן פֿאַרגענוגן. דאָס מאָל איז דער פֿאַר־גענוגן אַ פֿאַרגרעסערטער, ווײַל איך זע ווי סימכאָ־וויטש קומט נענטער צו זיין ציל: אַרויסצוגעבן אַלע זיינע פאָטעמעס אין ביידע שפּראָכן — ייִדיש און ענגליש — כּדי סיי דער ייִדישער, סיי דער ענגלישער לייענער זאָל קענען הנאה האָבן פון זיינע שאָפונגען. אַז גאָט וועט גיבן נאָך אַ פּאָר יאָרן, שאָפּדיקע יאָרן, וועלן מיר אויך זען דעם דריטן באַנד פון דער גרויסער אונטערנעמונג.

די פאָטאָזע פון שמחה סימכאָוויטש איז גוט באַ־קאַנט אין אויסער אונדזער שטאָט און אונדזער לאַנד. און נישט בלויז באַקאַנט נאָר אויך באַליבט. דאָס האָט אים געהאָלפן צו באַקומען אַ צאָל פּרעמיעס און אויסצייכענונגען. און דער פּראָיעקט פון צונויפּקלייבן אַלע פאָטעמעס, אַזוי צו זאָגן: „אונטער איין שירם" איז טאַקע צוליב דעם, אַז וואָס מער לייענער זאָלן זיך באַ־קענען מיט זיינע שאָפונגען, ספּעציעל די פון יינגערן דור. און מיר וויַנטשן אים גרויס דערפאָלג.

ב. לאָפּין שרײַבט אין זיין ליד „צייכנס":

„טויזנט ציגער האָט דאָס וואַרט,
מלוכהדיקע וועראטער — צונג.
וואַרט און צונג צונויפּגעפּאַרט,
ווי בלויער שטאָל און קלונג."

בײַ סימכאָוויטשן גייט דאָס פֿאַר אויך צוזאַמען און ער ווייזט דאָס אַרויס אין ביידע שפּראָכן. וועלן טאָקע די ביכער וואָס מער אינטערעסאַנט, וועט מען קען באמת שטודירן אָלץ וואָס סימכאָוויטש האָט אונגעשריבן, אָבער וועגן דעם וועלן מיר מרזן שרײַבן, וועט מיר וועלן קענען מאַכן אַ סך־הכּל פון דער גאַנצער אַרבעט און ווידמען מער צייט און מער פֿלאַץ.

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Vancouver group promotes Jewish leadership

By LAUREN KRAMER
Pacific Correspondent

VANCOUVER — In mid-June, a group of 120 Jews congregated in Jerusalem for the third annual Return on Investment Summit. Among them were 80 Jewish entrepreneurs from Israel, Canada, the United States and 40 young Jewish entrepreneurs from other parts of the world.

They were selected by the Center for Leadership Initiatives (CLI), a Vancouver-based foundation founded in 2006 through the initial support of U.S. philanthropist Lynn Schusterman. It describes itself as being dedicated to developing Jewish leaders and promoting managerial excellence in the Jewish community.

Among others, CLI has partnered with such organizations as the Forest Foundation, the Foundation for Jewish Camping, and Birthright Israel.

"We don't see the next generation as disappointing," said CLI director Yoni Gordis. "We see a huge wave of identification and celebration happening."

The people selected for the summit, aged 22 to 34, are all involved in some kind of innovative Jewish initiative, such as volunteer programs, websites, multimedia, education or environmentalism. The summit brings them together so they can network and share information about each other's projects. But there's also an instructional component.

"They go through organizational and technological skills training," Gordis said. "We teach them how to build business plans so they can get better traction out there in the world. These young people are desperate to know each other and to collaborate. Our job is to help them meet, improve their skills so their individual projects will be more effective, and where possible, get them to collaborate."

This year, Daniel Roth, a Jewish educator and non-profit director, and Daniel Rattner, 25, a filmmaker, are the sole Canadians taking part in the Return on Investment Summit (ROI).

Rattner, a Halifax native and graduate student at York University's Schulich School of Business, just finished working on a television show that aired last month for Israel's 60th birthday. Titled *Ralph Benmergui: My Israel*, the five-part series explored the present, past and future of Israel. Rattner is now working on a documentary called *Revival*, about the Hebrew language.

"I participated in last year's ROI summit and because it was such a positive experience, when I was invited back this year I was eager to go," he said. "It's a great experience because it brings people together from different parts of the world and gives them a chance to network and share ideas on the different projects they're working on. There's a strong Jewish connection, and I continue to stay in touch and collaborate with some of the people I met last year."

Julie Schneiderman, a 32-year-old Vancouverite, attended the first ROI summit in 2006. She was nominated for her work at the Canadian HIV Trials Network.

"There were people there from every corner of the world and they were very excited about finding projects and ways to connect," she recalled.

While she did not have a specific project in mind when she attended the conference, she left with the germ of an idea that she has continued in Canada. It involved bringing Israeli AIDS researchers to Vancouver in October 2007, and travelling to Ethiopia two months later with the same team to discuss the possibility of a partnership among Israel, Canada and Ethiopia.

"Adult male circumcision is one of the issues we want to look at, because research has found that circumcision in males can significantly reduce their chances of getting HIV, and there's an interesting link with it being a Jewish tradition," she said.

Today, Schneiderman is working toward a second Ethiopian visit in late 2008 to plan a strategy, do a needs assessment and get work underway.

"The biggest value of the Return on Investment Summit was being able to sit down face to face with people, build a relationship and create something," she said. "I saw so many young Jewish people at that summit interested in international work, human and social development issues, economic issues, and a real commitment to social justice. It's exciting to be with a group of young people who really want to see change."

Yedidim seeks support

Continued from page 18

but Yedidim has since taken it over and the program was subsequently expanded to include Sela, a similar program for Ethiopian girls at risk.

During Margo's last trip to Israel in January, discussions focused on how to increase financial support and raise the group's profile in other countries.

"We have to start to do something," Margo said. Few realize, she added, that Yedidim projects can get underway for as little as $20,000 or $30,000, but "it can make a huge difference."

The secret of the Yedidim program, one if its documents says, "lies in the peer-to-peer encounter model, which provides us with the unique ability to act as a safety net, essentially catching these youths before they reach the 'point of no return.'

"At the present time, potential program participants far outnumber our ability to include them in our programs."

Yedidim can be reached through its website, www.yedidim-israel.org, or locally by e-mailing Margo at ymargo@sympatico.ca.

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

McGill student sparkles as an entrepreneur

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

"Everything is doable, people just don't do it," says 20-year-old entrepreneur Daniel Shiner.

"The secret is that everything is easy – not easy in the sense that it doesn't take work but easy in the sense that the steps can be learned and the task can be accomplished."

With this simple motto to guide him, Shiner has skilfully navigated the labyrinth of the business world.

"It's definitely not about the money," he says of his passion for business. "Around Grade 9 or 10, I was starting to get bored of doing the same things every weekend. Simply, business looked fun."

Currently a management student at McGill University, Shiner is the founder and president of SoulShine Digital, a digital media consulting and development agency specializing in web and logo design.

Since its establishment in 2004, the company has experienced burgeoning success. In recognition of his accomplishments, Shiner was named the provincial entrepreneur of the year in the Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship's Student Entrepreneur Competition.

As a young high school student at the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Shiner scoured the city for job opportunities, but he found nothing that appealed to him.

"I already wanted to be the manager. I was 16, and I looked like I was 13. The only jobs I could get were flipping burgers and bussing tables," he says.

Finally, at the beginning of his Grade 11 year, Shiner's aunt contacted him on behalf of an associate in search of a web designer. It was then that Shiner realized that the computer field could provide him with the opportunity he had been searching for.

"I told her that I was familiar with web design. I really had no clue about it," Shiner confesses. "But I did see an opportunity. Adults don't trust kids with anything but computers. They believe in whiz kids."

Shiner agreed to meet with the person who became SoulShine Digital's first client and immersed himself in learning the tools required to complete the project – which he pulled off without a hitch.

"At 16, this guy probably wouldn't have hired me to work at his cash register, but he was willing to give me the enormous responsibility of designing and managing a website," Shiner says.

"I was careful not to be irresponsible. His business was depending on me, so if I really thought I couldn't have done it, I wouldn't have taken it on, but I knew I had the skills to be able to learn whatever I needed to learn."

He identifies the experience as a pivotal one in his rapidly progressing business career.

"That first jump gave me confidence in my own competence," he says. "Every challenge I take on requires pressure, but it taught me that I actually enjoy that pressure. The client ended up with a great product and I learned a lot."

Shiner spent the rest of his time in high school developing SoulShine Digital, establishing contacts and testing the waters of the business world. He augmented his personal endeavours with his role as the co-president of the TannenbaumCHAT business club, a student group that undertakes business ventures and directs all profits to charity.

"One of the first things I learned was the power of asking someone a question," Shiner says. "People are such great assets, and we don't realize how many teachers we have out there."

In light of Shiner's initial success with little formal education, he was somewhat skeptical of its importance. Although he is naturally gifted with business skills, Shiner came to realize the value of education.

"While I don't think anyone can teach you how to be an entrepreneur, they can teach you how to structure your ideas and to make sure you're doing things responsibly, which is critical," he said.

Addowall.com, an online interactive wall for an artist community, is his most recent project.

"Any artist can get a piece of the wall, called an addo, to put up any type of art they wish. The position of every artist's square is based on its popularity. Every person that comes to the wall has a voice," Shiner says.

Along with his partner Raphael Law, a graduate of McGill Computer Science, Shiner has invested nearly two years into the development of Addowall. Addowall is unique in that the best art rises to the top of the wall, while the worst falls to the bottom, according to artists' votes.

"Artist communities are out there because artists are excited about the potential to connect all over the world. The problem is that it's so hard to sift through the art to find the good stuff," Shiner says.

The idea for Addowall was born in the wake of initial failure. After realizing the flaws of a previous concept, Shiner parked himself at a library desk, determined not to return home until he thought of something better. After hours of contemplation, he went to the bathroom and noted how much graffiti was scattered across the stall and, moreover, across the city.

"People have a need to express themselves, to be remembered and to be heard," Shiner thought. "What if there was a wall the entire world could write on? It's a magical concept and the computer makes it possible."

Addowall is a direct manifestation of Shiner's desire to create something that appeals to people's needs and to truly enjoy himself while doing it.

"Will it make me a millionaire? I doubt it. But I knew that all along," he says. "I'll just be happy to see people from all over the world connect to one another using something that I helped create."

Although he's certain he'll pursue a career in business after graduation, he won't speculate on what form that it will take.

"What I love the most is to create, to create a project, a product or an idea that could actually change the way people live," Shiner says.

"Create something – I realize that sounds a little vague – but it's what I've got to do. Have any ideas?"

Dan Shiner, a student and business man, has been driven to suceed since his early teens.

CLARIFICATION

In "Victim of bullying becomes a body builder" (Heebonics, May 15), Rick Rotchild was referred to as "a former body builder champion in the FAME World Championship and PRO Showdown competitions" because he had been stripped of his title due to steroid use. He was subsequently banned from future events by the organization, and his lab results were made known to other bodybuilding associations.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Only paid Family Moments announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Mazel tov announcements featured on onlysimchas.com will appear as space allows.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words, maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., #205 North York, ON. M3B 3K4

or email to: cblackman@cjnews.com

Mazel tov Dorothy Bellack on your 89th birthday Aug. 2, with love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Ida Lazar on her 90th birthday June 30, with love from Stanley, Elaine, David, Jennifer, Steven, Noam and Serena. L'chaim!

Mazel tov to Stephanie & Yehuda Sadek on the birth and brit milah of Gavriel Eliyahu. Mazel tov to the grandparents, family and friends.

Mazel tov to Merle & Leonard Eisen on their 50th wedding anniversary. With love from your children and grandchildren.

Happy 90th birthday to Minnie Granville. With love and best wishes from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to our beloved son, Daniel Adams, on your bar mitzvah. We are very proud of you. With love from Mom, Steve, Dad and Rachel.

Happy birthday mommy! We love you very much! Love always, Ava, Emily and Jason.

Eyal, Elana and big sister Rebecca Ravas are delighted to announce the birth of Kobi Jesse born April 8.

Bonnie & Paul Rodak, Sandra & Jeffrey Otis announce the engagement of their children Michelle & Joshua. Mazel tov to the Shear & Baker families.

Paul & Lisa Kay announce Hannah's arrival April 30. Grandparents, Gary & Noreen Kay, Brenda Gorendar, David & Elaine Cooper. Great-grandparents, Sari Troister, Malka Gorendar.

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What's New

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NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINE: What's New deadlines: Monday, June 23, is the deadline for the July 3 issue and Thursday, June 26, is the deadline for the July 10 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, June 21

OSHAWA SERVICES

Beth Zion Congregation, a conservative community in Oshawa, holds Shabbat services at 9:30 a.m. Join them at 9:20 a.m. for Hebrew reading lesson. Kiddush follows services. Information, 416-840-9723, 905-723-2353 or www.bethzionoshawa.com

EMUNAH SHABBAT

Join Emunah Women for the 13th annual seudah shlishit and learning taking place at six synagogues across Toronto: BAYT at 5 p.m. with Prof. Hindy Najman; Bnai Torah Congregation at 6:15 p.m. with Sarah Mali; Beth Jacob Synagogue at 5:30 p.m. with Chana Werner; Shaarei Shomayim Congregation at 6 p.m. with Rebecca Winter; Shaarei Tefillah Congregation at 5:30 p.m. with Sherri Nussbaum; and Yeshivat Or Chaim at 5:30 p.m. with Rabbi Shlomo and Ofra Gemara. Couvert $18, sponsorships $36 or $54. Reserve, 416-636-0036.

Sunday, June 22

CLOSET SALE

National Council of Jewish Woman of Canada, Toronto Section, holds a charity sale of clothing, shoes, housewares, books etc. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Council House, 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100.

FILM: *TOXIC TRESPASS*

Join Darchei Noam for a screening of a documentary about the effects of pollutants,, *Toxic Trespass: How Safe Are Your Children*? A discussion follows with **Dorothy Goldin Rosenberg**, executive producer of the film and **Rabbi Shalom Schachter**. 7 p.m. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

CAUCASUS BBQ

The Jewish Caucasus Community Centre is holding a BBQ for singles in their 20's and 30's. 1 p.m. at the Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. $10 in advance, $12 at the door. Tickets, 647-272-8474.

Tuesday, June 24

SUMMER CLOSET SALE

National Council of Jewish Woman of Canada, Toronto Section, holds its first "Tuesday Summer Closet Sale," 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Every Tuesday through until Aug. 26. 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100

Wednesday, June 25

SAR-EL INFO MEETING

The Sar-El program enables civilian volunteers to work on Israeli army supply/maintenance bases. 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 or www.sarelcanada.org.

Other News

JUNIOR HOCKEY TRYOUTS

Jewish hockey players who play Junior A, AAA, AA and A level are invited to try out for the Canadian Junior Jewish National team which will participate in the World Jewish Hockey Championships in July 2009 in Israel, June 22-24. Israel Ice Hockey website or contact info@israelicehockey.com.

LONDON GOLF/COMEDY

Temple Israel of London holds its annual golf tournament and comedy night at the Westminster Trails Golf Club, Sunday, June 29. Info and registration call 519-858-4400.

COURAGE IN MOTION

Join Beit Halochem on a fully supported 5-day bike tour of Northern Israel and celebrate Israel@60 alongside Israel's war veterans. Sept. 14-18, 2008. Information and registration available at www.cycleisrael.com or 905-695-0611.

Continued on page 27

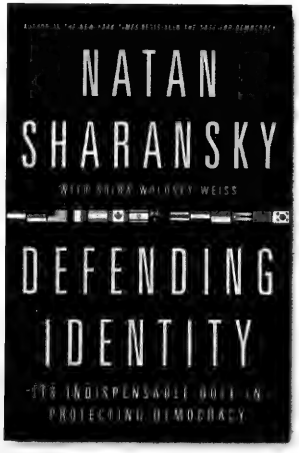
IN CONVERSATION
Heather Reisman & Natan Sharansky
Monday, June 23rd at 7pm
Chapters Bayview Village

Natan Sharansky, former Soviet dissident, political prisoner, and human rights icon, has spent his life championing democracy and freedom.

Join us as our Chief Booklover **Heather Reisman** interviews Mr. Sharansky as they discuss *Defending Identity*.

Book signing to follow.

Chapters
chapters.ca/events



Continued from page 26

EATING DISORDERS

Eating Disorders of York Region provides services, education and support groups for families and friends of individuals who are affected by eating disorders. Free programs offered Monday-Thursday each week. For information contact 905-886-6632 or visit www.edoyr.com.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jias-toronto.org. For more information about these programs call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafes: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment . **Joanna**, ext. 30.

Youth Groups: Programs for newcomer children and teens. Canadians and newcomers get community service hours for participation in our teen group. **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800 or www.jfandcs.com. Call **Shawna** ext. 215 for info and registration.

When You're About to Separate: What to Tell The Kids. A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation on how to best meet your child's needs. Tuesday, June 24, 6:30-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, suite 313.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC discusses "Power of Attorney for Property and Personal Care, Substitute Decision Making and More" with lawyer from Advocacy Centre for the Elderly. Thursday, June 19, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155 or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

The Association of Jewish Seniors' hosts a "To Our Good Health" seminar with **Jan MacQuarrie** on "Laughter is the Best Medicine." Monday, June 23, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre. Lunch and entertainment included. Free for members who pay next year's dues, guests $10. Reserve in advance only, call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama Wednesday, July 9; Fallsview Casino, Niagara Falls, Wednesday, July 30; Bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Bridge,Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Seniors walking group meets Thursdays, 9-10 a.m. Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom Social Club offers theatre trips to see *Wonderful Town*, Wednesday, July 2, *A Little Night Music*, Tuesday, Aug. 12 and *The Music Man* Sept. 3. $85 each, includes orchestra seats for matinee performance and transportation. Reserve, 416 633-3838.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"**Stephen Sondheim**: The Man Who Changed the Musical" a lecture by **Gordon Bean**. Tuesday, June 24, 10 a.m. $3, non members $6.

Canada Day Celebration, Wednesday, June 25, 11a.m.-3 p.m. Free.

Wellness Lecture, "Muscle and Bone Maintenance" by **Yossi Strauch**. Thursday, June 26, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

"Abraham to Saddam: History of the Jews of Iraq" a lecture by **Diana Mingail**, Thursday, June 19, 7:30 p.m. Non members $8. Info, ext. 154.

Jazz @ the J, Ron Davis Sextet, Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. $28. Ext. 0.

Cooking class, "Introduction to the Stove: Meet, Cook and Eat!" Simple and delicious dishes using healthy, natural and colourful ingredients. Sunday, June 22, 1-4 p.m. $18. Register or info, randis@mnjcc.org or 416-924-6211, ext. 154

Pride Screening @ the J, *Jerusalem is Proud to Present*, a documentary following the events leading up to The World Pride Conference in Jerusalem in the summer of 2006, followed by a discussion. Wednesday, June 25, 7:30 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. Free. Info, esthera@mnjcc.org or 416-924-6211, ext. 606.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

BJCC 6th Annual Golf Tournament Thursday, June 26 at Glen Eagle Golf Club. Call **Jim**, ext. 371.

Conversation Cafes, newcomers to Canada practice speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

Volunteers Wanted

CIRCLE OF CARE

Give the gift of friendship to an older adult who wants to stay in their own home. All it takes is a walk in the park, sharing a story or a laugh to lift the spirits of a senior. Know that you will be providing a priceless service to someone who needs you. For information call **Selena**, 416-635-2900, ext. 462 to volunteer.

BJCC COMPUTER LAB

Be a part of the BJCC Seniors-Online Computer Lab! If you are 55+ and have computer or teaching skills this is an opportunity to share your computer knowledge with others seniors. We are looking for a retired or semi-retired individual to help teach and develop our curriculum catering to the elder adult learner. Also looking for teaching assistants. Contact **Brian Prosserman**, 905-882-6080.

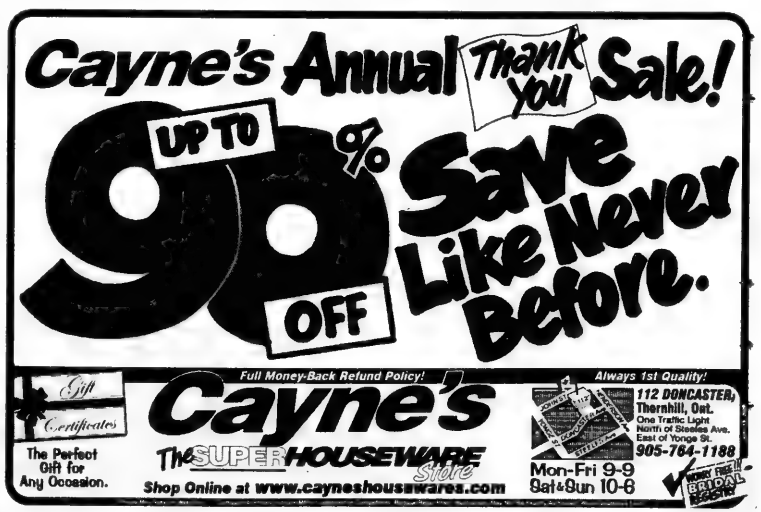
VISIT ISOLATED SENIORS

The Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living seeks friendly visiting volunteers with 1-2 hours per week for regular visits, in person or over the phone, to isolated seniors. Choose the day that best suits you. Call **Naomi Ziegler**, 416-225-2112 ext.127 or naomiz@betelcentre.org.

JF&C LOUNGE AND RESOURCE CENTRE CELEBRATED: Miles Nadal and Kelly Grier were honoured recently for their generous support of the Jerome D. Diamond Adolescent Centre, a program of Jewish Family & Child. Through the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, the couple funded the recent renovation of the facility's beautiful student lounge and resource centre. Students and staff at the day treatment and school program for youths with emotional and/or behavioural problems attended the celebration.

CANADIANS AND ISRAELIS CREATE STATE OF THE ART HIGH SCHOOL: Netanya's educational system was given a boost in early June at the groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion of ORT Netanya's high school. The expanded campus will include an ecological bubble for environmental studies, new classrooms, laboratories, sports hall and a new, state-of-the-art library and convention centre, named in honor of Bluma Appel. The Netanya municipality is contributing a new, multifunctional sports hall with matching funding from Mifal Hapayis, Israel's national lottery. Attending the event were Minister for Social Affairs and Services Isaac Herzog; Canadian Ambassador John Allen; a delegation of the ORT Canada leadership headed by ORT Canada president Arthur Silber; Netanya Mayor Miriam Fierberg-Ikar and hundreds of guests. From left: Allen; Zvi Peleg, ORT Israel director general; Silber; Dr. Uzi Tsuk, chair of ORT Israel; and Bracha Rager, president of ORT Israel.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 29



OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Helen Zamon	May 31/08	6 Orchid Court
Lynne Cogan	May 31/08	270 Queen's Quay
Florence Pudgie Roth	May 31/08	3705 Bathurst Street
Howard Gitter	Jun 2/08	65 Skymark Drive
Sheldon Lasko	Jun 4/08	19 Simeon Court
Dorothy Heitin	Jun 5/08	645 Castlefield Avenue
Birdie Steele	Jun 5/08	83 Bevdale Road
Duffy Black	Jun 6/08	111 Avenue Road

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Dr. Leon Levene	Jun 5/08	35 Pheasant Valley Court

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Slonimsky, Hillary Hyman	June 1/08	3560 Bathurst St
Weiss, Ecaterina	June 2/08	Private
Finkelberg, Sadie	June 3/08	45 Stornoway Cres
Osterreicher, Samuel	June 3/08	291 Hillhurst Blvd
Rotsztain, Sala (Sarah)	June 4/08	333 Clark Ave
Berkovits, Jack	June 4/08	113 Kennard Ave
Kuttner, Rebecca	June 4/08	Private
Baseman, Samuel	June 6/08	
Kideckel, Sarah	June 8/08	3560 Bathurst St
Miller, Esther	June 8/08	205 Hilda Ave
Hertzberg, Sara	June 8/08	3560 Bathurst St
Teytelbaum, Fyodor	June 9/08	Private
Nash, Isadore Irving	June 10/08	85 Skymark Dr
Pohn, Allan	June 10/08	65 Huntingdale Blvd

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The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of
ROZALIA FRIEDMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd at 1:00 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St., 3 km north of Major Mackenzie
Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto Congregation Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend.

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
HENRY GORE ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd, 2:00 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Community Section, Phase 5
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of the late
BRIAN KALB ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd, 10:30 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Cemetery
Bathurst south of Steeles
Shomrei Shabbos Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
ROSE JASKOLKA ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd at 12:00 p.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Section #7
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the beloved memory of
SOLOMON KLIMITZ ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd, 11:30 a.m.
Roselawn Cemetery
Anshei B'nai Moshe Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
HARRY PRESS ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd, 11:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Cemetery
Lithuanian Farband Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of the late
SYLVIA WEINRIEB ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 22nd, 12:00 noon
Bathurst Lawn Cemetery
Bathurst south of Steeles
Adath Israel Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling

University grad writes about life after high school

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Inspired by the major changes he experienced when he ventured into post-secondary education seven years ago, Robert Shapiro, 25, decided to write a novel that would tackle some of the issues facing students today, and perhaps ease the transition from high school to university.

Shapiro, a Thornhill-native who began his academic career in 2001 at Fanshawe College in London, Ont., before moving on to York University, where he obtained a degree in history, most recently graduated from Seneca College's corporate communications graduate program. He has spent enough time on college and university campuses to understand the culture.

Robert Shapiro [Sheri Shefa photo]

In his first year of college at Fanshawe, Shapiro said he began to notice that the friends he grew up with were changing, sometimes, for the worse.

"There were people I went to elementary school and high school with. Just a couple months into being away at college, [they became] completely different people. You go to their house and there are drugs laid out, they're not going to classes, and these are people you grew up playing street hockey with," Shapiro said.

"Reading all the campus newspapers, every story was about how this person was date raped out of this frat house and this protest was happening on campus and it was such a weird culture that was going on that it was just begging for a story."

He added that making the transition from high school to university is a big adjustment, and anyone who says they weren't affected by it is in denial.

"Everyone around you changes and you grow into being just a number and you go through all these things. I was noticing all this happening around me and so I started jotting some notes on a Post-it and from there I started flushing out a story."

Having written a novel is a feat in itself, but having done so while a full-time student is even more impressive.

"The process was really gruelling. There were enough times when I wanted to throw my computer out of the window… I was writing this book at all hours of the night. I'd go to school all day, go to a job all night, and then sit and write until the sun came up."

About five years later, in 2006, Shapiro had finished writing his novel, *Five Past Twelve*, which he self-published through AuthorHouse in April.

The novel is about Jack Geary, a student at a Boston college who has just entered his sophomore year. Feeling disengaged from his peers, growing tired of the college experience in general, and after witnessing the rape of a friend, Jack turns to drugs and quickly loses control.

Despite alienating himself from his peers, Jack develops two important relationships – one, a love affair with a female student, and another, a friendship with the campus priest who challenges Jack to face his demons.

Shapiro said that although the novel is not autobiographical, he did draw from his emotions and from the experiences of those around him.

"All the thoughts and feelings, to an extent, are mine. Some of them are exaggerated to convey a point, but a lot of the actual experiences – you know, I never succumbed to a drug addiction, but some people did, and it is people you never thought would," he said.

"Why I didn't succumb to it, I have no idea."

He said that one of the messages in his book is that he feels the post-secondary system is flawed.

"You just become this cog in the machine and I think everyone goes through the process of trying to find your identity because no matter what you built yourself to be in high school, you're going to be reconstructed or rebuilt when you enter college," Shapiro said.

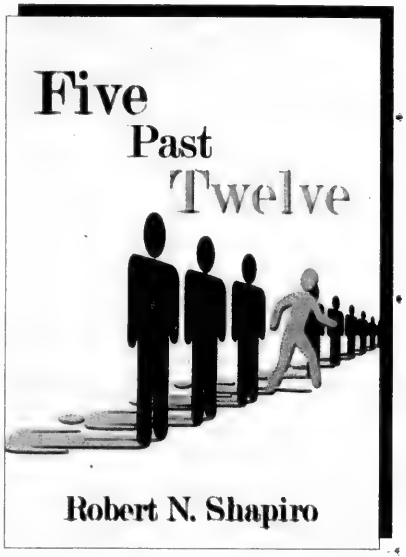
"I don't think university fosters creativity. In a lot of ways, it kind of drains it. You have to work in a very strict system, with a lot of strict guidelines and bureaucracy. It just became this huge bureaucratic machine, where even education is put on the back burner."

In the novel, during a conversation Jack has with the priest, he expresses his frustration with the post-secondary education system.

"Peace and order, order and peace. That's what makes the world go round. If someone breaks the harmony, they are a menace to society. These menaces can be writers, painters, sculptors, teachers, or anyone who ever looked around and didn't see some man-made utopia. Why do we have to fall in line? Can't we see the world for what it is, without being a cynic?"

Through the novel, Shapiro also portrayed university as a place where students resemble sheep that are part of a herd.

"The students marched as if traveling through an invisible burning tunnel. They were battle scarred, weary, and ultimately drained. Girl followed boy who trailed a succession of other boys and girls. It was monotonous and never-ending, yet no one would succumb to the tiresome routine. From dorm room to coffee shop to class and so on and so forth."



Raised by his mother, a single mom who made a point of fostering Jewish values in their family, Shapiro said that there is no doubt that aspects of his Jewish background made it into his writing.

"I definitely think it played a part when I was writing this in the values that come through in the character, whether he is Jewish or not," Shapiro said.

Family Moments
Only from The Canadian Jewish news
Did your friend just have a baby?
Did your daughter get engaged?
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Food producers in China increasingly seek kosher certification

By PHYLLIS KOEGEL

"Do you want to go to China?" That's what my colleague at OU Kosher asked me two months before an important ingredients show in which the Orthodox Union participates annually.

China, well, how could I say no! Having travelled there last summer for vacation, I knew from experience just how long and tiring a trip it was, but I was on an organized tour then and everything was taken care of for us as a group. This would be different. I would be travelling by myself and meeting my colleagues who handle the Southeast Asia region for OU Kosher in Shanghai.

The OU's China and Far East team of Rabbi Mordechai Grunberg, Rabbi Donneal Epstein and Zhu Yanan handle the OU's rapid growth in China. China, now the second-largest exporter in the world, is becoming the fastest growing supplier of food ingredients to international food corporations. It has been estimated that close to $1.25 billion of kosher certified ingredients are exported annually worldwide. Enter the OU, the world's largest respected kosher certification agency, now certifying more than 300 plants in China. As the export industry grows in China, OU Kosher certifications are growing along with it.

I left New York on a Sunday morning and arrived at my hotel in Shanghai, a very long 24 hours later. The time zone change is exactly 12 hours ahead in China, so as you can well imagine, I was quite disoriented and sleep deprived. I travelled via Korean Airlines, which was simply a wonderful experience, and I connected in Seoul for a two-hour flight to Shanghai. I dozed off at the gate in Seoul, only to awaken abruptly and realize most of the passengers had already boarded, and I almost missed my connecting flight.

The hospitality of the Asian people is beyond measure, and the flight attendants were especially sensitive to my kosher dietary needs. Kosher travellers are accustomed to packing our own food just in case the meals served are not edible, or as has sometimes happened, not available. My meals were delicious, and the head flight attendant kept checking on me to make sure I was satisfied with the food. I was lucky that the seat next to me was empty, and I was able to stretch out a bit.

Fast forward 24 hours, and I am in a taxi racing through the streets of Shanghai. It is 10 p.m. and the skyline is magnificent, but the drivers seem to think of themselves as participants in the Indy 500. My taxi driver makes a left turn from the right lane of a four-lane highway as I hold on for dear life.

Somehow I arrive safely at my hotel, where my colleague, Zhu Yanan, the OU's man in China, greets me and helps me check in. He offers to have someone drive me around the next day so that I can sightsee, as the show we will be attending does not begin for another day. The Chinese people are very courteous and proper, with an obvious curiosity about westerners. As China becomes more westernized, the people embrace anything and everything American. College students are eager to practise English, which they study in university.

Show time in Shanghai: the Food Ingredients China Show opens on Wednesday morning and we meet many manufacturers who are eager to obtain OU Kosher certification for their products, as their customers are demanding kosher certification for export to the United States and Israel. The days pass quickly with the exhibition attracting well over 10,000 visitors from all over the world.

Continued on page 31

What are my visitation rights?

Family Matters

by

John Syrtash

B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator for 26 years

Question. My ex common-law wife lives in Vancouver. I pay her proper support every month. But I rarely see my kids, except when it's convenient for her to have me split the airfare to fly the kids in to Toronto to see them when she feels like visiting her relatives and taking in a show. This has been going on for years. I miss my kids. What are my rights because I'm tired of being shoved around.

Answer. You have the right to continue to be a schlemiel and be abused. Or, you can bring an application in a British Columbia Family Court for regularly scheduled rights of access. Have your lawyer offer to settle in writing so that she may have to pay all your costs if you win. The longer you wait, the harder it gets.

Question. I've been married to my husband for a long time. Several years ago I found out he had an affair with a younger woman and we separated for a while. Both of our families urged us to reconcile, which we did for the sake of our three children, all under the age of 15. But after many years I found out he was seeing that woman again. I want a divorce. If he's making $120,000 gross yearly, how much in support can I receive?

Answer. Under the Federal Child Support Guidelines, if you become the primary parent then your husband would be obliged to pay you $1,881 (non-taxable) for three children if you lived in Ontario. In addition, depending on how much you earn for work outside the home, if any, he would have to pay his proportionate share of the costs of certain extras, such as orthodontics, any other non-OHIP dental or other uninsured medical expenses, daycare/nanny expenses, private school, summer camp, post-secondary and possibly extra-curricular expenses.

Measure what you earn against what he earns, and comparing your gross incomes, he pays his percentage of the expenses. If you are entirely a homemaker then he pays all of the expenses. Without knowing your income I cannot comment on how much, if any, spousal support you would receive. There is not as yet any new law for "Spousal Support Guidelines," only recommendations for such guidelines that have been circulated among many lawyers and Judges. However, at the income level you referenced, a primary parent with three children who is not working would receive 55 to 59 percent of her husband's income for child and spousal support.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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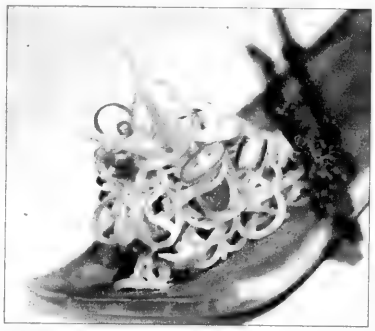
Certificate of choice is OU

Continued from page 30

The OU's reputation as the most influential kosher certification symbol in the world is reinforced as visitors from all over the globe stop at our booth to discuss their kosher needs. This reflects the media coverage the OU has recently received nationwide in publications including *USA Today*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, *Financial Times*, *Newsday*, the *Miami Herald* and *Business Week*, all positioning the OU as the leader in its category.

Many Chinese ingredient manufacturers request OU Kosher certification applications, and our Chinese representative, Zhu, will oversee their completion by companies eager to have their products become OU certified.

As the new business development and marketing associate, I have an opportunity to network with many ingredient brokers and importers who require their ingredient sources to be OU certified. Many emphasize their company's requirements that all ingredients meet certain specifications, including kosher certification.



Their certification of choice is OU, as one food ingredients manager told me, "We insist on OU certification because of its universal acceptance and undisputed global kosher standard."

OU Kosher has more than doubled its China kosher certification growth in the last two years. The OU expects to grow its China certification business quickly over the next five years. Its seal-of-approval can assure Chinese manufacturers that the millions of consumers who buy kosher and trust the supervision behind the OU symbol welcome their products.

The ingredient and food production markets today constitute 90 per cent of the marketplace in China, with the remaining 10 per cent being "finished products" such as candy, frozen and canned fish and baked goods. This 10 per cent includes consumer retail packages and industrial food service items. The OU forecasts a gradual reversal of these percentages beginning in 2008 – at the minimum rate of 10 per cent a year – until "finished goods" comprise the 90 per cent.

It's a matter of record that multinational companies with the OU kosher seal of approval have created a surefire way to gain increased market share for a relatively modest investment.

As I travel the world attending a multitude of domestic and international food and ingredient trade shows, I have the privilege of branding the OU as the leader in the kosher certification industry while maintaining no compromise in the highest standards of certification. I do my best to "demystify" the certification process in a way that makes it easy for a corporation to do business with us. We strive to make certification an easy, open and transparent process, with top quality customer service as one of our most important assets.

As the show ends on Friday afternoon, we have to stay in Shanghai for Shabbat. We change hotels to be closer to the Shanghai Chabad and I look forward to experiencing the day of rest in the beautiful city of Shanghai.

We light candles at the shul and I marvel at the 150 Jewish guests from all over the world who gather together to usher in the Shabbat. Davening is beautiful and everyone is smiling and mingling – Israelis, Americans, South Americans, Canadians and Chinese Jews – united by Yiddishkeit as the common bond.

Dinner is delicious, the rabbi and rebbetzin warm and welcoming, and the people fascinating. I marvel at people I meet who have chosen to live in China for personal as well as professional reasons. They cherish the Chabad, as it welcomes everyone who enters its doors as a safe Jewish haven and home away from home. We get to know one another, and I even make a few new friends with whom I promise to stay in touch after my return home. I truly am sorry when Shabbat ends.

I arrive home Sunday night, exactly one week since my journey began, happily exhausted and disoriented again, but this time laden with mementos and wonderful memories. But the part I will remember most is the spiritual and magical Shabbat in Shanghai, a period of delightful rest and renewal following a work week in which I travelled thousands of miles through a dozen time zones to bring the message of kashrut to the growing commercial colossus that is China.

Phyllis Koegel is the Orthodox Union's new business development and marketing associate.

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Mazel Tov!

Grandmother, 90, does it her own way

By IRENA KARSHENBAUM
Special to The CJN

CALGARY — Riva Wolf seems to instinctively know the secrets of staying young and was eager to share them with me.

She is 90, turning 91 this September, and walks, talks and dresses like a person at least 30 years younger. She bargains with God a lot, asking him to let her live to her one grandson's bar mitzvah, then another grandson's bar mitzvah. She bargains for her children's health, and God seems to give Wolf what she's asking for. It helps that she's got a positive attitude and a lust for life that keeps her grateful every evening for the day that's passed and excited each morning for the day ahead.

She never drank after one unpleasant experience with alcohol but smoked for 15 years. She didn't know that smoking cigarettes can cause lung cancer until her children, armed with that fairly recent knowledge, insisted she quit.

Her youthfulness may have genetic origins. Her father ran the Pleasant Confectionary store in Calgary's inner city until he was 83. After retirement, he refused to hang out with "old" people. He died when he was 92. Wolf's mother, however, suffered from poor health her whole life, never fully recovering from the accidental drowning of her first child. She died at 59.

What is certain is that Wolf is unconventional and has lived her life the way she's wanted to.

"I wasn't a very nice girl that way," she says, recalling her single days. "I played the field. I was one of a kind. Very few Jewish girls would have done what I did."

Certainly few would have had the chutzpah to take a job reading tea leaves at age 17, just out of high school. "I convinced the woman to hire me, telling her I had ESP and then told all my friends' mothers to come see me while I was on my probationary period," Wolf says. "They all paid a quarter and told the owner what a great job I did. I stayed in that job almost two years."

Treating life as an adventure, she moved to Vancouver on her own. She found a job as a Russian translator, although she didn't speak the language. Wolf figured that "the people who are looking for a Russian translator probably don't speak any Russian, so they'd have no way of knowing I don't speak Russian." She bought a Russian language book and learned enough words and phrases to get by in her job, where she'd stayed more than a year.

Eventually, marriage caught up with her, but not until there was a broken heart – her fiancé's – and a returned engagement ring. She married Fred Wolf in 1944, a marriage that lasted 60 years, until he died five years ago.The couple had three sons.

Marriage, however, didn't kill her independent spirit. In 1969, along with two of her sons, she opened up a men's retail store, Lord Wolf, in downtown Calgary, because she was "inspired by the Beatles." she says, "I was called the weird mother of three boys, and I made hippie clothes." Wolf and her husband ran the business until 1988.

At 70, retirement was not on the horizon for her. Despite the difficulties of finding work at that age, she landed a job as a telemarketer, a position she speaks of fondly, in her characteristic positive style. "It was a wonderful job," she says.

Riva Wolf [Irena Karshenbaum photo]

Has Wolf ever felt stress and sadness? Yes, she says, when her husband was sick. It took her a year after his death to "get back on my feet. I figured he wouldn't want me that way and I couldn't be that way."

Wolf's resiliency stems from her happy nature. She can't ever recall feeling depressed in her youth. "I had no reason to feel sad or unhappy. I had the most loving parents. Everything came my way," she says.

In September 2007, a new job came her way. With the help of one of her grandsons, Wolf now works at Baby Gap two days a week.

What does the future hold for Wolf? "As long as I can, I want to live alive," she says. "Life has been very good to me. I have a lot of wonderful young friends. I am accepted by young people and that makes me feel good."

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Thousands of Falash Mora still in Gondar

By RON CSILLAG
JTA

GONDAR, Ethiopia — The sight of a mother trying to coax one more spoonful of mushy cereal into her child's mouth is a far cry from the horrifying famine that engulfed Ethiopia in 1984.

Today, the hundreds of young mothers and wide-eyed infants crowded into the Gondar Beta Israel Association's feeding centre face another problem: seemingly endless waiting. They are among several thousand Ethiopians in Gondar hoping for permission to immigrate to Israel.

"They really have no choice but to be here," says Getu Zemene, chairman of the association, which runs an aid compound that provides food, schooling and some employment assistance to Ethiopians here who say they are part of the Beta Israel community of Ethiopian Jews.

These Ethiopians were practising Christians until recently, and claim links to Jewish progenitors who converted to Christianity several generations ago to escape economic and social pressures. They are known as Falash Mora.

"Israel made them a promise and they have come to Gondar," Zemene said. "Here they wait."

Over the last five years, more than 17,000 Falash Mora have been taken to Israel from Ethiopia, most of them from the Gondar area. Now, however, the Israeli government says it has finished screening potential Ethiopian immigrants. The list of Falash Mora that Israel committed to bringing in a February 2003 government decision has been exhausted, and except for a few hundred who will be leaving Ethiopia over the next few weeks, the vast majority of those waiting in Gondar will not be part of this mass aliyah.

Over 17,000 have come to Israel from Ethiopia in last five years

Zemene says there are 12,000 Falash Mora living in desperate poverty in Gondar. "I'm disappointed in Israel," Zemene says. "Look, these people have fathers and mothers" in Israel.

Since the exodus to Israel of Ethiopian Jewry – known as Beta Israel – in Operations Moses and Solomon in 1984 and 1991, respectively, Israel has taken in tens of thousands of Falash Mora. Due to the difficulty Falash Mora have of proving their links to Jewish progeny, Israel has relied on an informal 1999 census to identify potentially eligible immigrants. Israel requires that petitioners demonstrate that they have close relatives in the Jewish state and that they embrace Judaism as a condition of aliyah.

Zemene says the 12,000 people in Gondar – including people whose petitions for aliyah were rejected and some 8,500 or so who migrated to Gondar over the last five years but whom the Israeli government has declined to screen – will be stranded should Israel end its Ethiopian operation.

Zemene himself was rejected for aliyah seven years ago. When asked why, he says, "Still nobody has told me anything."

American Jewish aid groups involved in Ethiopian aliyah have promised to provide domestic resettlement aid and humanitarian assistance for Ethiopians who waited in Gondar for years but whose petitions for aliyah were rejected.

As thousands of Ethiopians in Gondar await word of their fate, they continue to flock to aid compounds in the city that are funded by the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee also runs health clinics here.

At the feeding centre, nearly 1,000 children up to age six come with their mothers twice daily for meals of cereals, eggs, bread, vegetables and fruit. Children ages six to 18 receive one daily meal consisting of a small pile of white beans, two eggs, an orange, a bread roll and a banana.

"The food here is not adequate," Zemene says. No one is starving, he explains, but there is widespread hunger.

Over at another one of the compounds, hundreds of children study for up to four hours per day at the School for Hebrew, Jewish Culture and Religion. Zemene estimates that 85 per cent of children in the classes have never attended a regular school.

Around the corner, a nurse examines the younger children. The nurse, who does not want to be identified, says the children's growth rates are acceptable.

Inspiration comes at the synagogue, adjacent to the feeding centre and a mikvah. It's an open space partially enclosed with plastic sheeting and corrugated metal.

During a recent afternoon service, three older boys led the congregation in a mix of Amharic and Hebrew. Men and women, clad in traditional white robes, sat separately, many with heads bowed. They responded dutifully, with many of the younger ones following along in donated prayer books.

At the Gondar Beta Israel Association's main office, 120 men can sit in small stalls for vocational training in traditional weaving, spinning and metalwork.

If Israel shuts down its emigration operation here, "we will continue as before," Zemene pledges, without elaborating.

An Ethiopian woman displays photos of people still awaiting immigration to Israel. [RNS/Reuters photo]

Aliyah funds exhausted

Continued from page 1

through a list of potential Ethiopian immigrants dating back to 1999. That list is now closed, according to ministry spokesperson Sabine Hadad.

The UJC announced recently it had exhausted the $71 million it had raised and was ceasing its funding in Ethiopia. The national arm of the North American network of local Jewish federations had pledged $100 million to Ethiopian immigration and absorption as part of Operation Promise. The Jewish Agency for Israel, which co-ordinates the Ethiopians' immigration and absorption in Israel, anticipates the final flight of Ethiopian immigrants will arrive in Israel in early July.

"The Jewish Agency is winding down its activity based on the decision of the government to cease the current immigration of the Falash Mora at the end of June," agency spokesperson Michael Jankelowitz told JTA.

But the coalition of activists pressing for additional Falash Mora aliyah say another 8,500 or so Ethiopians should be screened by the government for eligibility. The activists say they are people who are on the 1999 list but remained in their rural villages rather than leaving for the Ethiopian cities of Gondar and Addis Ababa. Most petitioners congregated in the cities while Israel reviewed their cases and during that time received Jewish aid.

Israeli courts have rejected this argument, ruling that the government fulfilled its commitments dating back to the 2003 government decision and that the 8,500 Ethiopians represent a new group. Nevertheless, the coalition of activists is pressing on with its campaign, which began last December.

"I know people have concerns that there's no end to this, that this is an indefinite extension, that they're not really Jews," said Irwin Cotler, a former Canadian justice minister and longtime advocate for Ethiopian aliyah.

"Our entire position rests on two points – one, that there's a finite, definite group of 8,500. Two, we're not saying the 8,500 should be brought. We're saying the 8,500 have a right to have their eligibility determined according to law."

At the heart of the controversy over Ethiopian immigration is the fear that mass Ethiopian aliyah will continue without end. Ethiopian aliyah was declared over by Israeli officials on several previous occasions, only to begin anew following public campaigns for its extension.

Unlike the Ethiopian immigrants who came to Israel in Operations Moses and Solomon in 1984 and 1991, respectively, the Falash Mora were not practising Jews until very recently. That has made it difficult to ascertain their claims of links – either by heritage or marriage – to Ethiopians of Jewish ancestry whose progenitors converted to Christianity more than a century ago to escape economic and social discrimination. Rather than immigrating under the Law of Return, the Ethiopians qualify under a family-reunification statute, the Law of Entry.

Some observers, including veteran Ethiopian immigrants, have warned that Ethiopians with dubious claims to Jewish ancestry are exploiting the system to escape Africa's desperate poverty for a better life in Israel. But advocates of the Falash Mora say that except for a few isolated cases, those coming to Israel have legitimate Jewish links.

In their current campaign, activists have developed a four-pronged approach focusing on Israel's three branches of government and the media. Advocates are filing additional lawsuits and appeals; lobbying Knesset members for legislation expanding Ethiopian aliyah; urging the prime minister to issue a new order on Ethiopian aliyah; and campaigning for public support.

Meanwhile, Jewish-aid funding to Ethiopia is drying up. The North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ), which funds Jewish aid and education in Ethiopia, says it will stay the course, but its sponsors are pulling out.

"The truth is, we just don't have the money," said Jim Lodge, the vice-president of the Israel and Overseas division at UJC, one of NACOEJ's main sponsors. "It's not out of any kind of policy decision or initiative on our own, but simply out of budget considerations."

JTA correspondent Ron Csillag contributed to this report from Gondar.

Extensive security the norm in Jordan

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to the CJN

Extensive security measures are in place in Jordan to ensure that terrorist groups don't cause instability or infiltrate the border with Israel.

In Umm Qais in northern Jordan, which borders on Israel and the Golan Heights, it is impossible to enter or leave the village without passing through Jordanian army checkpoints with armed soldiers and tanks. In the village, where most men attend prayers daily at the central mosque, there are many Jordanians of Palestinian origin.

"Security is especially tight here because the Jordanian government is worried about Islamic extremists getting to the border with Israel and conducting terrorist attacks or undermining King Abdullah's [Hashemite] regime," said Anna, a middle-aged German volunteer at the Umm Qais archeological site, who did not want to give her last name.

"Northern Jordan traditionally has been the centre of Palestinian extremism," she said. "There is a big Palestinian refugee camp in the city of Irbid, less than an hour's drive from here. In Black September in 1974, Irbid was considered the stronghold of Yasser Arafat and Palestinian nationalists [who challenged the Hashemite regime]."

Catherina, another German volunteer at the site who wished to remain anonymous, added: "I was in Irbid the other day, and a soldier got on the city bus to look at everyone's passport. He wasn't interested in women's passports but in the men's. The regime is fearful of Muslim extremists who want to carry out terrorist attacks... There are concerns that there are Al Qaeda cells around here."

Israeli security officials have reportedly been concerned that Al Qaeda might try to kidnap an Israeli farmer or soldier near the Jordan Valley.

Police at the resthouse in the archeological site in Umm Qais, Jordan. [Rhonda Spivak photos]

Al Qaeda's presence in northern Jordan is not new. An Al Qaeda group is believed to be behind an attack last year on a Jordanian resort not far from Umm Qais, near Israel's Kibbutz Ein Gev on the Sea of Galilee. Additionally, an Al Qaeda group is believed to have been responsible for the firing of a Katyusha rocket from Jordan into Eilat.

Numerous police are located at tourist sites throughout Jordan since the triple suicide bombing in November 2005 of three western-owned hotels in Amman (the Renaissance, the Hyatt Regency and Days Inn), carried out by the Iraqi branch of Al Qaeda led by the Jordanian militant Abu Musab Zarqawi. The blast killed 60 people.

Many Israelis are wary of travelling to Amman since a deranged gunman attacked western tourists in broad daylight in the city's downtown Roman Theatre in 2006, claiming to have acted in response to the fighting in the Second Lebanon War.

An American institution in Amman currently does not display an American flag or any other identifier. And people are nervous about working in locations that are obviously American.

"I thought about playing piano and singing regularly at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Amman, but decided not to because it is too high profile," said Danny, an American singer who has been living in Amman for a few years.

Hotels frequented by tourists have extensive security, far more than their counterparts in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv or Netanya. In the parking lot of the Marriot Hotel in Amman, guards check both the underside and inside of vehicles entering the hotel complex. Anyone entering the hotel must go through airport-style security procedures, including luggage scanning as well as walk-through detectors. A sign in the hotel elevator reads: "This elevator is under electronic surveillance."

This year, Jordanian authorities banned all events marking the *Naqba*, or "Catastrophe," a term used by Palestinians to refer to the creation of the State of Israel 60 years ago. A number of pro-Palestinian groups and Jordanian opposition parties had been planning to hold a rally in Amman. This event and other "illegal" public gatherings were disallowed.

"[Most] people in this country are interested in living in peace," said Jutta Haesner, director of the German Protestant Institute of Archeology in Amman. "[Jordanians] don't want Iran or Syria to get them into trouble. They see the refugees from Iraq coming here and what kind of trouble there is in Iraq, and they don't want to be part of it."

However, as Israel turns 60, King Abdullah is reportedly concerned about the ongoing crisis in Gaza and fearful that the instability there could lead to a Hamas takeover of the West Bank, which would have negative implications for Jordan.

Large billboards of King Abdullah and his late father, King Hussein, are located throughout the kingdom, a reminder to all of who is in charge of the country.

Hamas releases letter from Schalit

JERUSALEM — Hamas released a letter from its Israeli captive, abducted soldier Gilad Schalit.

Making good on its promise to former U.S. president Jimmy Carter, the Palestinian Islamist faction on June 9 delivered a letter from Schalit, an Israeli soldier who was abducted and taken to the Gaza Strip almost two years ago.

Gilad Schalit

Schalit's parents said the letter, which was handled by the Carter Center, was addressed to them and signaled distress on the part of the captive, who has been held almost entirely incommunicado.

"He pleads for his life," Schalit's father, Noam, told *Yediot Achronot* on June 10. "We have no doubt that this is Gilad's handwriting. The letter is recent, even though it is not dated."

In the letter, which was considered a proof of life, the young soldier wrote that his "health is deteriorating," and that he dreams of the day he will "come back home." He also asked the Israeli government not to "abandon" him.

"The government has to do every effort to put an end to this case and release him. The letter is nothing for us," Schalit's father said.

The gesture by Hamas came as Israeli leaders prepared to discuss the possibility of a major military sweep of Gaza to crush cross-border rocket fire.

Analysts said Hamas may be trying to signal its willingness to continue negotiations on releasing Schalit in exchange for jailed Palestinian terrorists. Israel has so far rejected many of the names on the Hamas release roster.

Prisoner exchange deal reported

Continued from page 1

Regev's comments came after the Lebanese newspaper *As-Safir* reported earlier Monday that military sources in Lebanon expect Hezbollah to return his son, Eldad, and Goldwasser to Israel next week, as part of an exchange deal.

According to the report, the deal will take place between June 20 and 25.

At the same time as the *As-Safir* report was published, United Nations sources told the Lebanese daily *Al-Akhbar* that an exchange for the kidnapped IDF soldiers is likely to be carried out at the end of next week.

The sources did not relay any other details about the swap except that it had been agreed upon after negotiations between Israel and Hezbollah were expedited through German mediation.

The Saudi-owned paper *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat* also reported that the family of jailed Lebanese terrorist Samir Kuntar has begun to prepare for his imminent return to Lebanon. Kuntar's return to Lebanon is believed to be part of Israel's commitments in the deal.

The various Arab media reports came while Dekel was in Europe for talks with the German mediator. A meeting between the two is expected to centre on advancing the deal, in return for the release of Kuntar and a number of Hezbollah operatives.

Kuntar is serving multiple life sentences for killing four Israelis in a 1979 infiltration of an apartment building in northern Israel. Among the victims were a 28-year-old man and his four-year-old daughter, whose head Kuntar repeatedly smashed against a rock before crushing her skull with a rifle butt.

On Sunday, the attorney representing Kuntar told *Ha'aretz* that his client has not received any information regarding his imminent release, despite reports to the contrary circulating in recent weeks.

El Salvador seeks recognition for little-known Nazi-era rescue

By LARRY LUXNER
JTA

WASHINGTON — El Salvador is home to only 120 Jews, but this small Central American nation of seven million has long portrayed itself as a solid friend of Israel and the Jewish people.

For years, the Salvadoran government has condemned anti-Zionist resolutions at the United Nations, and until August 2006, it was one of only two countries – the other was Costa Rica – that maintained an embassy in Jerusalem.

Now, with the help of the American Jewish Committee and a Los Angeles filmmaker, El Salvador is trying to win global recognition for an obscure diplomat whose actions during World War II helped rescue at least 25,000 European Jews from deportation to Nazi death camps.

From 1942 to 1945, Col. Jose Arturo Castellanos, El Salvador's consul general in Geneva, issued official papers to thousands of Hungarian, Polish, French, German and Czech Jewish families certifying that they were bona fide citizens of El Salvador.

The scheme – at first disavowed but later approved by his superiors back home – was carried out in secret by Castellanos' deputy and friend, a Romanian Jewish businessman named George Mandel-Mantello.

On June 11, both men were remembered posthumously at an event hosted by the Embassy of El Salvador in Washington. Among those on hand were Rene Leon, the country's longtime ambassador to the United States; Claudio Kahn, past president of El Salvador's Jewish community; and a number of other U.S. and Latin American dignitaries.

"We are here to present the story of a great man who conducted an operation from Switzerland that saved thousands of innocent Jewish people who would have otherwise died at the hands of the criminal Nazis," said Ricardo Moran Ferracuti, the co-ordinator for historical research at El Salvador's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "This is the story of Col. Castellanos, a man with great courage who stood up against the system."

Moran has tried for three years to persuade Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum to recognize Castellanos as Righteous Among the Nations, but he says the museum's authorities are very strict.

"The requirements are that the person was not Jewish, that he or she didn't make any profit, and that he risked his life and his job," he explained. "Unfortunately we cannot obtain this recognition for Mr. Mantello because he was a Jew. But without Mantello, Castellanos couldn't have done anything. It was a team operation."

Irena Steinfeldt, director of Yad Vashem's Righteous Among the Nations Department, in an e-mail to JTA said Yad Vashem has asked the Foreign Ministry of El Salvador to search its archives for documents showing that Castellanos acted against his superiors' orders.

"Should we receive such documents, we will submit the case to the Commission for the Designation of the Righteous, which will then have to evaluate Castellanos' role in the rescue operation and the risks he took," Steinfeldt wrote.

Obscure diplomat's actions during World War II helped rescue at least 25,000 European Jews from deportation to Nazi death camps

In 1938, Castellanos was sent to Germany to open El Salvador's consulate in Hamburg. Four years later Mandel, Mandel-Mantello's original name, visited Castellanos in Geneva, where the diplomat had been reassigned for his safety. Mandel asked for help in evading the Nazis in Romania.

Castellanos appointed Mandel as first secretary of El Salvador's consulate in Geneva.

Immediately upon receiving his Salvadoran passport, the wealthy Romanian added "Mantello" to his name in order to sound Latin. Inspired by other rescue efforts, Mantello suggested that Salvadoran passports be issued to rescue Jews.

Castellanos declined, citing the increased scrutiny of foreign passports. Instead he suggested issuing certificates of Salvadoran citizenship.

In 1944, Mandel-Mantello and Castellanos asked the Swiss government to represent its interests in Hungary. Specifically they sought protection of all the new "citizens" of El Salvador.

Following a series of bureaucratic delays, Switzerland finally agreed thanks to the intervention of Carl Lutz, the vice consul at the Swiss Legation in Budapest, which already represented 12 other countries, including the United States and Great Britain.

None of the Jews who received the official-looking, notarized documents ever immigrated to El Salvador, but the bogus papers gave them protection in Hungary, Poland and other countries where they resided.

By word of mouth, the not-so-secret operation eventually grew so large that Lutz moved it to a glass factory in Budapest, which became known locally as "the glass house."

Between the Swiss Legation and Mandel-Mantello's efforts, some 10,000 certificates were handed out. Each one saved the lives of individuals and entire families.

The little-known story inspired California filmmaker Brad Marlowe and his Salvadoran wife, Leonor Avila de Marlowe, to produce a documentary about Castellanos and Mandel-Mantello titled *Glass House*. The 78-minute film was shown publicly for the first time on June 12 at the Washington Hebrew Congregation.

For its part, El Salvador also hopes to solidify its ties with the AJC and the American Jewish community, which in the past has lobbied hard in favour of issues important to that country. These include humanitarian aid following the devastation of Hurricane Mitch in 1998, temporary protective status for hundreds of thousands of Salvadoran immigrants in the United States and passage of the controversial Central American Free Trade Agreement in 2005.

Castellano's daughter, Frieda Garcia, 59, a translator for El Salvador's President Tony Saca, says her father never talked much about his wartime rescue effort, and he died in 1977 in relative obscurity.

"My father started giving these documents out long before the government of El Salvador told him to stop," she said.

"People say our president at that time was pro-Nazi. Later, after a new president took office, they were able to mass produce and distribute the papers. But whenever I asked him, he would say that he didn't do anything another person in his place wouldn't have done."

Olmert OKs primaries

Ehud Olmert authorized a primary in his Kadima party. Besieged by scandal and trailing in the polls, the prime minister's June 11 go-ahead may mean the end of his tenure. He revealed his decision in a meeting with the head of Kadima's steering committee, MK Tzachi Hanegbi. "The prime minister instructed us to act quickly," Hanegbi said. "The process has started running." Hanegbi will convene the party this week to continue the process, but said he doesn't expect a primary to be held before the July 17 cross-examination of U.S. businessman Morris Talansky in the illicit funding investigation against Olmert. The prime minister has denied any wrongdoing.

PM muzzles ministers

Israel's prime minister told Israeli officials to avoid making public threats against Iran. Ehud Olmert told his cabinet June 10 that officials should "refrain from discussing sensitive matters publicly" – an allusion to Iran's nuclear program, political sources said. Transport Minister Shaul Mofaz, an Olmert deputy, helped fuel record-high oil prices this month by telling a newspaper that Israel will have to attack Iran if international sanctions failed to rein in its uranium enrichment. Commentators said the comments were part of preparations to challenge Olmert for leadership of the Kadima Party.

Lobby authors speak

The authors of a controversial book about the "Israel lobby" spoke in Israel last week. Profs. John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, from the University of Chicago and Harvard University, respectively, spoke June 12 at a forum in Tel Aviv and at Hebrew University in their first visit to Israel since the publication of *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, which drew charges of anti-Semitism when it was published last year. They were guests of Gush Shalom, a far-left Israeli peace group. Echoing their claim that pro-Israel forces in Washington pressured the United States into attacking Iraq, they said the same forces are pushing America into attacking Iran. "There is only one country in the world that is putting any pressure on the U.S. to attack Iran, and that is Israel," Mearsheimer told a packed lecture hall at Hebrew University. "And it is putting enormous pressure on the U.S."

Shelling wounds woman

An Israeli woman was wounded June 12 after Palestinians in Gaza hit Israel with dozens of mortar shells and Qassam rockets. She was hit as Hamas terrorists bombarded Israel, calling it a response to an explosion earlier in the day that killed three and injured 40 in Gaza's Beit Lahiya area. An apparent longer-range Grad missile also landed near Ashkelon. Hamas accused Israel of launching an air strike on Beit Lahiya, but the IDF denied conducting any activity in the area and said the explosion was likely caused by terrorists building bombs.

Peace hopes low

Most Israelis and Palestinians see no point to the current round of peace talks, a survey found. A joint poll issued June 12 by Hebrew University and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research found 55 per cent of Israelis and 68 per cent of Palestinians think talks between their respective leaders, Ehud Olmert and Mahmoud Abbas, are going nowhere and should be suspended. The poll also showed both sides are dissatisfied with Egyptian efforts to broker a Gaza truce, which a senior Israeli official told the *Jerusalem Post* was "likely" by this week. In Israel, the idea has only minority support because it's unclear if Gilad Schalit, a soldier held hostage by Hamas since 2006, would be released as part of a ceasefire. The poll had 1,006 Israelis respondents, 1,270 Palestinian ones, and a three per cent margin of error.

– files from JTA

Farmer traded plowshare for gun to help Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Abe Levine, a self-described "farmer," is a humble man of few words. But his actions 60 years ago spoke volumes.

A dedicated member of the Machal – overseas volunteers who came to Israel between 1947 and 1949 to help found the fledgling state – Levine sat proudly wearing a Machal baseball cap in a recent breakfast interview with *The CJN* and spoke of his "close shaves" while serving as a armoured car driver during Israel's War of Independence.

Having served four years in the Canadian Army beforehand, Levine's skills and experience as a soldier were put to good use by the Haganah, helping raw recruits handle their weapons and imparting tactical knowledge.

After landing in British-controlled Palestine as a volunteer and being assigned to the 72nd infantry division, Levine parlayed his knowledge of tractors and trucks into a re-assignment with the Haganah's 79th armoured car division, he said.

"What would you rather do, walk or drive?" he answered with a smile when asked why he transferred regiments. "Those years driving the tractor on the farm paid off. And I [was] the only guy in the Israeli army who wore a plaid shirt. So they named me 'Zeke,' like a farmer."

Levine, now 85, said his urge to join the Machal stemmed from images he saw in Europe while he was stationed in Germany near the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, just after its liberation towards the end of World War II.

In an autobiography he brought along with him to the interview, Levine pointed to the section where he put down his thoughts on his time in Israel and asked that his prose be used in lieu of comment.

"As a Jew, having heard about what had happened [in the Holocaust]... I was hoping to see for myself what the Germans had done," he wrote. "When we got to the camp, there were dead people lying all around in waist-high heaps. They were using the former guards to pick up the bodies to put them in the ditches... All these people were dead because they were Jews. No other reason."

Shortly thereafter, he was discharged from the Canadian Army and returned home to his parents' farm in Whitby, Ont. With images of Bergen-Belsen still fresh in his mind, Levine soon heard about an effort to recruit soldiers to fight for a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Abe Levine poses atop his armoured vehicle during a victory parade in Israel after the country won its independence in 1948. According to Levine, David Ben Gurion personally inspected the troops that day. [Photo courtesy Abe Levine]

"Unlike other [Machalniks], I did not join up after being inspired at one of the recruitment meetings," he wrote. "Instead, I just went, with only the knowledge of the cause and a desire to be part of what was happening."

Levine arrived in Palestine after a long journey by boat with 1,200 others via New York, Marseilles, Le Havre and "a DP camp called Grand Arenas," he said.

"The significance of such a journey for everyone involved cannot be underestimated," Levine writes in his memoirs. "There were over 1,000 survivors from the terrors of Nazi Europe heading to a Jewish homeland, where they hoped they would be safe at last."

He bills himself as "one skinny guy from Canada" among the other Machalniks who fought for Israel.

Once in Palestine, Levine said he quickly observed the dire conditions soldiers and pioneers had to live in on a daily basis.

Despite this, Levine was determined to "make a difference" in memory of the six million Jews killed by the Nazis.

"I understood that if there had been an established Jewish country, half of the victims could have gotten away, or two million, or even one million," he recalled. "We volunteers, men and women, wanted to right that wrong."

The first battle Levine participated in was at Mount Meron, he said.

It was there that he had one of his many close shaves.

"I was fortunate enough to close the small lookout [window] of my armoured truck a second before it was hit by an Arab bullet meant for me," he said.

Levine next saw action at the battle for Jish (Gush Halav), as part of Operation Hiram, a "lightning attack" on the Arab Liberation Army intended to surprise the enemy and take out its northern command centre.

"We never knew what to expect when we went into battle," Levine said, but he was happy when a sudden communication came in from command in May of 1948.

"I was up in the hills when Israel declared independence. Word came right away and I felt wonderful. Like it was all worth it," Levine said.

Describing himself as a man who "formed a deep relationship with Israel at the critical hour of its birth," Levine would have settled in Israel after the war had he not received word from Canada that his father had become seriously ill.

Instead, he returned to Canada and opened a business supplying tanneries with leather.

Levine has visited Israel 22 times since serving as a Machalnik, helping out on numerous occasions as a volunteer with Sar El. He laments the way the country is treated today by the world community.

"If the world would leave Israel alone, the possibilities would be wonderful," he said.

And if they won't leave Israel alone?

"What I don't understand is why Israelis don't send 10 rockets back for every one fired from Gaza," Levine said, expressing a deep-seated, recalcitrant attitude toward any enemy of the country he helped form.

During his time in the Machal, Levine saw most Arabs as "the enemy." Though he said he had lines he would not cross – "I wouldn't kill an Arab if I just saw him standing outside his house," he wrote – Levine knew the Jewish people had just barely survived a slaughter in Europe and he knew they "had to fight back" if they were to avoid another one in the future.

Last month, he took his most recent trip to Israel, where he owns an apartment, to partake in its 60th anniversary. It coincided with his grandson's participation on the March of the Living trip and his eldest granddaughter's role as a youth leader on another Israel excursion. For Levine, it was a symbolic torch-passing.

Watching his progeny become involved in Jewish causes and events has given him a sense of fulfillment, he said.

He feels his work and commitment to the Jewish state, has now "come full circle."

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Barbara Walters reflects on her career, marriages, family

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Barbara Walters, who is fast closing in on her 80th birthday, has had an amazing career in television in the United States. She was the first female nightly news co-anchor, the first woman to co-host the *Today* show, the host of *20/20*, the co-host of *The View*, and the host and producer of a series of *Specials*.

In retrospect, Walters has made her mark as a star interviewer, having interviewed some 30 heads of state from Egypt's Anwar Sadat and Iraq's Saddam Hussein to Poland's Lech Walesa and Britain's Margaret Thatcher.

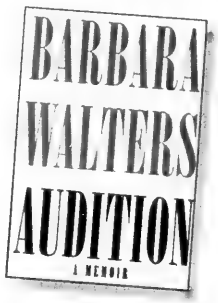
She has interviewed three Israeli prime ministers – Golda Meir, Menachem Begin and Yitzhak Rabin. In addition, she has covered U.S. presidents, including John F. Kennedy's assassination and Richard Nixon's historic trip to China.

Not bad for a Jewish girl who landed her first job as a lowly secretary in an advertising agency.

In *Audition: A Memoir* (Alfred A. Knopf), Walters recaps her eventful life with verve and passion. She recounts her rise in TV land, discloses bracing and sad details about her family, and reflects on heady love affairs and three failed marriages.

She dedicates this autobiography, in part, to her late older sister, Jacqueline, who was developmentally disabled and never had "a real life." Although Walters had "mixed feelings" about her, being both sympathetic and resentful, she credits Jacqueline with teaching her the meaning of compassion and the value of hard work.

This hefty book unfolds in chronological order, beginning with a frank account of the lives of her parents, Lou and Dena Seletsky, who never had much of a marriage. Not surprisingly, they hailed from remarkably similar backgrounds. Dena's family came from a village in Lithuania, while Lou's family – whose original name was Abrahams – came from Lodz, Poland, and settled in America by way of Britain.



Lou, the owner of a booking agency in the entertainment industry, struck it rich when, in 1937, he turned a former Greek Orthodox church in Boston into the glittering Latin Quarter nightclub.

Capitalizing on his success, Walters opened branches in Miami Beach and New York City. Walters, who was fairly close to him despite his long absences and womanizing, bears witness to his meteoric ascent.

Raised in an irreligious household, Walters writes, "We certainly knew full well that we were Jewish. But practising [Judaism] just never seemed important. As a result, I have no Jewish education… and don't observe the holidays."

A graduate of a renowned liberal arts college, she aspired to be an actress, but being practical, she attended a speedwriting school before being hired as a secretary. After a year, thanks to "pull," she acquired a position as a publicity assistant at an NBC affiliate in New York City. She began dating her boss, 10 years her senior, who was embroiled in divorce proceedings. "He was the first man I slept with," she discloses.

In this confessional tone, Walters subsequently writes about her first true love, a Frenchman who headed the catering and banquet department of a major hotel in Manhattan. "That he was married to an actress in Paris did not bother me," she admits. "Neither was I bothered by the 18-year difference in our ages."

Walters got her first big break after signing on as a writer for *Today*. She had previously been a publicist for a magazine, a job she disliked. By then, she had married and divorced her first husband, a manufacturer of children's hats, for whom she felt little sexual desire. The union lasted three years, and today, she barely remembers it. After they separated, she saw her ex only once again.

In passing, she relates her father's tragic descent into financial insolvency and his attempt at suicide. Due to these circumstances, Walters was forced to support her parents and sister, and for the next 40 years, she admits, she lived with a brooding sense of anxiety and insecurity. As she puts it, "I have… always felt I was auditioning, either for a new job or to make sure that I could hold on to the one I had."

Walters' foray into reporting occurred in the wake of Kennedy's murder in 1963. NBC, caught short-handed by the assassination, sent her to Washington, D.C., to help cover his funeral. Shortly afterward, she got married for the second time. "I loved him, but I wasn't passionately in love with him," she observes. "I felt trapped and restless."

Her reportage from China, in 1971, was a turning point. "I learned more about reporting than at any time before or since," she says.

Barbara Walters, right, interviewed former Israeli prime minister Golda Meir in 1973.

But there were dark days, too. Walters, a go-getter, was resented by her co-hosts, Frank McGee and Harry Reasoner, who were sullen male chauvinists. As a result, she had to scramble to advance her career.

Once her second marriage broke up, she dated the rather glitzy ambassadors to the United States from Iran and Argentina. One proposed marriage, but she was not game.

The first of her many reporting trips to the Middle East took place in August 1973, approximately a month before the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War. She went to Israel to interview Meir.

"Curiously, although I'm Jewish, I had never had any great desire to go to Israel," she acknowledges. "I'd never felt any special religious or spiritual connection to the Jewish state…" Much to her surprise, Israel overwhelmed her and "aroused feelings I never knew I had… I felt a startling and quite strong connection."

While in Israel, she was also granted an interview with Moshe Dayan, the flamboyant defence minister. Despite his reputation for rudeness, she befriended Dayan and remained friends with him until his untimely death.

By contrast, Sadat, whom she met in the wake of the Yom Kippur War, was personable and charismatic. She rates him as her best-ever interviewee. "He changed the world. At least he tried to." (She rates her interview with Hollywood actor Warren Beatty as her absolute worst. It was like "pulling teeth.")

In addition, Walters formed a cordial working relationship with Begin, but it unravelled after she pointedly questioned him about the wisdom of Israel's ill-fated invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

Outside the Mideast, one of her finest hours as a journalist when she landed an interview with Cuban leader Fidel Castro. She recalls that Castro, a friendly fellow, invited her and her crew into his kitchen and prepared delicious melted cheese sandwiches for them.

Walters' account of her third marriage, to a movie mogul she met on a blind date, makes for sober reading. "Wham! I thought, at last this is *it*." But no, this marriage "sputtered along," until it simply "ran out of steam."

She interviewed Saddam at a propitious moment, shortly after Israeli aircraft bombed Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981. In usual style, he denounced Israel and its existence. She was not surprised. "I guess one might ask how I, being Jewish, felt hearing these remarks. The truth is that I felt great concern for Israel but nothing personal. I'd heard similar remarks from Arabs before and would again."

She closes on a high note, saying she had the good fortune to hit her peak during what she describes as "the golden age" of TV: "I am probably happier and more at peace than I have ever been. I know I had a fantastic career. I know I travelled everywhere and met almost every important person there was to meet. I achieved more than I could ever have imagined."

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I.B. Singer praised and critiqued at a Luminato literary forum

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Dara Horn

David Bezmozgis

Isaac Bashevis Singer

The iconic Yiddish literary figure Isaac Bashevis Singer has been hailed as a novelist and short story writer who straddled the old and new worlds.

Singer, the winner of the 1978 Nobel Prize in literature, was nostalgically remembered at a forum sponsored by Luminato, the Toronto Festival of Arts and Creativity.

Singer was analyzed by three published authors – Joseph Kertes, David Bezmozgis and Dara Horn – earlier this month at the Al Green Theatre, in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

Kertes, the dean of Humber College's department of creative and performing arts, is the author of *Gratitude*, which was Penguin's lead fiction title in its spring catalogue.

Bezmozgis wrote *Natasha and Other Stories*, which won the City of Toronto Book Award in 2004.

Horn, named one of *Granta* magazine's Top Young American Novelists, has written two novels, *In the Image* and *The World to Come*, both of which were the recipients of the National Jewish Book Award in the United States.

All three panelists delivered succinct appraisals of Singer, whose books range from *Satan in Goray* (1955) and *The Manor* (1967) to *Enemies, a Love Story* (1972) and *Yentl the Yeshiva Boy* (1983).

Born in Poland in 1902, Singer immigrated to the United States in 1935 to join his elder brother, Israel Joshua. He attained international fame after the American novelist Saul Bellow translated his collection of short stories, *Gimpel the Fool*, into English in the mid-1950s. Singer died in 1991.

Kertes, the founder of Humber College's creative writing program, suggested that Singer brought a storehouse of memories and impressions of Poland to his adopted homeland, and wrote unapologetically in Yiddish.

He was an outsider, yet he was imbued with a modern sensibility.

At heart, Singer was a storyteller whose self-professed role was to pay homage to a venerable and accomplished Jewish community that would virtually be wiped out by the Nazis.

Bezmozgis, an immigrant like Singer, noted that his body of work can be divided between the Polish shtetl and the post-war world.

Bezmozgis – who was born in Riga, Latvia, in 1973 and immigrated to Canada with his family when he was six years old – praised Singer's storytelling skills, but criticized his lack of attention to style.

Reading an excerpt from *Enemies, a Love Story*, he described it as a book that manages to distil many of Singer's themes.

Bezmozgis also read excerpts from his still uncompleted second novel, which is set in Soviet-occupied Latvia during World War II and is suffused with a sense of hard realism and disillusionment.

Horn, who is young enough to be Singer's great-granddaughter, said that he bridged the real and the surreal.

Born in New Jersey in 1977, Horn earned a Ph.D in comparative literature from Harvard University. She observed that Singer's commercial success stemmed in part from his ability to portray himself as an American writer, even though he primarily viewed himself as a Yiddish writer.

She added that Singer understood the need to promote his novels and short stories and realized the importance of having them translated into English.

In a critique, she said that he was "a bit lazy" stylistically, at least later in his career, and that he falsely presented himself as "the last voice of Yiddish literature" when, in fact, the opposite was really true.

Turning an old saying on its head, Horn, a fluent Yiddish speaker, elicited waves of laughter when she joked that she and her husband converse in Yiddish when they don't want their parents to understand what they have just said.

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Concert was a love-in for Leonard Cohen

By SHLOMO SCHWARTZBERG
Special to The CJN

He still has it. In the third of his four shows performed at Toronto's Sony Centre, the legendary Leonard Cohen, still quite spry at 73, delivered a powerhouse evening of entertainment, backed by six stupendous musicians and three sublime vocalists, including Sharon Robinson, his collaborator and co-writer on his 2001 album *Ten New Songs*.

Attired in a nifty black double-breasted suit, blue shirt and jaunty fedora, Cohen, still the icon of cool, belied his age for most of the evening, and ranged confidently from the early classic songs of the 1960s and '70s, such as *Suzanne*, *Bird on the Wire* and *Who By Fire* (inspired by a prayer said on Yom Kippur) to his equally strong and memorable fare from the late '80s and '90s, including *Democracy*, *I'm Your Man*, *First We Take Manhattan* and *Everybody Knows*. (Tellingly, he didn't bother with any tracks from *Dear Heather*, his forgettable and bland 2004 album, and only picked the best songs – *Boogie Street*, *In My Secret Life* – from his middling 2001 album, *Ten New Songs*, though his stark, spoken word recitation of *A Thousand Kisses Deep*, from that same album, was one of the evening's highlights.)

The sold-out Sony Centre audience, most in their 40s and 50s but with a fair number of thirty- and twentysomethings, too, couldn't have been more rapt. This was a veritable concert love-in, with women screaming out their love for Cohen before songs and men thanking him for being, well, Leonard.

And Cohen reciprocated in kind, pronouncing himself "deeply grateful" to his fans for the "interest" they'd shown over the years in his career. This wasn't false modesty, nor was his supreme generosity to his co-performers an affectation.

In my experience, and I've been to my share of concerts over the years, the backup musicians and singers usually get thanked once before the encore(s), but Cohen started to thank them a few songs in and never stopped doing so throughout the evening; they must have been lauded a half dozen times each, which is simply unprecedented.

As for the music, it soared, whether it was Cohen singing *Hallelujah* with almost religious fervour, his voice seemingly rising to the heavens, or his quiet rendition of *Suzanne*, which has to be one of the most beautiful, heartbreaking songs ever written in the English language.

Other tunes were more prescient then they'd ever been before. Listening to Cohen's majestic turn on *Democracy* and its complex lyrics, "It's coming to America first, the cradle of the best and the worst/ It's here they got the range and the machinery for change, and it's here they got the spiritual thirst," I couldn't help thinking of Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama and the possibility that he may actually herald the positive revolutionary change that Cohen is singing about.

But it wasn't all serious stuff. Cohen literally jumped around the stage during his rousing barn-burner *Closing Time* and jokingly made reference to his last tour, way back in 1993, when he was, as he put it with a wry smile, "a 60-year-old kid with a crazy dream."

Watching Cohen during the long evening – which, including his two sets and three encores, added up to a remarkable 2½ hours of performance – you could believe that he might actually have trouble believing that he's so loved and so successful. He is, though, and that he's ascended to this career peak, including his recent induction into the U.S. Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, with such class and panache, only goes to show that the good guys sometimes do get the adulation and honour that they deserve.

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

CHRISTIE PITS DRAMA *LOST DAUGHTER* AT FRINGE FESTIVAL

Lost Daughter, a historical drama by Montreal playwright **Tara Goldstein**, is scheduled for performance during the Fringe Festival in Toronto. Inspired by Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, the play is set in Toronto in the summer of 1933, a time of intense heat, widespread unemployment and anti-Semitic incitements in city parks and beaches.

Goldstein was chosen to read aloud the part of Shylock in her Montreal high school English class in 1971. Although most of the students were Jewish, Goldstein recalls that there was no discussion of the play's concepts of Christian forgiveness (as symbolized by Portia's "quality of mercy" speech) and Jewish revenge (Shylock's desire for a pound of flesh). "We were left with the uncomfortable knowledge that Christians were merciful and Jews were vengeful and needed to be punished," she recalled.

With that memory in mind, Goldstein began writing *Lost Daughter* in 2000. The play "not only engages with the themes of Canadian xenophobia and anti-Semitism in the summer of 1933, but also portrays the rich tradition of forgiveness in Jewish thought and culture," she said.

The title comes from Jessica's last words to her Jewish father, Shylock, before she elopes with her Christian husband, Lorenzo, in *The Merchant of Venice*. "Farewell, and if my fortune be not crossed/ I have a father, you a daughter, lost." Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. July 3, 5, 6, 11 & 13

* * *

Fringe Presents The Lesson: In **Eugene Ionesco**'s *The Lesson*, a dim-witted pupil and a scatterbrained professor confront each other in class; the lesson quickly devolves, with dire consequences for both. By turns comic and violent, Ionesco's absurdist dark comedy challenges our conventional assumptions about education, communication and knowledge itself.

The Fringe production stars actor-teacher **Alex Fallis** opposite his former student, **Julia Nish-Lapidus**, and **Leah Black**. (Julia's mother is **Janet Nish-Lapidus**, current principal of the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School.) Tarragon Theatre, Extra Space, July 5 to 12. $10. www.fringetoronto.com

* * *

Other Fringe Offerings: *Damages*, a drama involving two aging Holocaust survivors and an act of betrayal that kept them estranged for 30 years, features the artistry of playwright **Michael Posner**, director **Kayla Gordon** and actor **Harvey Atkin**. It's one of many upcoming worthy productions in the 2008 Toronto Fringe Festival.

Others include *Jew for a Day*, which tells the story of a gentile child who decides he wants to be Jewish; *Just Another School Shooting* by **Art Moore**, about an event during a trip to Israel; *Sitting in a Tree*, by **Ronit Rubinstein**, a funny, quirky look at love; *The Spy*, a comic show created and performed by **Jonno Katz** of Melbourne, Australia, a tale of intrigue and espionage set in London in 1975; and *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Abortion* about a Bible group's assassination attempt on an elusive "baby killer," written by **Erin Fleck** and directed by **Maya Rabinovitch**.

For more information, visit www.fringetoronto.com or phone 416-966-1062.

* * *

Names in the News: Writers **Dara Horn**, **David Bezmozgis** and **Joseph Kertesz** participated in a celebration of Isaac Bashevis Singer as part of Toronto's Luminato Festival at the Miles Nadal JCC.

Kertesz, founding dean of the Humber creative writing program and moderator of the readings and panel discussion, led off with a capsule summary of the life and literary merit of the great Yiddish writer. Bezmozgis, author of the award-winning collection *Natasha and Other Stories*, expanded upon this as he read a selection from Singer's novel *Enemies: A Love Story*, then a passage from his own current novel-in-progress.

But it was Horn, whose most recent novel is *The World to Come*, who stole the show with her intimate, apparently encyclopedic knowledge of Singer's oeuvre and the works of lesser-known Yiddishists such as **Lamed Shapiro**, whom she said was superior even to Singer.

The only Yiddish speaker on the panel, Horn said she had learned the language not in the traditional way from one's parents, but at university. Her boyfriend used to help with her Yiddish and – "Reader, I married him," she quipped, adding that they now speak in Yiddish to discuss things they don't want her parents to hear. The event drew a capacity crowd to the Al Green Theatre, Miles Nadal JCC.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **The Ron Davis Sextet** performs Jazz @ the J. $15, $24, $28. Thursday, June 19, 8 p.m. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre. 416-924-6211, ext. 0

• The outspoken documentary *Jerusalem Is Proud to Present* follows the events leading up to the World Pride Conference in Jerusalem in the summer of 2006 and Jerusalem's first gay pride parade. A discussion follows this free screening. Miles Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, Wednesday, June 24, 7:30 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org

• Veteran Toronto singer and pianist **Fern Lindzon** has been garnering praise lately for her recent CD, *Moments Like These*. Hear her at the TD Canada Trust Toronto Jazz Festival, Trane Studio, 946 Bathurst St., Sunday, June 22, 4 to 7 p.m. Cover $10. 416-913-8197. She's also playing at the Toronto City Roots Festival, Distillery District, June 29, 2 p.m. Free. www.torontocityroots.com/

THE MAKING OF 'THE NEW MAN': The 1930s are known for the political upheavals that led to World War II and the Holocaust. The exhibition, The 1930s: the making of "The New Man," at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa until Sept. 6, brings together more than 200 works that explore the seminal link between art and biology, reflecting the dissemination of the contrasting concepts of the "degenerate" artists and those of the "Superman" or the "The New Man" that were spreading through Nazi Germany, Benito Mussolini's Italy and Josef Stalin's Soviet Union. The exhibition offers a unique opportunity to see works by Salvador Dali, Pablo Picasso, Max Ernst, Jackson Pollock, Alex Colville and others. Pictured is *Blind Power*, a 1937 painting by German artist Rudolf Schlichter, whose works were later seized by the Nazis as degenerate art.

Corrections

In the *CJN* Party Planner, June 5, the story "More than flowers, you'll get flair to remember" (page B31) did not include the phone number for An Affair to Remember. It is 905-881-6686.

Also, in the article "Caterers offer original dishes" (page B39), the name of the owner of J. Catering was mispelled. It should have read Josh Okorofsky.

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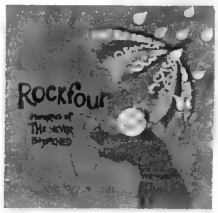
Israeli band Rockfour rocks in neo-psychedelic style

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Rockfour, *Memories of the Never Happened*

Rockfour's newest album, *Memories of the Never Happened*, is a throwback to the 1960s with a modern twist.



Their neo-psychedelic style is a mix of the Beatles and the Who, with a little bit of early Pink Floyd thrown in for good measure. The twang of guitars and thumping drum solos are joined with harmonicas, guitarrons (large Mexican acoustic guitars used in mariachi bands), mellotrons (electro-mechanical keyboards developed in the early 1960s) and the Wurlitzer, an electro-mechanical, stringless piano. It's hard to believe that Rockfour started as a rock band in Holon, Israel. After making a few Hebrew albums, the band switched to English.

As their music played in the background, I spent a surprising amount of time flipping through their lyrics pamphlet, which read like a book of poetry. The album is loaded with a mix of head-bopping rock numbers and soothing, chill-out tracks. Even though some songs, such as *Old Village House*, last nearly seven minutes, I couldn't help but tap along to the beat the whole way through.

www.rockfour.com

David Buchbinder, *Odessa/Havana*

True to Canada's multicultural spirit, award-winning trumpeter David Buchbinder worked with Juno Award-winning pianist Hilario Duran in downtown Toronto to fuse two seemingly different styles into one album. *Odessa/Havana* is a mix of Jewish and Cuban music, two styles that originally came together in the 1950s during the American mambo craze. Few artists can pull off nine-minute songs as well as Buchbinder can. While I was skeptical at first, I soon found that each song is like an adventure, with musical twists and turns. The album's pumping highs and soothing lows make it a good soundtrack for any dinner party. Just when the trumpet seemed to get too soft, a mix of drums and piano would explode from my stereo. The album's blend of trumpets, violins, pianos and drums gives it a unique sound that challenges the boundaries of both Cuban and Jewish music. No song represents this best than *Colaboracion*, the only track that was composed by both Buchbinder and Duran. The song blends jazzy piano riffs with violin solos to create a genre of its own.

www.davidbuchbinder.ca

Out To Lunch, *Excuse Me While I do the Boogaloo*

Jazz is king in Out to Lunch's debut album, *Excuse Me While I do the Boogaloo*. Led by David Levy, the New York City-based band brings improvisation and soul together with mellow tracks like *Maudlin's Eleven*. Levy, a Canadian born multi-instrumentalist, met his fellow band members in the New England Conservatory of Music. Their love of all things jazz shines in this album, which mixes funk, salsa and house music. The band's use of a full horn section and live electronica gives a unique kick to a classic genre. Soft voices murmur throughout various tracks as the bass clarinet, saxophone, drums, flute, trumpet and keyboard mesh together to create toe-tapping songs. Out to Lunch's songs are like snowflakes, each one is different and every once in a while, they give you goose bumps.

www.outtolunchmusic.com

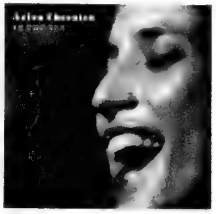
Fern Lindzon, *Moments Like These*

It's obvious that Fern Lindzon has fallen in love with jazz. Her first album, *Moments Like These*, is a love song for jazz musicians. Her style is contemporary jazz with a mix of klezmer music. The album is a bit like a lullaby that lasts a little too long. Still, Lindzon's voice, soft and pure, makes up for the length. *Let Yourself Go*, one of my favourite songs on the album, is a soothing blend of jazzy piano and smooth vocals. The simplicity of the lyrics is appealing, as are Lindzon's duets with guitarist Reg Schwager and bassist George Koller. Lindzon, who was introduced to jazz in her early 20s, has spent most of her life studying music, and it shows. Her musical instincts combined with years of preparation make her debut album worth listening to.

www.fernlindzon.com

Aviva Chernick, *In the Sea*

Aviva Chernick's spunky personality shines through in her album *In the Sea*. Quirky lyrics and jazzy piano riffs are combined to create upbeat tracks such as *Pirate Jenny* (by Kurt Weill). With a little help from pianist Tania Gill and bassist Andrew Downing, Chernick created a first album loaded with heartfelt melodies and smooth, gentle vocals. Chernick's music has been described as world cabaret with an eastern European tone. Her album features songs from all over the world, including Judeo-Spanish tunes, Negro spirituals and Yiddish folk songs. Chernick trained as a theatre director, contemporary dancer and actor before turning to music. She is the lead singer of Shakshuka, a world fusion ensemble. Her debut album holds nothing back, bringing emotion and depth to every track.



www.avivachernick.com

Barry Manilow's voice still resonates with emotion

By MARVIN GLASSMAN
Special to The CJN

When singer/songwriter Barry Manilow came to the Air Canada Centre in Toronto earlier this month as part of his first Canadian tour in 15 years, many of his fans considered it a miracle (to paraphrase a Manilow hit song) that the 1970s chart-topper has ventured outside Las Vegas to perform at all.

"When I agreed to perform in Las Vegas in 2000, I thought I said goodbye forever to touring," said Manilow in a telephone interview. "I loved the audiences, but hated the long journeys by plane and staying in hotels.

"But I missed seeing fans in Canada and elsewhere, so I agreed to do a series of one-night arena shows, which will be a little longer than the Vegas shows. Our show will have all the spectacular highlights of the Music and Passion shows that I do in Vegas," he said.

Those who heard him will be impressed that Manilow, who turned 65 on June 17, still has an impeccable voice that resonates with emotion. And audiences at his arena shows thus far are so familiar with Manilow's 25 top 40 songs from the 1970s, including *Copacabana*, *I Write The Songs* and *Weekend In New England*, that many sang along with him.

Manilow, who has sold more than 75 million records, loves sentiment and nostalgia. A highlight of the concerts will therefore be Manilow recalling his love for his late grandfather, Joseph Manilow, while singing *I Made It Through The Rain*.

"Grandpa coaxed me to sing *Happy Birthday* to my cousin in a Manhattan record-your-voice store when I was a toddler, and I wouldn't sing until years later.

"When I became a star in 1974, Grandpa gave me my first standing ovation and I was so nervous – but I knew that he was proud to see me at Carnegie Hall. How proud he was of seeing his grandson's star just blocks from the old record-your-voice studio," Manilow said.

Manilow's willingness to share his emotional vulnerability is what makes him so endearing. Despite being a multimillionaire, he has never forgotten his humble roots, knowing there would have been no career without Grandpa and others in his life.

His grandfather was the dominant male figure in the young Barry's life. Manilow was born in Brooklyn as Barry Alan Pincus, but his parents (a Jewish mother, Edna Manilow, and an Irish Catholic father, Harold Pincus) were divorced when Barry was two, and Pincus and his son never bonded from that point on.

Manilow was raised by his mother and grandparents Esther and Joseph Manilow, Jewish immigrants from Russia who lived in a small Williamsburg apartment. Barry changed his surname to Manilow shortly before his bar mitzvah out of love for his zaide.

He began his musical education on the accordion and refined it on the piano that he received as a bar mitzvah gift. "I hated the accordion. It seems that every Jewish kid had to play one. But when I played the piano, I knew music would be my passion and my ticket out of Brooklyn."

For a time, things were dire for Manilow financially and emotionally. He nearly went bankrupt twice and had married and divorced his high school sweetheart by the age of 25.

But he knew the craft of songwriting. For a time he coached singers wanting to audition on Broadway and was the musical director for Bette Midler. Manilow produced Midler's first album, as well as many more for several singers, before starring on his own in 1973 and developing a large fan base over the years.

In addition to his many hit songs, Manilow also wrote the music for two musicals, *Copacabana* and *Harmony*.

Harmony, a musical set in Nazi Germany in the 1930s, is based on the real-life story of The Comedian Harmonists, a group of three Jews (one a rabbi) and three non-Jews who were a popular singing group in Europe.

The story, a mixture of comedy and drama, recalls how the group fell apart when they returned to Nazi Germany in the late '30s and disbanded because of the Holocaust.

"The story is uplifting and may mean more to me because my relatives went through the Holocaust. [It has] songs that I wrote from Jewish cantorials and klezmer music."

Harmony has never had the same success as Manilow's other projects, despite receiving positive reviews when the play debuted in San Diego in 1997, and despite many attempts by Manilow to stage it on Broadway, the play has not been seen in over a decade.

"It's frustrating, because what is artistically good is not necessarily a commercial success. I am not producing *Harmony* anymore, but there are some producers that are willing to try again, and I hope *Harmony* can still come to Broadway. To this day, *Harmony* is the project in my career that I am most proud of."

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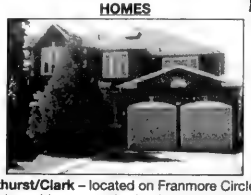

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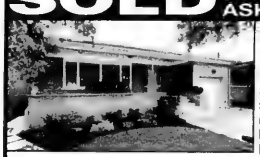

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Greater Toronto Area

Walk, fun fair to help raise funds for neuroblastoma research

For the fourth straight year, Sunday In The Park With Lilah will raise funds for neuroblastoma research at the Hospital for Sick Children.

The event, Sunday June 22, at Fieldstone Day School, 2999 Dufferin St., will feature a family walk and fun fair, not to mention live reptiles from Reptilia, scientists from Mad Science, Patty from kids'CBC, and live performances by Kayla and Jen Gould.

Bouncy castles, face painting, a silent auction, and lunch, as well as other surprises will round out the day.

Lilah is Lilah Petersiel, the four-year-old daughter of Eric Petersiel and Tami Moscoe. When she was born, she had only one kidney. An ultrasound and further tests determined that she had a severe childhood cancer called neuroblastoma.

Neuroblastoma is a cancer of the nervous system that causes tumours to grow quickly. If not discovered in the first few months of life, a child has only a 20 per cent chance of survival.

Shortly after birth, a golf ball-sized tumour was found on Lilah's adrenal gland. It was removed, but the cancer had spread to the liver.

Since then, life for Lilah has involved chemotherapy and multiple hospital and doctors' visits. It's now three years since her last round of chemotherapy, and Lilah is enjoying day care.

Registration is online at www.lilahsfund.com or at the event, at 9:30 a.m. Kickoff will be at 10 a.m. Previous picnics have raised more than $300,000, and organizers hope to raise another $100,000 this year.

For details, see the website, or call Moscoe or Petersiel at 416-651-1229.

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Arts & Travel

Exhibit focuses on Jewish children in contemporary Holland

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

AMSTERDAM — If you have ever tried to shlep a child through the galleries of a museum, you'll know it's an experience best enjoyed in the company of adults.

But the JHM (Jewish Historical Museum) Children's Museum in Amsterdam stands as a stark exception to that rule. The three-level museum, which rubs shoulders with the adult-oriented Jewish Historical Museum, is a delightful, bright space that invites children – Jewish and other – to learn how the rich tapestry of custom, tradition and law weaves its way through Jewish life.

selves in a bright red and blue kitchen, the colours clearly demarcating meat from milk.

"Would you like to braid some challah?" came a voice from the kitchen. Our timing was impeccable that day. I'd arrived with my twin girls minutes after a local school group had left the building, and the kitchen was still bustling with activity. In no time, my girls were seated at the table learning the fine art of challah braiding with freshly baked dough. Using edible ink and rice paper, they stamped the underside of the challah and left it to bake while we explored the room further.

This kitchen is a Jewish educator's dream. At every turn is information explaining the intricacies of kashruth. A shelf painted green contains easily recognizable pareve items and information about the separation of meat and milk accompanies the blue and red shelves, with their corresponding sinks.

The children's museum encourages interactivity. [Lauren Kramer photo]

Rather than having visitors stare through glass panels at untouchable objects, the children's museum encourages interactivity at every turn, using multimedia screens to depict the lives and studies of Jewish children in Holland.

Max the Matzo leads kids through the imaginary Hollander family's Jewish home through interactive multimedia presentations. The ground floor is a craft room where kids can paint and draw. There are pages printed with Jewish themes for colouring and art supplies neatly stacked, though with strict instructions that they may only be used under supervision. Since there was no supervision on this level, we ascended to the second floor and found our-

The library and study are on level two, with children's books about the holidays in Dutch, English and Hebrew, and an assortment of Judaic literature. In the multimedia presentation on this level, we see the Hollander children learning about loving thy neighbour as thyself. But it's the third-floor music room that really magnetizes the kids.

Press a button in the music room and it fills with the beautiful melodies of Jewish music. The shelves of a large cupboard hold items of significance to the Jewish holidays, and everything is available for touching and playing. There are masks on the Purim shelf, a shofar on the Rosh Hashanah shelf and a seder plate with removable fake food on the Passover shelf. This is a space where kids can refresh their memories of the Jewish festivals and enjoy an environment where nothing is off limits.

While the Jewish Historical Museum next door is full of the sad facts of the Holocaust and the devastating effect it had on Holland's Jewry, there is no sadness in the children's museum. These three levels are about learning through exploration and encouragement, and offer a warm, positive environment that is pure celebration of the joy of being Jewish.

"Until it was renovated three years ago… the former Jewish Historical Museum was not especially attractive to children and not a lot of children visited," Annelie Spaans, the Jewish Historical Museum's spokesperson, says.

Petra Katzenstein, the museum's director, says, "We found our inspiration in the fact that children in the Netherlands are often only informed about Jews in the context of the Second World War. They don't know any Jews, and sometimes believe that they are all dead. So we show the life and daily activities that everyone, whatever their background, can relate to.

"The goal of the children's museum, which opened in December 2006, is to give the visitor the opportunity to get to know Jewish culture and knowledge. That's the best and most positive way to deal with prejudices and fear of what is different."

So if you're passing through Amsterdam with kids in tow, be sure to make this museum – one out of some 51 in the city competing for tourists' attention – a priority.

For more information about the JHM Children's Museum, visit www.jhm.nl.

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35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
50 ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
62 SHARED ACCOMMODATION WANTED
65 ACCOMMODATION/SWAP/EXCHANGE
67 HOUSE SITTERS
70 UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION
75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
81 APARTMENT TO SUBLET
82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
84 ROOM WANTED FOR RENT
85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT/SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. AVAIL.
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM. WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE/RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT-OF-TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT-OF-COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH./SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND/LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND/LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS/RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
246 VOLUNTEERS
247 DAY CARE AVAILABLE
248 DAY CARE WANTED
250 DOMESTIC HELP AVAILABLE
255 DOMESTIC HELP WANTED
257 HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE
258 HEALTHCARE WANTED
259 SENIORS
260 BUSINESS PERSONALS
265 PEOPLE SEARCH
270 PERSONALS
273 INTRODUCTION SERVICES
275 PERSONAL COMPANIONS WANTED
279 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY
280 ANNOUNCEMENTS
290 LOST & FOUND
295 PETS
300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY
345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
379 CLOCKS/WATCHES
380 CLOTHING
382 COUNSELLING
385 COMPUTER
386 DANCING
387 DECORATING
390 DRIVING
392 DRY CLEANING/LAUNDRY
394 EDUCATION
395 ELECTRICAL
396 ELECTRONICS
400 ENTERTAINMENT
402 FINANCIAL
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425 JEWELLERY
427 JUDAICA
430 LEASING
431 LANDSCAPING/LAWNCARE
432 LAWYERS
433 LESSONS
434 LIMOUSINE/TAXI
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440 MISCELLANEOUS
442 MUSICAL SERVICES
443 MORTGAGES
445 MOVING
449 PEST CONTROL
450 PAINTING/WALLPAPERING
452 PARTY SERVICES
455 PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO
460 PLUMBING
465 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
470 RENOVATIONS
472 RETIREMENT HOMES
475 ROOFING
476 SATELITE & EQUIPMENT
480 SECURITY SYSTEMS
481 SEWING
485 SNOW REMOVAL
490 TABLE COVERING
493 TAILORING/ALTERATIONS
495 TILING
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Berman the broadcaster headlines Winnipeg Y dinner

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — About eight months ago, the "Y" sports dinner committee, now in its 36th year, decided to roll the dice and bring in a legitimate heavy-weight speaker from the United States to headline its 36th fundraising dinner.

They chose broadcaster Chris Berman, ESPN's shining star who was listed on *The Sporting News* Top 100 Most Powerful People in sports in 1995 and 2005.

With Berman as the draw, the double-Chai dinner proved formidable as a fundraiser, and it was rewarding for the patrons at the Winnipeg Convention Centre. Some 1,305 attended, breaking the record set in 2000, when 1,125 broke bread with legendary boxer Rubin "Hurricane" Carter.

Berman, who has been selected the National Sportscaster of the Year six times and seen his various shows capture nine Emmy Awards, came across as a prototypical good-guy neighbour whom you might casually rehash last night's all-important playoff game with.

I spoke with Berman at a mid-afternoon press conference and learned that he is indeed a "lantzman." He didn't hesitate to elaborate on his ethnicity.

"Yea, mom [Peggy] and dad [Jim], and I are Jewish," he said. "Me being a Christopher is interesting. It makes people scratch their heads, but yeah, my brother and I are [Jewish].

"I may not be the most devout growing up and I'm not Orthodox by any means. We celebrate the main holidays and we light the candles on Chanukah. Passover has always been, like, fun if that's the right word. I mean we're pretty Reform. The answer is, yes, we grew up that way."

Chris also added he is proud to be Jewish and makes a point of always trying to mention a Jewish holiday while on camera.

The affable celebrity and graduate of Brown University who majored in history is married to Kathy Alexinski and has a daughter Meredith, 21, and son Douglas, 20.

As for why there are an inordinate number of Jews in TV and radio, Berman paused for a moment and then offered, "That's a good question. I never gave it much thought. It's hard to characterize a whole group of people whether it's by religion or whatever boundaries, but many Jewish people perhaps are more educated and are very good communicators. To do this job you have to be."

Chris Berman, left, receives a souvenir Winnipeg Blue Bombers jersey from Bombers president and CEO Lyle Bauer.

Berman praised his Jewish ESPN colleague, Canadian Dan Shulman, as "being one of the nicest people in the business. He's respectful and very good at what he does. I've known him a long time and I'm happy for his success."

Anyone who watches the 53-year-old Berman's in-studio telecasts or football and baseball broadcasts, knows his calling card is a name-shtick game.

"It all started at university," he told the "Y" audience, "when we'd all joke around with a few beers and dream up names."

Former major league pitcher Bert Blyleven's nickname became "Bert be home Blyleven," and one-time Toronto Blue Jays second baseman Roberto Alomar, was referred to as "Roberto at the Alamo."

His signature comment on baseball telecasts when a batter belts the ball deep is, "Back! Back! Back!" In football, when a receiver latches on to a pass, Berman's trademark description is: "He could go all the way!

"I never did all that stuff to be noticed," he said. "I'm just kind of having fun with sports, despite what revisionist history might say. I have over 1,000 names, and they're not all brilliant by any stretch of the imagination."

As for the current problem of drugs in sports, Berman felt that football is more on top of the situation than the other leagues. "I laud the NFL for being ahead of the game and seemingly being serious about it. Though to say nobody tiptoes around it would be naïve, I guess."

Berman, an original ESPN guy who has been with the American sports network for 29 years, connected with the dinner crowd and at times drew loud applause when he showed his knowledge of the Canadian Football League and expressed empathy with Winnipeggers over the loss of the Jets to Phoenix. The loss to Canada of the Montreal Expos was also, in his opinion, a travesty that might have been averted had Montreal built a cozy 30,000-seat ballpark.

"We at one time had two CFL games a week on ESPN," he said. "I remember when quarterback Warren Moon was playing and starred with Edmonton. That's how I got into it. Any help I can give the game in Canada, I'll give it my best try."

The Cheshire, Conn., resident, who was an avid hockey fan himself of the now defunct Hartford Whalers, imparted: "You had the Jets and we had the Whalers. It was your NHL team that put Winnipeg on the map for me. You should never have lost your team."

The affable Berman also fielded questions from the guests, saying that one of his biggest thrills was covering the game when Orioles' shortstop Cal Ripken broke legendary Lou Gehrig's consecutive games-played streak of 2,130.

One patron asked his opinion of the Buffalo Bills playing a number of games in Toronto. He put thumbs down on the idea. "The NFL has no business spreading into Canada. It's OK to have one game a year, but not to expand into your country" he said to loud applause.

Who is one of Berman's favorite people in the world of sports? Coach Mike Holmgren, who in January decided to come back and coach the NFL's Seattle Seahawks for one more year.

The greatest QB ever in Berman's view was Joe Montana. His favourite interview was the Bears' late star Walter Payton. "I just knew I was around someone special," he said of the Chicago running back.

Berman summed it all up when he spoke from the heart and offered: "I'm just a guy having fun with sports. It isn't brain surgery. You talk with your audience, not at them. Sport is the last melting pot. We can be perfect strangers, yet we can all talk about it with each other, regardless of whom we are. That's how I'd like to be remembered."

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Inside Back

Understanding the media

By MICHAEL GORDON

"What do you think of this?" the patient asked.

"This" was another newspaper report on the risks of a standard medication that the patient was using.

It reminded me of the time the potential risks of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) came out in the media. A family member called me in a panic asking what she should do. She had been on HRT for more than four years, but she could not see her doctor for a week and was terrified because the media's report of an increased risk of heart attacks in users of the medication was interpreted by her and many thousand others as a medical emergency – a heart attack waiting to happen.

The Senior Side of Life

The actual results of the study revealed that the incidence of disease per 10,000 women on combined HRT in one year was this: seven more cases of coronary heart disease, 37 in those on combined HRT versus 30 in those on placebo, plus some other negative and some positive outcomes. For many people, the actual difference of 37 compared to 30 cases in 10,000 women per year may have seemed like a lot. But for any individual taking HRT, the increased risk from the medication was very low – much lower than many other risks that individuals routinely take when they drive, for example.

Still, the impact was monumental in terms of general usage, and HRT was discontinued by most physicians for most individuals. Some gradual return of use for short periods for defined symptoms is occurring, but not the large-scale use that was common before the news report.

The question is not whether that report was interpreted fairly by the media. It is whether the almost daily research outcomes for many drugs and foodstuffs should be taken at face value and lead to dramatic or urgent changes in usage. During the past few years, medications such as anti-depressants, major tranquilizers, anti-inflammatory drugs and over the counter cold medications have been reported as potentially dangerous.

Recently the issues of whether coffee and red wine are good for you or bad for you, or both good and bad depending on how much and what kind you consume, have been in the news. These kinds of reports can make the medical profession and the consumer dizzy and often lead to uncertainty and skepticism about medical science and medical recommendations.

What is sometimes forgotten is that medical knowledge is an ever-evolving entity. Throughout human history, medical knowledge developed, often slowly because of the nature of medical science, which has exploded over the last hundred years.

Medical research worldwide constantly addresses questions and challenges today's knowledge to either fortify or refute it. Eventually, what is initially learned gets translated into solid knowledge that ultimately ends up as medical wisdom, as physicians learn how to use the knowledge they have in individual clinical situations . That is part of the art of medicine that is required to balance its scientific base – which is always evolving and changing.

The key for the consumer is to take each media story with a bit of skepticism, and if you or a family member are computer-savvy, to explore in greater depth just what was actually reported and the basis of it, and look for commentaries from reliable sources on what was reported.

You should discuss these findings with your doctor before any drastic changes in treatment are made, because most of the reports, as in the example of HRT, are not urgent in long-term decision-making, but must be considered looking at all the risks and benefits, and then geared to your special situation as an individual.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press).

NUTTY CARROT SALAD

- 1 c roasted sunflower seeds**
- 8 medium carrots, grated
- ¼ c chives, snipped with scissors

Dressing:

- 1/3 c lemon juice
- 1 tbl. sugar
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- 4 tsp. olive oil
- 1 tsp Kosher salt, approx.

Whisk together lemon juice, salt, pepper and sugar in a bowl, then whisk in oil. Pour dressing over carrots & chives and mix well. Let the salad settle for a few minutes, then adjust seasoning. Sprinkle with roasted sunflower seeds.

**Spread seeds on baking sheet; roast in preheated 350° oven approx. 15-min., or until lightly roasted and crisp.

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Toward a creative future

Epi on Education

My last column ended with an idea that I have reiterated many times in speeches and articles: the notion that Jewish continuity is not a suitable goal for Jewish education. Of course, our entire tradition of education is about the transmission of knowledge and values from one generation to the next for the purpose of continuity, but we have learned that while continuity is necessary, it is not sufficient.

Seymour Epstein

We could not have overcome the obstacles to our continuing existence as a nation, religion and culture by mere continuation of our elegant traditions. In every generation, there were Jews who broke past paradigms in order to interpret our ways in accord with new conditions.

That revolutionary tradition began with Avraham, the first Jew, and it's no accident that both the biblical narrative and the midrashic overlay portray Avraham as completely breaking with his past, at times not even knowing what the future would bring. While his particular break was critically necessary for us to come into being as a spiritual innovation, his example repeated itself within our tradition again and again.

We found a mystical formula for maintaining the essence of Torah teaching over countless generations and in every location on the planet, while making Jewish life both relevant and liveable in every century and on every continent. And that was accomplished by a creativity that derived from pride and courage: pride in the past and courage to cope with the future.

While this creativity was nurtured and practised within Jewish life, it overflowed into western civilization. There is no doubt that the genius demonstrated by Jewish recipients of the Nobel Prize is mostly a product of our inability to accept a flawed world and our need for cosmic repair.

Our educational programs should be designed – through the teaching of Jewish literacy and the inculcation of deep identity – to engender pride and courage, not for a mere continuation of the past, but for a creative future.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Book offers Zionists a PR guide

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

You don't need to spend big shekels to make a difference for Israel.

That's the message being preached by Toronto-born lawyer and scribe Haskell Nussbaum in his latest book, *101+ Ways to Help Israel: A Guide To Doing Small Things That Can Make Big Differences.*

Released in May by Gavel Press, the 161-page book reads like a handy guidebook that even the most casual supporters of Israel will find useful.

With lots of nifty advice on how to promote, fundraise, talk up and defend the Holy Land, Nussbaum offers a range of suggestions that go from the most minute activity, like putting a pro-Israel bumper sticker on your car, to more grandiose gestures such as organizing an Israel week in your community.

"If everyone who said they supported Israel actually did, Israel's GDP would go up exponentially," Nussbaum told *The CJN* in an interview last month. "Everybody always talks about 'buying Israel,' but I don't know how many people actually set aside a budget for it, whether it's Israeli chocolate, wine or whatever."

In the introduction to his book, Nussbaum writes: "This is a guide to those of us who don't [currently] live in Israel but who nevertheless care about Israel's long-term survival and want to contribute."

Nussbaum, 39, made aliyah in 1991. He served in the Israel Defence Forces in the Golani Brigades, and said he thought up the book in 2006 while he was living in New York, and watching Israel fight the Second Lebanon War through the media lens.

"I felt very powerless," he said. "I decided to think of ways where people can help. Little things aside from politics, sending cheques or one more letter to the editor."

Although he initially conceived his project as a small booklet, Nussbaum said he spent the next year and a half turning it into a full-blown book.

"I've kept the price really low in order to encourage people to buy it," he said, "because to me it seems that Israel is becoming less relevant to people's lives. I feel like people are less aware of what's going on in Israel and are therefore less connected. Which is why I put so much emphasis in the book on things you can do in your daily life."

In researching for the book, Nussbaum said many people told him they just don't have time to seek out causes for Israel. It's a sentiment he's out to explode.

"I think most people in North America are travelling less to Israel. It's more expensive, news is bad and it creates a disassociation," Nussbaum lamented.

The book therefore lays out some simple concepts and ideas that can be applied in our daily routine without much bother.

And the appendix is an A-to-Z treasure-trove of website addresses on all topics Israel.

Nussbaum said in his youth he was a strong advocate for people making aliyah to help ensure Israel's vitality and future. But he's since softened his stance.

"The older I get, the more I realize that Israel needs its allies around the world," he said, referring mainly to the Diaspora communities who have the power to maintain a positive Israel image in the public eye in their home countries.

And with this book, Nussbaum has given those communities an ample supply of ideas to help the cause.

For more information, visit www.WaysToHelpIsrael.com

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This Week

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National

Grafstein's suicide bombing bill gets through Senate. *Page 3*

Jew.ru connects young Russian Jews. *Page 7*

Heebonics

Vivian Nicole Tesler set to release debut pop CD. *Page 33*

Arts & Travel

The Fringe isn't just for young people. *Page 34*

A most unusual Chabad rabbi. *Page 37*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions.....10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 20
Just Between Us 23
Family Moments 27
What's New 28
Obituaries and Notices.....30
Israel & the Jewish World 31
Heebonics.....33
Arts & Travel.....34
Books & Authors.....37
Classified 38
Sports.....42

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'A nuclear Iran is intolerable,' Sarkozy tells Knesset

By SARA MILLER
and ARIEL ZILBER
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

JERUSALEM — French President Nicolas Sarkozy, speaking at a special session of the Knesset in his honour, vowed Monday that France would always defend Israel in the face of any existential threat – a direct reference to Iran and its nuclear program.

"A nuclear Iran is intolerable," Sarkozy said. "Anyone trying to destroy Israel will find France blocking the way."

Then, to applause from the assembled politicians, judicial leaders and dignitaries, Sarkozy declared: "Israel must know it is not alone in the battle against Iran's nuclear ambitions."

Turning to the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Sarkozy said the recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of both Israel and a Palestinian state is a condition for peace. The Palestinians, he said, "have the right to a viable state of their own." He added that such a state would "ensure Israel's security."

He also called on Israel to end its settlement activity in east Jerusalem and the West Bank, and said there would be "no peace without a solution to the problem of the Palestinian refugees," a key sticking point in negotiations between the two sides. The French leader also urged Israel to "encourage legislation that would entice settlers to leave the West Bank."

He added, however, that "there will be no peace if the Palestinians do not fight terrorism. Each side has to make an effort. Peace is not possible if the Palestinians cannot move about freely."

Sarkozy and his wife, Carla Bruni, were given a red carpet reception as they arrived at the Knesset, and as he stood to speak, the French leader received a standing ovation from lawmakers.

In his address to the plenum of lawmakers in Jerusalem, the first by a French president since François Mitterrand's in 1982, Sarkozy said his nation's connection to the Jewish people had enriched French culture.

Before Sarkozy's speech, Knesset Speaker Dalia Itzik praised him for his "determination" and "courageous reforms," and Opposition Leader Benjamin Netanyahu, called him a "true friend of Israel."

Continued on page 32

French President Nikolas Sarkozy and his wife, Carla Bruni, were met and welcomed by Speaker Dalia Itzik, right, when they arrived Monday morning at the Knesset in Jerusalem. *[Israel Sun photo]*

Hezbollah threatens community: report

By PAUL LUNGEN
& ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporters

Canada's Jewish communities awoke to shocking headlines in the wake of an ABC News report last week that suggested Hezbollah sleeper cells were set to strike Israeli and Jewish targets in Ottawa and Toronto.

Citing British, U.S. and Canadian intelligence reports, ABC News on June 19 reported Hezbollah operatives had conducted surveillance on the Israeli Embassy in Ottawa and synagogues in Toronto.

In Ottawa, Melisa Leclerc, a spokesperson for Minister of Public Safety Stockwell Day, told *The CJN* by e-mail that the ministry acknowledged "Canada is not immune from the threat of terrorism.

"As you can appreciate, the minister cannot comment on operations that Canada's security agencies may or may not be undertaking.

"The government of Canada remains vigilant in our efforts to prevent a terrorist act both at home and abroad," she wrote. "We continue to work very closely with our international partners, including the United States, sharing information and co-operating in the global fight against terrorism.

"Hezbollah is a listed [terrorist] entity. It is a crime to knowingly participate in certain activities of this organization."

Hezbollah, it is believed, acting on Iranian orders, attacked the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992 and the city's Jewish community centre in 1994, killing 29 in the first attack and 85 in the second.

Continued on page 6

Korach
Candlelighting: 8:45
Havdalah: 9:51
Greater Toronto Area

Schalit family challenges ceasefire in court — see page 31

The News in Brief

CANADA

NDP Revolt Afoot?

OTTAWA — A revolt appears to be brewing in the New Democratic Party (NDP) over its position on the upcoming followup to the 2001 UN conference against racism, the *National Post* reported. Some NDP MPs are asking the party to reconsider its call for Canada to attend the controversial gathering. The NDP at first supported the government's decision to boycott the conference, but a few weeks ago, the party reversed itself, saying UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon had given assurances the meeting would not degenerate into an anti-Israel spectacle. The first conference was marked by anti-Israel and anti-Semitic agitation. Canadian Jewish Congress has criticized the NDP for its reversal.

Ghetto Ranks Fourth

MONTREAL — Montreal's McGill Ghetto is the only Canadian locale to be listed among the top 10 Jewish neighbourhoods in North America. It ranked fourth on a list compiled by *Jewish Living*, a New York-based magazine that's partly funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The magazine said size and amenities weren't its only criteria. "We have identified neighbourhoods across the continent that are growing, rebuilding, reinventing themselves, unifying their disparate parts and exploring our traditions in unconventional ways," it said. The listed areas are Aventura, Fla.; Boulder, Colo.; Lower Merion, Pa.; the McGill Ghetto; North Dallas, Texas; North/West Berkeley, Calif.; Pico-Robertson in Los Angeles; SoHo/TriBeCa in New York City; University City in St. Louis; and West Seattle, Wash.

WORLD

Ex-Winnipegger Weds

LOS ANGELES — A Winnipeg-born woman is part of a lesbian Jewish couple who were among the first to legally marry in California. Diane Olson and Robin Tyler, born Arlene Chernick in Winnipeg, were one of the original plaintiffs to sue the state to legalize same-sex marriage. They wed June 16 under a chupah on the steps of the Beverly Hills Courthouse, the *Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles* reported. The couple, who have been together 14 years, applied annually for a marriage license for eight years. A Reform rabbi officiated. The California Supreme Court legalized gay marriage this month.

Beef Boycott Starts

NEW YORK — An Orthodox social justice group has launched a boycott of the kosher slaughterhouse Agriprocessors. Uri L'tzedek, started by students at the liberal Orthodox rabbinical seminary Yeshivat Chovevei Torah in New York, said it would stop patronizing the Iowa company on June 15 if it didn't adopt ethical labour standards. Some 400 workers were arrested in a raid on the plant last month. Organizers say 1,300 people signed the petition asking the firm to comply with Jewish and U.S. rules on workers' rights.

Pastor Apologizes

SAN ANTONIO — Pastor John Hagee expressed regret for suggesting the Holocaust was God's way of moving Jews to Israel. In a letter to the head of the Anti-Defamation League, Hagee promised to be sensitive and respectful in how he expresses his faith, and in particular to acknowledge human limitations in understanding God's motives. "I regret if my Jewish friends felt any pain as a result [of the comments]," Hagee wrote. "I have always believed that the Holocaust was a tragedy unique in its evil and horror." Hagee, a leading pro-Israel U.S. evangelical leader, has come under fire for offensive comments. Republican presidential nominee John McCain has repudiated Hagee for his Shoah comments.

Germany Seeks Demanjuk's Extradition

CLEVELAND — Germany is seeking the extradition of Nazi war criminal John Demjanjuk to stand trial.

Germany wants to prosecute Demjanjuk, 88, of suburban Cleveland, on charges he took part in killing Jewish prisoners at the Sobibor death camp. German authorities said he could be extradited by the end of 2008. Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear his appeal of a 2005 deportation order, paving the way for his extradition.

Demjanjuk, a retired autoworker, is number 2 on the Simon Wiesenthal Center's list of most-wanted Nazi war criminals. The Israeli Supreme Court revoked his death sentence in 1988 when questions were raised about his identity as the notorious "Ivan the Terrible."

The news that Demjanjuk might face deportation came the same week as the U.S. Board of Immigration Appeals upheld a deportation order for another alleged war criminal, Josias Kumpf of Wisconsin, whose citizenship was revoked in 2003. U.S. authorities want to deport him to Germany, Austria or Serbia.

Meanwhile, an alleged Nazi war criminal living in Austria was spotted recently among fans of a soccer game in the city of Klagenfurt. Milivoj Asner, 95, a Croatia native, had avoided standing trial because of a diagnosis of dementia. He is alleged to have co-ordinated the deportation of Jews and Gypsies to a fascist camp in occupied Croatia. Asner has told reporters that he would welcome the chance to clear his name in court. Asner is number 4 on the Wiesenthal Center's most-wanted list.

Rabbi Still In Brazil

SAU PAULO — An Israeli rabbi who fled to Brazil amid child-abuse allegations is fighting extradition to Israel. *Ha'aretz* quoted Rabbi Elior Chen's Israeli lawyer last week as saying he denies charges that he told followers to abuse their children. He had just visited the rabbi in Brazil. Rabbi Chen, 29, was originally said to have fled to Canada.

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Suicide bombing bill passes Senate

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A private member's bill that would make suicide bombing an explicit Criminal Code offence has passed the Senate and is making its way to the House of Commons.

The Senate last week unanimously approved Bill S-210, sponsored by Senator Jerry Grafstein, four years after it was first introduced. Grafstein said he hopes all parties in the House will line up behind the bill and grant it quick passage.

He has already received the support of his own Liberal party, and the governing Conservatives have also indicated they back the bill. Grafstein said he will lobby colleagues from the New Democratic Party and the Bloc Québécois for their support.

Sen. Jerry Grafstein

The one-paragraph bill, which was held up after the Justice Department voiced concerns that it was redundant and would complicate prosecutions, says simply, "suicide bombing comes within… the definition [of] terrorist activity."

Grafstein said he hopes the NDP will line up behind the bill, given that their former leader, Ed Broadbent, is part of list of prominent Canadians who endorse it. The group Canadians Against Suicide Bombing (CANASB) has rallied the support of dozens of well-known figures for the bill. Among them are former prime ministers Jean Chrétien, Kim Campbell and John Turner, one-time cabinet ministers Marc Lalonde and Flora MacDonald, Liberal MP Bob Rae and former Ontario premier David Peterson, plus academics, religious leaders and other well-known Canadians.

"Rarely in the history of Parliament has such a distinguished list of Canadians supported a private member's bill," Grafstein said.

Grafstein said the bill was thoroughly studied at committee stage in the Senate and could be passed by the House in only a couple of days. Passage by a respected country like Canada will have international repercussions. It could lead to changes to international treaties and conventions to include suicide bombing as a criminal act, he continued.

At the local level, it would criminalize those who aid and abet in suicide bombings, reaching even websites "that demonstrate how to make suicide bombs."

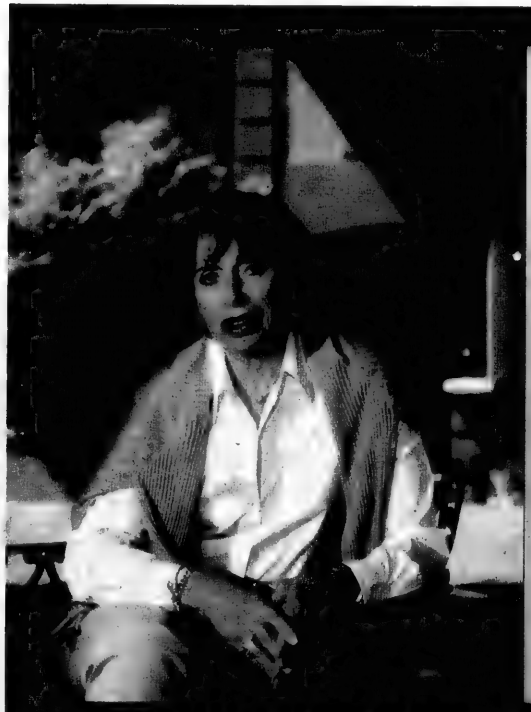
Jason Kenney, secretary of state for Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity, said that "the government is supporting the bill," but he would not say whether that would translate into quick passage. All members of the cabinet will back the bill, but backbenchers will be given a free vote, he said.

"I think the bill is largely symbolic," he said. "Bombings of any kind are illegal domestically and in international law. We think there is a useful symbolic point in the bill and we endorse it."

Kenney said while the Conservative government has taken steps to address terrorism – by cutting aid to Hamas, listing Hezbollah as a terrorist organization and adding the Tamil Tigers to the list of banned groups – previous Liberal governments "failed" to do so.

Reuben Bromstein, a retired judge who serves as CANASB president, said passage of the bill in the House would make Canada the first country to explicitly criminalize suicide bombing. Canada could serve as a model for other states considering enacting domestic law to address the issue, and it would have an educative effect, demonstrating Canadian "society's disapproval of the act in question."

"It would be a signal that we're the first country to do it. It's a Canadian invention that Grafstein has put in," he said.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Political unreality in Israel

From the editor's desk

Israel is a land of many splendours and unceasing marvels. First-time tourists or veteran visitors will never lack for meaningful ways to spend their time or breathtaking sights to inspire their souls.

But it is also a land of intense emotion and constant political quarrels.

The emotion and the quarrelling were much in evidence last week in newspapers, radio talk shows, TV broadcasts, coffee houses, taxicabs and probably many living rooms, as a result of the ceasefire that took effect Thursday morning between Israel and Hamas.

As of this writing, the ceasefire has held for four days.

A letter written by Gilad Schalit to his family was just released to a pitying Israeli public.

The young soldier was kidnapped two years ago by pitiless Hamas terrorists. His release was not part of the arrangement negotiated by the Egyptian mediators on behalf of Israel. It is to be negotiated at a later stage of the process. His parents have now initiated legal proceedings against the government for its failure to have included release terms for their son as part of the initial phase of the arrangement with Hamas.

The desperation and incongruity of the family's suing the government were but a small part, however, of the political storm that broke over the country.

The clouds burst because of the ceasefire itself. Or so it seemed to this observer, who, after an admittedly non-scientific, random sampling of opinion "on the street" and in various taxicabs, could find no one who supported the decision to enter into the ceasefire.

To be sure, the people of Israel want the communities around Gaza to live in peace and quiet. They want Gilad Schalit to be home with his parents. But they recoiled at the idea of cutting a deal with Hamas.

The disclaimer by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that his government had not negotiated with Hamas, but rather with Egypt, was utterly unconvincing to mainstreet Israel. The party at the other end of the mutual commitments was Hamas, still openly striving for Israel's destruction, still receiving funds and training from Iran, still cruelly manipulating the nation's emotions surrounding abducted Schalit.

The criticisms openly and quite vociferously levelled against the ceasefire were the following:

- The government has stripped itself of any credibility in purporting never to deal with Hamas and other terrorist groups.
- The government has effectively enabled the Palestinian Authority to enter discussions with Hamas.
- The government has elevated Hamas' stature in the eyes of the Arab world.
- The government has demonstrated Israel's weakness to the Arab world. With all its military might, Israel has been incapable – or unwilling, some people said – to repatriate Gilad Schalit, let alone bring an end to the rocketfire on Sderot, Ashkelon and environs.

The most common complaint about the ceasefire, however, was that the government did not have the moral authority to negotiate it. More specifically, people said, Olmert no longer has that moral authority. He may technically still wield the legal authority of his office, but any claim to the moral authority of the position has been spent.

The large majority of the public has no confidence in Olmert. The allegations against him that he received cash-stuffed envelopes from Morris Talansky were the final straw that toppled the heap of his credibility.

The Talansky accusations were so shocking that one wiseacre, though not an Olmert supporter, suggested that the prime minister had been targeted by a group of right-wing religious leaders in the United States who wished to bring about his demise and thus prevent any territorial concessions to the Palestinians. According to his theory, Talansky was their foil.

But even this conspiratorial exculpation of Olmert did not translate into sympathy for the prime minister.

Olmert has not been found guilty in respect of any of the five investigations undertaken against him. But the authority of his office is no longer able to save his reputation, which to most Israelis, is one of self-absorption and corruption.

Olmert has set a busy course for himself recently. Last month, he launched Turkish-mediated peace talks with Syria. He has expressed an interest in holding direct negotiations with Syria, but Syrian President Bashar Assad refuses. Rumours persist that Olmert might meet with Assad next month in France. Last week he expressed his willingness to open diplomatic channels with Lebanon as well.

He was slated to visit Egypt this week to talk with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak primarily, although not exclusively, about Gilad Schalit.

Some pundits have suggested that Olmert's multi-fronted overtures are a sort of smokescreen for earnest preparations being made at the moment by the Israel Defence Forces for a strike against Iran should international diplomatic efforts fail to stop Tehran's development of nuclear weapons capability. Not too many Israelis "on the street," however, believe this.

Olmert's schedule seems only to irritate most Israelis more. They complain of a sense of unreality in the country's politics. There is a profound disconnect between the government's policies and the will of the majority of the people, that we were told time and again, the prime minister ignores. If he continues to do so, will it be at his or the country's peril?

–MBD

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In June 1982, Israel sent troops across the Lebanese border to root out PLO terrorists and push them at least 40 kilometres north, out of rocket range of northern Israel. The effort was dubbed Operation Peace for Galilee. The war generated misgivings among many Israelis and spawned the Peace Now movement. Pictured are Israel's then-prime minister Menachem Begin, left, embracing Maj. Sa'ad Haddad of the South (Free) Lebanese Army, which supported Israel's incursion into Lebanon, and Ariel Sharon, right, Israel's minister of defence. Only 18 years later, in 2000, on the orders of then-prime minister Ehud Barak, did the last Israeli soldier leave Lebanon.

[IPPA photo]

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Canadian Jewish Congress downplayed the report

Continued from page 1

Hundreds more were wounded in both bombings. Hezbollah has been placed on a list of banned terrorist organizations by the government of Canada, which sided with Israel in its 2006 war with the Lebanon-based terror group.

In Ottawa, Israeli embassy spokesperson Orit Kremer said, "We're not commenting on what is a sensitive security matter."

Canadian Jewish Congress, however, quickly downplayed the report.

Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, told *The CJN* he had assured communal leadership there was nothing to panic about.

"We have been in touch with the highest security authorities in Canada, including local and regional police chiefs, anti-terrorism units, CSIS, RCMP, all of whom assured us that there's no truth to the report itself," he said.

Farber insisted the report was merely a rehash of old news by ABC, an American television network, relating to chatter that was picked up in mid-February after Imad Mugniyah – a notorious senior Hezbollah official – was assassinated in Damascus. At the time, Hezbollah immediately blamed Mossad, though Israel denied any responsibility for the killing.

At Mugniyah's funeral, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah appeared via video link and during his eulogy declared, "Zionists, if you want an open war, let it be an open war anywhere."

When asked specifically if Toronto's Jewish community needs to worry about going to shul, Farber stated "absolutely not."

John Thompson, president of the Mackenzie Institute, a non-profit organization that studies political instability and terrorism, said Hezbollah poses "a real threat."

"Hezbollah is on Iran's leash, and Iran has been cruising for trouble for a few years. When Iran is locked within a major conflict with Israel and the United States, they activate [sleeper] cells."

"The threat to the Jewish community is coming. The threat to the Jewish community is real."

Asked why Canadian Jews might be on terrorists' hit list, Thompson said that the way to show "leadership in the Middle East is by demonstrating how dangerous you are to the world's Jewish community." He advised Canadian Jews to continue on their normal routines, but to "pay more attention to security and take security seriously."

David Harris, president of Democracy House, a Canadian think-tank, said security experts "know Canada is heavily infiltrated by Hezbollah and fellow travellers, and their targets will include Canadians in general and Jews in particular."

Harris said he had no specific information about the latest threat reports. "All I can say is to express my surprise and dismay that any of this should be considered a surprising kind of warning."

Even if the specific reports proves to be "inaccurate, it would be an inaccurate report with a heavy factual basis," he said.

"The Jewish and Canadian communities should be on the alert, because the enemy is among us."

"The very fact you have a presence of people dedicated to Hezbollah tells us you have people who, by and large, could be activated at any moment. Our peace and security are enjoyed with the sufferance of Hezbollah."

Harris said Islamic extremists are preoccupied with Jews, and "they focus on demonizing the Jews. It's no mistake it's been describe as a Nazi-like organization."

A third terrorism expert took a dissenting view. Speaking on CTV, Alan Bell, president of the security firm Globe Risk Holdings, said Hezbollah has no reason to attack in Canada. Hezbollah's presence in Canada is limited to fundraising, recruitment, document forgery and procuring equipment. An attack within Canada would likely alienate the group's supporters, he said.

Bernie Farber

He questioned the origin of the story. "If CSIS [Canada's security agency] picked up these guys coming from the Middle East and they're under surveillance, why would a reporter in the United States be given that information?" he asked.

Surveillance of Hezbollah suspects would continue secretly, "and this individual or these individuals would be being monitored at this particular moment."

Bell said Hezbollah would be unlikely to attack in the United States, as that would provide justification for an American attack on Iran.

Analyzing the ABC report, Farber said, "There was certainly chatter, which was normal, after [the Mugniyah assassination]. Congress was aware of this, because [Canada's] security people make us aware of these things. We were also aware of the fact that the proper security forces were investigating the chatter and came back to us to assure us that it was only chatter. They said there was nothing that led them to believe that there was any specific threat against the Jewish community.

"What ABC seems to have done is to have picked up an old story and regurgitated it again, without really following through properly.

"All that said, back in February we raised a community alert in relation to the assassination of Mugniyah. Yesterday, to be prudent, we sent out a second alert to Jewish communal institutions. This second alert was more because when things like this come into the newspapers... you never know what that can trigger. There are crazies out there. It's better for us to be safe than sorry," Farber said.

"This is not an alarmist alert. It's just based on the fact that we know this information has been proven wrong. Nonetheless, given the fact that it's out in the public domain, people should be aware of it."

B'nai Brith Canada, meanwhile, issued a statement acknowledging that while "officials agree that there is no specific threat at present, [B'nai Brith] has warned it is crucial that continued vigilance be maintained given the established presence of Hezbollah in our midst."

B'nai Brith reminded institutions in the Jewish community that it is essential that security protocols be reviewed and that vigilance be maintained as a top priority. Equally imperative is the need to inform members of the Jewish community of the ongoing need to be "aware and prepared."

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Air Canada puts Tel Aviv *back* on the map

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Air Canada has asked one of its suppliers to correct "an inadvertent" omission that excluded Tel Aviv on its inflight seat-back videos.

Air Canada made the request after some of its customers complained that the Israeli destination was missing from the moving-map videos.

Peter Fitzpatrick, a spokesperson for the airline, said "we have talked to the supplier and they are in the process of redoing the map."

The map can be accessed by passengers on a television monitor located in the back of the seat in front of them. Television programs, movies and sporting events can also be viewed on the small screens.

Fitzpatrick said the supplier had been asked to match all the destinations on the video map with those in the airline's *enRoute* magazine, which includes Tel Aviv. The supplier must now re-do all the software in the fleet, he said.

The issue created a stir in France, where the Union des Patrons et des Professionels Juifs de France, a Jewish organization, reproduced the map. While it showed Israel's borders, no Israeli cities are highlighted, though Gaza, Amman and even Ajlun, Jordan, are present.

Fitzpatrick said the airline "went to our supplier as soon as it was brought to our attention."

Air Canada flies daily from Toronto's Pearson Airport to Israel's Ben-Gurion International Airport during the peak summer months.

Young Russian Jews connect through 'I'm a Jew.ru'

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

As a Russian Jew, Suzy Uretzki never felt as if she fit into Toronto's Jewish community.

Then she went to a Shabbaton in Chicago after receiving an e-mail about the event, specifically for Russian Jews, from Hillel.

Impressed by Chicago's well organized Russian Jewish community, Uretzki,19, and her 24-year-old sister, Inna, realized how fragmented Toronto's Russian Jewish population is. Along with Sarit Shor, 24, who they met in Chicago, they decided to start the group "I'm a Jew.ru," so younger members of the community could connect.

Hillel-funded, I'm a Jew.ru is aimed at Russian Jews in Toronto aged 18 to 26. Created a few months ago as a Facebook group, it currently has more than 200 members.

According to Romm Gurel and Lea Soibelman of Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS), many members of the Russian Jewish community have not integrated with the Jewish community in Canada. "They don't come to events, they don't feel like they belong," Gurel said.

The younger Uretzki agrees.

"It's discouraging," she said. "[We] don't have a place where [we] can feel comfortable."

While organizations such as Hillel do bring Jews together, both Uretzkis never felt like they fit into these groups.

"I went to university for four years, and I never went to Hillel. [It] wasn't a safe space," the older Uretzki said.

Rotem Stark, a 25-year-old Israeli, is the group's Hillel contact and is helping them organize. She is the founder of Fanan, a Hillel-funded Israeli Jewish group.

"Just because we're all Jewish doesn't mean we have the same culture or background. Jews in Canada have different interests," Stark said.

Olga Safro, a 24-year-old Ryerson University graduate, emigrated from Kazakhstan in 2001.

A member of the I'm a Jew.ru Facebook page, she said Russian organizations in Toronto are "based solely on language. Nobody cares about cultural background. I think that most Jews in Canada are from the same background… It's hard to connect."

Jew.ru's first event, held on June 22, was a meet-and-greet at the Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP). In future, the group may add more of a religious aspect to events, but this could get complicated.

"Judaism [in Canada] is seen as a religion, in Russia it's a culture," Shor said.

Groups for Russian Jews in Toronto are "very religious oriented. If you don't ally with religious beliefs, you're left to find your own [group]," Shor added. "We want to expose them [people] to Judaism, but we're not pursuing them."

From left are Sarit Shor, 24, Suzy Uretzki, 19, and her sister, Inna, 24, who started the group "I'm a Jew.ru" to help the Russian Jewish population in Toronto connect.
[Rita Poliakov photo]

The Uretzki sisters and Shor are considering modelling an event after the Shabbaton they attended in Chicago.

"We had a Shabbat dinner with a rabbi. It wasn't too religious. [We were] getting exposed to topics in a completely different way. It was social and fun. Basic religious aspects were there to expose [guests] very slowly," Shor said.

Jew.ru's mandate is to recognize both the Russian and Jewish aspects of their members' identities.

"The two aren't exclusive, you can't separate being Russian and Jewish," Suzy Uretzki said. "I'm Russian Jewish, it's who I am."

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Amzallag, Caroline	מזל	Chait, Jodi	מיכל	Goldfarb, Noam	נועם	Levy, Taryn	תמר	Quaglieri, Jake	גרשון	Susman, Robyn	רחל
Ander, Shira	שירה	Citron, Zev	זאב	Goldmacher, Jaclyn	שרית	Lewis, Rebecca	רבקה	Ravid, Amir	אפיר	Swartz, Aaron	אהרון
Apelowicz, Adam	שמעון	Cohen, Daniel	דניאל	Gonik, Melissa	מירב	Lightstone, Max	מרדכי	Reshef, Sharon	שרון	Swartz, Aziza	יעל
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Azran, Zoee	זואי	Craig, Jacqueline	פרים	Goren, Anita	אניטה	Litman, Cody	טל	Rothschild, Daniel	דניאל	Tetelbaun, Guido	גידו
Babins, Jonah	יונה	Danziger, Yuli	יולי	Gortler, Hilary	אילנה	Little, Aidan	חיים	Salomon, Aaron	אהרון	Troychansky, Rebekka	רבקה
Badani, Maor	מאור	Dishy, Aaron	אהרון	Gottesman, Benjamin	בנימין	Lorie, Elizabeth	אלישבע	Saskin, Aliza	עליזה	Turk, Sarah	שרה
Bahar, Russell	רזיאל	Dzaldov, Jennifer	ברכה	Greenberg, Caylee	ברכה	Maged, Alexander	שמעון	Saskin, Michael	מכאל	Vekselshtein, Veronica	דבורה
Barak, Ben	בן	Eisen, Jonah	יונה	Gruber, Aidan	עדן	Maksimov, Dorin	דורין	Saskin, Oren	אורן	Volcovich, Gabriel	גבריאל
Barzilay, Shir	שיר	Elmalech, Coby	קובי	Guttmann, Elie	אליהו	Malka, Natalie	רחל	Savage, Jonathan	יונתן	Welkovics, Daniel	דניאל
Belilli, Eden	עדן	Elmaleh, Danielle	רחל	Halpert, Josette	צפורה	Margel, Melanie	מלכה	Schachter, Rachel	ריזה	Yermus, Aleeza	עליזה
Benaim, Amanda	מלכה	Elmalem, Jordan	יצחק	Hananaev, Juliet	גליה	Markizano, Leeran	לירן	Seed, Joshua	יהושע	Zagury, Omri	עמרי
Benatar, Jordana	חיה	Erdos-Rush, Jesse	יוסף	Hanukaev, Aviel	אביאל	Melamdowitz, Daniel	דניאל	Segal, Gabrielle	בתיה	Zaretsky, Sandra	שרה
Bener, Or	אור	Factor, Carly	חנה	Hendler, Kevin	רענן	Miller, Jordanna	ירדנה	Sender, Nicole	חנה	Zeldin, Adeena	עדינה
Benezrah, Rachel	רחל	Feldman, Jennifer	יעל	Herblum, Jordana	ירדנה	Miller, Lyle	יהודה	Shamir, Jackie	שרון	Zimmerman, Michael	מנחם
Benlezrah, Jacob	יעקב	Filatov, Pavel	פנחס	Heymann, Gregory	גידעון	Mishaev, Yonatan	יונתן	Shapiro, Joshua	יהושע	Zive, Michelle	מיכל
Benmordecai, Danielle	פניה	Finkelstein, Mara	פרים חוה	Hollend, Miriam	פרים	Moses, Odelia	אודליה	Sheinberg, Adi	עדי	Zwirek, Ethan	איתן
Bensadoun, Emerald	ספיר	Fischer, Gabriella	לאה	Igra, Max	יצחק	Mucher, Yasmine	יסמין	Shloush, Ariel	ארי		
Berish, Richard	בנימין	Freedman-Kaldman, Leslie	אלימה	Jacobs, Kevin	ארי	Muller, Ben	בנימין	Shtulberg, Erica	אריקה		
Berns, Jamie	חנה חוה	Friedman, Jared	בנימין	Kamen, Corey	ראובן	Muskat-Brown, Dalia	דליה	Siegel, Derek	דב		
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Sarkozy's friendship

It has been more than 25 years since the president of France addressed the Knesset of Israel. Francois Mitterrand did so in 1982. Current French President Nicolas Sarkozy did so this week, on Monday. It is no wonder, therefore, that the government of Israel treated the visit by the French president and his wife, Carla Bruni, as a moment of high protocol and circumstance. Indeed, the French president himself regarded the occasion as one laden with significant bilateral weight. The entourage that travelled with Sarkozy to Israel included seven cabinet ministers, 80 business people, 40 senior members of the French Jewish community and some 100 reporters.

Ever since former French president Charles DeGaulle embargoed the delivery of French-built missile boats to Israel – for which Israel had already paid – and the subsequent clandestine retrieval of the boats by Israeli commandos, relations between the two states had not risen beyond cool or polite. At times the policies of the French government in the Arab-Israeli dispute have been quite inimical, and even hostile, to the Jewish state.

But Sarkozy seems to have been cut from different *tricolore* cloth than that of his predecessors. He seems genuinely concerned for the future well-being and security of the Jewish state. And he has never missed an opportunity, either in France or abroad, to make that very point, even though it is decidedly unwise for him to do so from a domestic political point of view, since more than six million Muslims and barely more than half a million Jews live in France. Indeed, it cannot have been a coincidence that on the eve of Sarkozy's visit to Israel, a 17-year-old boy wearing a kippah was beaten over the head with metal bars in eastern Paris in what was described as "an anti-Semitic act."

"I have always been and would always be a friend of Israel," Sarkozy told the welcoming assembly at Ben-Gurion Airport.

"A nuclear Iran is intolerable," he later told the Knesset. "Anyone trying to destroy Israel will find France blocking the way."

Given that Israeli relations with the EU were officially upgraded last week; that Europe will play an increasingly pivotal role in the international effort to stop the development of an Iranian nuclear weapon; and that the uncertainty surrounding the presidential election in the United States will inevitably create a perceived vacuum of western power and leadership, which could embolden Middle Eastern Islamist terrorists, Sarkozy's promise will become ever more important to Israel and the region.

Sarkozy's friendship for Israel does not ensure agreement with Israel in all aspects of the Jewish state's conflict with the Palestinians and other Arab forces in the region.

But if he can influence and co-ordinate collective action with his counterparts in Germany and Great Britain, his promise will be akin to a beacon in what Israelis and most Jews perceive will be a dark time ahead and sole existential struggle in the face of grave, ultimate danger.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Yasser Arafat's leadership of the PLO was under siege in an intense and often violent revolt by some in his own organization, aided by Syria and Libya. Syrian leaders said they had no desire to depose Arafat, just to stop what they called his willingness to discuss peace with Israel.

Editorials & Letters

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Imperfections of Roosevelt, Churchill

Reviewer Rabbi Bernard Baskin does not adequately deal with the critical issues the book *Human Smoke* touches on ("Revelatory revisionist history," *CJN*, June 12). The book deserves much more serious questioning and criticism.

Yes, American president Franklin D. Roosevelt was far from being a saintly, or even a fair person, when it came to the Jews and reacting in a humane way to the subhuman treatment of our people by Adolf Hitler and his friends. Yes, British prime minister Winston Churchill was certainly not a pacifist and ultimately contributed to the death of many German civilians.

However, it is clear from Nazi plans that if Britain had not declared war on Germany for its attack on Poland, Germany would have continued the blitzkrieg war it had begun on its neighbours. There simply cannot be any doubt that the Nazis' twin aims were conquest and elimination of "undesirables."

JEWISH COMMUNITY TURF WAR
LET'S SEE HOW YOU LIKE SLEEPING WITH THE GEFILTE FISHES WHEN WE THROW YOU INTO THE LAKE WEARING CHOLENT SHOES

Human beings have a right, and even an obligation, to defend themselves against aggression and violence. Even imperfect humans have a right to resist the efforts of those vicious people who seek to loot and kill them. Examining the imperfections of Roosevelt and Churchill simply obscures the central issue of World War II.

Joseph Koenig
Toronto

* * *

Ceding the Golan

Jordy Cummings gravely misunderstands the nature of Israel's situation ("Supports talks with Syria, *CJN* letters, June 19). There is no way that ceding the Golan Heights to Syria will ease tension or reduce Israel's precarious predicament in the Middle East. Why should land be exchanged for peace? If Syria or any other countries should desire peace, all they need do is make a sincere promise to prevent ill will and hateful actions against Israel. Syria invaded Israel several times and is responsible for the deaths of many Israeli soldiers and civilians. Why should such a large country as Syria have the right to try and take land away from a diminutive Israel? Why should Israel cede strategic land that helps guarantee its security? It is my sincere opinion that people who can do nothing but critique Israel are indeed "anti-Semitic," whether they are Jews or not. I fully endorse a balanced approach to controversial issues, but I do find fault with those who are arrogant enough to chastise Israel at the expense of its own security and well-being.

Michael Helfield
Toronto

Rabbi Heschel and the Berrigans

In his highly laudatory review of the latest volume of the biography of the late Rabbi Abraham Heschel ("Heschel's voice still speaks," *CJN* Perspectives, *June* 5), Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, rightly praises Rabbi Heschel for his academic and rabbinical work, as well as for his involvement in social causes and anti-war activities.

I was surprised, however, at the lack of any mention of Rabbi Heschel's controversial and unwise connections to some openly anti-Semitic and virulently anti-Israel activists, such as Philip Berrigan and Rev. Daniel Berrigan, whom Heschel considered to be his "soul-brothers." For years, these Catholic priests issued inflammatory and vicious attacks against the Jewish state, such as the description of Israel by Rev. Daniel Berrigan in front of a group of Arab university graduates, as "a criminal Jewish community."

Historian Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, a great leader of the American Jewish community, himself a leading promoter of human rights and peace with the Palestinians, unmasked the true meaning of the Berrigans' hate for Israel, by explaining that "underneath the language of the new left, it is the old-fashioned theological anti-Semitism." Unfortunately, Rabbi Heschel, who had witnessed himself how millions of Jews were slaughtered while so-called friends stood silent or even participated in atrocities, decided to ignore the dark, anti-Semitic side of people such as the Berrigans and continued to befriend and support them, uncritically, until his last days.

In today's world, we can still observe some of our brethren, rabbis, writers, academics, a few perhaps motivated by genuine social concerns, making common cause with the sworn enemies of Israel. While we should praise and cherish Heschel's social legacy and rabbinical teachings, it would be prudent to remember his apparent blindness toward evil against our own people and to be vigilant not to repeat his naivete.

Jack Chivo
West Vancouver

* * *

Jewish prayer at Queen's Park

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty says that adding multicultural prayers at the legislature reflects the "respectful" Ontario we have built together. ("Jewish prayer to be part of Queen's Park rituals," *CJN*, June 19). It is a decent symbolic gesture, but it is deeply at odds with Ontario's institutionalized disrespect of small, non-Catholic religious minorities who must pay to provide their children with a faith-based education that more than 600,000 Catholic children receive from their tax dollars.

Gila Gladstone-Martow
Thornhill

LET THEM GO...

Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Schalit

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Truce with Hamas is a victory for Iran

By MICHAEL B. OREN

Proponents of an Israeli-Palestinian accord are praising the ceasefire between Israel and Hamas that went into effect June 19. Yet even if the agreement suspends violence temporarily – though dozens of Hamas rockets struck Israel the day before – it represents a historic accomplishment for the jihadist forces most opposed to peace, and defeat for the Palestinians who might still have been Israel's partners.

The roots of this tragedy go back to the summer of 2005 and the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza. The evacuation, intended to free Israel of Gaza's political and strategic burden, was hailed as a victory by Palestinian terrorist groups, above all Hamas.

Hamas proceeded to fire some 1,000 rocket and mortar shells into Israel. Six months later, Hamas gunmen, taking advantage of an earlier ceasefire, infiltrated Israel, killed two soldiers, and captured Cpl. Gilad Schalit.

Hamas' audacity spurred Hezbollah to mount a similar ambush against Israelis patrolling the Lebanese border, triggering a war in which Israel was once again humbled. Hamas now felt sufficiently emboldened to overthrow Gaza's Fatah-led government, and to declare itself regnant in the strip. Subsequently, Hamas launched thousands more rocket and mortar salvos against Israel, rendering parts of the country nearly uninhabitable.

In response, Israel Defence Forces (IDF) air strikes and limited ground incursions killed hundreds of armed Palestinians in Gaza, and Israel earned international censure for collateral civilian deaths and "disproportionate" tactics. Israel also imposed a land and sea blockade of Gaza, strictly controlling its supply of vital commodities such as a gasoline. But the policy enabled Hamas to hoard the fuel and declare a humanitarian crisis.

Israel never mounted the rolling, multi-month operation that the IDF had planned. Traumatized by his abortive performance in the Lebanon War and hobbled by financial scandals, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert balked at a military engagement liable to result in incalculable casualties and United Nations condemnations, but unlikely to halt Hamas aggression.

Sderot residents seek shelter after a Kassam rocket attack.

Like Hezbollah in 2006, Hamas won because it did not lose. Its leaders still walked Gaza's streets freely while children in Sderot and other Israeli border towns cowered in bomb shelters. Like Hezbollah, which recently wrested unprecedented powers from the Lebanese parliament, Hamas parlayed its military success into political capital.

The European Parliament demanded the immediate lifting of the Gaza blockade, and France initiated secret contacts with Hamas officials. A minister from the Israeli Labor Party, Ami Ayalon, went a step further by calling for Hamas' inclusion in peace talks – a recommendation soon echoed by former U.S. president Jimmy Carter and the *New York Times*.

One of Sderot's younger residents after an attack by Hamas.

The Egyptian-brokered ceasefire yields Hamas greater benefits than it might have obtained in direct negotiations. In exchange for giving its word to halt rocket attacks and weapons smuggling, Hamas receives the right to monitor the main border crossings into Gaza and to enforce a truce in the West Bank, where Fatah retains formal control.

If quiet is maintained, then Israel will be required to accept a ceasefire in the West Bank as well. The blockade will be incrementally lifted, while Schalit remains in captivity. Hamas can regroup and re-arm.

The Olmert government will have to go to vast lengths to portray this arrangement as anything other than a strategic and moral defeat. Hamas initiated a vicious war against Israel, destroyed and disrupted myriad Israeli lives, and has been rewarded with economic salvation and international prestige.

Tellingly, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, who once declared Hamas illegal, will soon travel to Gaza for reconciliation talks. Abbas' move signifies the degree to which Hamas, with Israel's help, now dominates Palestinian politics. It testifies, moreover, to another Iranian triumph.

As the primary sponsor of Hamas, Iran is the ceasefire's ultimate beneficiary. Having already surrounded Israel on three of its borders – Gaza, Lebanon and Syria – Iran is poised to penetrate the West Bank. By activating these fronts, Tehran can divert attention from its nuclear program and block any diplomatic efforts to stop it.

The advocates of peace between Israelis and Palestinians should recognize that fact when applauding quiet at any price. The cost of this truce may well be war.

Michael B. Oren is a senior fellow at the Shalem Center in Jerusalem and the author of Power, Faith, and Fantasy: America in the Middle East, 1776 to the Present. *This article first appeared in the* Wall Street Journal.

This calm is fragile and liable to be short-lived

Excerpts from a June 16 statement in Jerusalem by Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert at the Sheatufim Conference on Philanthropy and Civil Society, during which he referred to the situation in Gaza:

A few weeks ago, I said that… I intended to exhaust my full responsibility as prime minister and my obligation to bring about quiet and security for the residents of the south.

I reiterated that this would happen one way or another. The terrorist organizations that control the Gaza Strip have been under continuous military and economic pressure in recent months as a result of the government's policies. It was they who sought the calm.

In recent weeks, the government has held a dialogue with Egypt, in the framework of which the Egyptians committed themselves to bringing about a calm on the ground. In this context, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Egyptian government and President Hosni Mubarak – Israel's most important partner in the efforts to create calm, stability and a continuity of peace in the Middle East – and his right-hand man, Gen. Omar Suleiman.

I would like to emphasize and make it clear that we did not hold – and I will not hold – negotiations with any terrorist organization. We have no illusions. This calm is fragile and is liable to be short-lived. Hamas and the other terrorist organizations have not changed and have not become patrons of peace. These are contemptible and bloodthirsty terrorists. Even today, they are doing everything they can to harm innocent Israeli civilians.

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert

I would like to make it clear that Hamas is [in charge] in the Gaza Strip and it will bear the responsibility for any violation of the quiet. If the firing and terrorist actions continue, Israel will be compelled to act in order to halt the threat against its citizens.

Regarding Cpl. Gilad Schalit, his release is an inseparable part of the understandings regarding the terms of the calm. Next week will mark two years since Gilad's abduction. His photograph is in my office, in front of me. I see his eyes every day, and I make an effort every day so that it will be possible to return Gilad to his parents, Noam and Aviva, and to the rest of his family, safe and sound. I have told them more than once that aside from them, there is no one in the world who wishes for Gilad Schalit's return home, safe and sound, more than I.

I believe that as part of the understandings that facilitated the start of the calm, that I hope that we will also be able to move forward on Gilad Schalit's return home.

As we approach the implementation of this calm, we are aware and alert. Alongside our willingness to give this step a chance, the cabinet has decided to instruct Defense Minister Ehud Barak and the security forces to be ready for any other action that may be required, on a short timetable, should it become clear that this effort that the State of Israel has made in order avoid a violent confrontation and direct friction with the Palestinians is unsuccessful.

I very much hope that it succeeds. I believe that there will be quiet in the south of the country. From here, I warmly embrace all the residents of the south who, with great courage and strength, have faced this daily threat throughout these very long months and years. It is they who, in the end, have enabled the government to act in the responsible, balanced and correct way that, I believe, it has, even in this sensitive, complicated and delicate situation.

Healed but not cured

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

She could not be cured. As a result of contracting polio as a child, she has become more and more incapacitated, and in the last few years, she has been confined to a wheelchair. She has also had other serious illnesses.

But she is healing. Her spirit is whole and as vibrant as ever. There is hardly a play she doesn't see or a cultural event she doesn't attend. She sees most of the movies at the annual Toronto International Film Festival.

The forceful person that she is has turned her into a staunch advocate for the rights of the disabled. For years, she appeared on a television program devoted to the subject. She still writes letters to newspapers if she feels that the disabled have been misrepresented or discriminated against.

When in the 1990s a few social workers, therapists and rabbis came together to form what nowadays is called the Toronto Jewish Healing Project, it was quite obvious that it would only get off the ground if she took it in hand. She did. As a result, for more than a decade now, many members of the Jewish community have been helped to cope with their medical and psychological burdens through Jewish teachings.

Through conferences, lectures and study sessions, the project has attracted professionals in the field. Some pay greater attention nowadays to the spiritual needs of their patients. The groups the project runs and the healing services it arranges have strengthened many individuals in the knowledge that even if you can't be cured, you can be healed.

Though she had been the director of social work at Baycrest in Toronto until her retirement, and despite her very Jewish New York upbringing, it was thanks to the Healing Project that she herself discovered the spiritual roots of Judaism. She now regularly attends services and study groups at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto and for several years was a formidable presence on its board. Her continued counsel brings strength and comfort to many members of the congregation. At age 75, she celebrated her bat mitzvah.

Recently, in line with similar agencies across North America, Toronto's Jewish Family and Child Service has taken over the administration of the Healing Project, thus recognizing the contribution it is making to the welfare of members of our community. Together with her team of volunteers, she will continue to be involved, but the heavy burden of organization has been lifted from her shoulders.

I cannot think of a woman more deserving of the epithet *eshet chayil*, a woman of valour. She is a role model and an inspiration to us all. Toronto Jewry owes her an enormous debt of gratitude.

Early next month, Etta Ginsberg McEwan will be 82. *Bis hundert un tsvantsig.*

Pearls of wisdom for the Jewish class of 2008

Mark Masters in Ottawa

The Jewish students who have graduated this spring are an incredibly important part of our community. We are the wave of young leaders who will strengthen Canada's Jewish community and ensure that it continues to thrive.

So, while listening to the honorary degree recipient address my graduating class this June at Carleton University, my mind began to wander. I started putting together my own speech, one that, to me at least, was more important than any words spoken at my own graduation ceremony…

To the class of Jewish graduating students 2008: Mazel tov! We did it.

Being a Jewish student on a university campus these days brings with it a set of challenges on top of those faced by the average student. But as we clutch our newly earned degrees, we must learn from the challenges we confronted.

First and foremost, we must not abandon our roots. It's important to stay in touch with those running your local Hillel and offer to help them.

One of the greatest flaws that student organizations have is a lack of institutional memory. The turnover rate of four years ensures that such groups are almost always in a state of flux. Students are usually out the door before long-term results can be seen.

There are dedicated staffs that remain with the Hillel organizations nationwide and work to offer continuity, but they far too often become disconnected from the common student's life.

Every graduating student must try to stay in touch with the Jewish community at their university or college, at least in the first few months of the next semester.

As we leave our university life behind, we must pay heed to the diversity we discovered. When I met my roommates in first year, I quickly found out that two of the three had never met a Jewish person before.

We tend to be sheltered in our community sometimes, but we must note that for most people, we remain a mystery and people – whatever they tell you – tend to think the worst of the unknown.

In our post-university lives, we must be goodwill ambassadors for our faith. Wherever we go, we are representing not just ourselves, but Judaism as a whole.

The diversity within our universities is also found within our faith. There is no right way to be Jewish. There is no right amount of time to go to synagogue, and there is no right way to celebrate our festivals.

During my years in university, I attended different synagogues, different Passover seders and different Shabbat dinners. All were unique, and all were an experience unto themselves.

Our community is strongest when we stick together. Student life gets bogged down far too much in infighting and petty squabbling over issues that, when seen in the light of day, don't deserve the attention they get in the heat of the moment.

When I was younger, I use to shun anything that strayed from the customs I grew up with. I have since shed this immaturity.

We need to work together and be together. To reach this goal, we must try to take positions in the Jewish community outside of our professional lives.

My final message to the Jewish graduating class of 2008 is this: family is the most important thing. It's a lesson I'm repeatedly taught in my life. Parents, grandparents, siblings and extended family all exist for us to enjoy and rely on.

My university life would have been far different if I didn't have the unflinching support of my parents, which paved the way for me to succeed.

I know full well that every person has a different relationship with his or her family, but I trust that among the many relatives we all have, there are connections that can be made and Friday nights that can be shared.

And so with that I say good luck to all the graduating Jewish students. I write this not because of some arrogant belief that I know best. I don't write with pretension, but rather from a desire to share, because in these life-affirming moments, a desire to relate to others is a driving force.

This is simply my effort to share what I have learned from my university life.

The more things change…

Jesse Mintz in Halifax

As inevitable as aging is the personal growth that often accompanies it. The casualties of such change, for better or worse, are often one's closest relationships as people mature differently and inevitably grow apart. Knowing this, I have often wondered what exactly the axiom "the more things change, the more they stay the same" means.

University presents a particularly trying time for most relationships. Leaving high school means more then leaving home – for many it also means leaving a social comfort level for the first time.

While I usually revel in the opportunity to write on politics and religion, it often serves me well to reflect on things a little closer to home. In that vein, I write this column on the preservation of friendships over the stretch of time and the expanse of personal differences.

Grade 11 served as a formative year for me. The March of the Living was a tremendously spiritual experience – one that forced me to seriously consider the type of person I was fast becoming and the type of friends I wanted to surround myself with. Shortly following this experience, I joined several of my friends in their weekly Friday night *tish* – in what lovingly became known as the "Shabbas Crew."

What started as small Friday night gatherings grew with each passing week. Following each of our own family Shabbat meals, we would congregate in an empty basement or backyard, sing niggunim, swap Jewish stories and jokes, and learn a little Torah.

Cellphones occasionally interrupted stories, basic Shabbat rules – especially concerning lights – were often overlooked, and I myself went straight downtown on several occasions. However, Shabbas Crew served as a three-hour Jewish anchor amid whatever else was going on in our lives.

Despite how much I enjoyed these weekly get-togethers, I found myself continually being pulled between two poles. Many Friday nights were divided – the first half spent sitting round a table, laughing and joking and singing with friends, while the second half was often spent running around downtown, trying to catch up with others who had been there all evening.

It's always easier to understand motives in retrospect, and I look back now and ask myself why I acted in such a way. The Shabbas Crew bonded over something concrete – a shared religion and culture that manifested itself in a common experience of kinship, and often a communal bottle of scotch. I looked forward to every Friday night because I always felt at ease around that table. But more so than that, I felt that many of the friends I made, people I had been close to for barely a year, knew me in a different way then others did or could.

All people change over time. While I have spent three years in university in Halifax, some of my friends have made aliyah and are serving in the Israeli army or studying in Israeli yeshivas and seminaries. Others, meanwhile, have gone on to succeed at the disparate university programs they have found themselves in.

I hadn't really given the Shabbas Crew much thought until recently when I was invited to a reunion. As I have grown less connected with Judaism, my relationship with those with whom I bonded over a shared culture has tragically suffered. It is understandable, then, that the thought of revisiting our old stomping grounds made me a little anxious.

I was not apprehensive at the thought of the political debates or religious disagreements that would inevitably arise; likewise, I was not distressed about the awkward glances shot at my nose-ring or the fact that I alone drove on Shabbat. What caused me to be nervous was the possibility that by sitting around that table now as a different person, I would be changing my perception of past gatherings and of the people with whom I shared them.

As I walked up the steps this time around, though, there was no debate within me as to where I wanted to be. Granted, there are few people that I have shared a table with whom my politics clash so vehemently; and little remains of our religious commonalties beyond our attendance at what is now the Anne and Max Tanenbaum Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and experiences in Israel together. But sitting together, humming niggunim, talking and sharing stories, transcended any differences of politics and religion.

We only have a couple of months together in the same city until we all return to the rest of our lives – be it in Israel and the army or university programs around the country. Yet it seems that the more things have changed personally for each of us over the years, the more our common relationships have managed to stay the same.

The Kirshner File

The Jew who transformed himself into a Muslim

If there was ever a person who crossed every conceivable cultural and religious boundary and boldly stepped into a brave, new world, no doubt it was Leopold Weiss.

Born in 1900 in the city of Lvov, in what was then the Habsburg empire but is now in Ukraine, he was the descendant of a long line of rabbis.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Proficient in Hebrew and conversant with the Talmud, yet probably influenced by his father's break with Orthodox Judaism, Weiss soon lost interest in religion as he pursued his studies at the University of Vienna.

In 1922, in a detour that radically changed his life, he visited his two uncles in Jerusalem, Dorian Feigenbaum, a psychoanalyst and a pupil of Sigmund Freud, and Aryeh Feigenbaum, an ophthalmologist who founded the first Hebrew medical journal in Palestine.

From Jerusalem, Weiss, a critic of Zionism, freelanced for a German daily, the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and these assignments exposed him to Arabs and Islam, to whom and to which he became partial.

Having been commissioned by that newspaper to write more stories, he travelled around the Middle East, fascinated by the region and increasingly engaged by Islam. His first book, *The Unromantic Orient*, was published in 1924.

Georg Misch

Weiss, who had grown up with the hoary notion that Muslims were barbarians, converted to Islam in 1926, taking the name Mohammad Asad.

Having been excommunicated by his family for leaving Judaism, he spent the next six years in Saudi Arabia, which formed him as a Muslim and where he became a trusted member of the king's inner circle.

Travelling to the Indian sub-continent, he met the poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal, who promoted the concept of a liberal, independent Muslim state in India.

Asad, a reformer who believed that "moderation in all its forms is a basic demand of Islam," was one of Iqbal's disciples.

With the partition of India in 1947, Pakistan emerged as a separate nation and he was appointed its first ambassador to the United Nations. By then, he was a renowned scholar, having written *Islam at the Crossroads*.

When his assignment at the UN ended, due to a personal scandal, Asad wrote *The Road to Mecca*. Published to critical acclaim in 1954, it was a memoir about his conversion to Islam and a travelogue about his odyssey in the Muslim world.

Settling next in Tangier, Morocco, he produced what is widely considered his magnum opus, *The Message of the Qur'an*, a translation and commentary of Islam's holiest book.

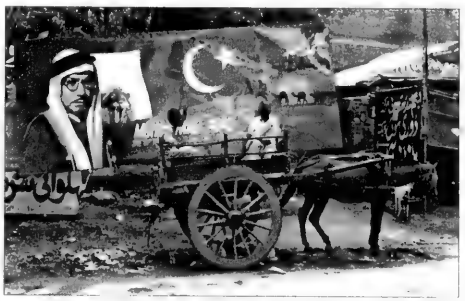
In 1982, he moved to southern Spain, where he died a decade later. He was buried in a Muslim cemetery in Granada.

Asad was an unknown quantity to Georg Misch, an Austrian documentary filmmaker, only a few short years ago. But now, with the release of his latest movie, *A Road to Mecca: The Journey of Muhammad Asad*, which was screened at the Hot Docs festival in Toronto recently, Misch has become something of an authority on this intriguing figure.

A 38-year-old agnostic raised as a Catholic in Vienna, he first heard about Asad when his girlfriend, Miriam Ali de Unzaga, mentioned him in 2001, shortly after 19 Arab terrorists crashed commercial airliners into the World Trade Center in Manhattan. Unzaga, a practising Ismaili Muslim whose grandfather immigrated to Europe from India decades ago, encountered Asad when she read his translation of the Qur'an while studying anthropology in London. "I didn't realize he was an Austrian, much less originally a Jew, " she said in an interview.

She asked Misch whether, in light of the Twin Towers disaster and the debate it had unleashed in Islam, he would be interested in making a film about Asad. Misch's previous documentaries, *Calling Hedy Lamarr and I Am From Nowhere*, which dealt with a glamorous Hollywood actress of Austrian origin and the American dream, were far removed from the topic of Islam. Nonetheless, he and Unzaga concluded that a film about Asad's life would be exceedingly timely.

Asad, whom they describe in their film as "Europe's gift to Islam," always sought to bridge the gap between Islam and the West. But after Sept. 11, Asad's brand of conciliatory Islam was all the more relevant. Misch, too, wanted to humanize Islam."The West has a deformed and caricatured image of Islam," he said. "With the Cold War over, Islam replaced communism as the enemy, the other."



Muhammad Asad, as seen on a poster in Pakistan

Unzaga, the scriptwriter of *A Road to Mecca*, was animated by the same objective, having been annoyed by the West's perception of Islam as a fanatical faith. An "enlightened Muslim," in Misch's words, she is an acolyte of the Aga Khan, the leader of the world's approximately 15 million Ismaili Muslims. "Having also been persecuted, we have a lot in common with Jews," she said.

To Misch, Asad is not merely "a hippie who did a bit of Islam lite." As he put it, "Asad really transformed himself. He became an Arab, though he never forgot or denied his Jewishness." Asked if he may have been a self-hating Jew, Misch said, "He never hated himself. He was a lost Jew who found a new direction. His son, Talal, told us he never had a bad thing to say about Jews." And he wept upon learning that his relatives had been murdered in the Holocaust.

According to Misch, Asad was drawn to Islam for intellectual reasons. "He had a logical approach. He liked the universality of Islam and disliked the materialism and hedonism of the West." *A Road to Mecca*, however, says that Asad adopted Islam as an answer to his "spiritual emptiness."

Asad himself observed: "Islam appears to me like a perfect work of architecture. All its parts are harmoniously conceived to complement and support each other. Nothing is superfluous and nothing [is] lacking; and the result is a structure of absolute balance and solid composure."

If Asad had been alive today, Misch speculated, he would have denounced Islamic extremism and terrorism. "He completely opposed violence. Militant Islam was a source of immense disappointment to him."

Asad's jaundiced view of Zionism was established during his sojourn in Palestine. "I conceived from the outset a strong objection to Zionism," Asad wrote. "I considered it immoral that [Jewish] immigrants, assisted by a foreign great power, should come from abroad with the avowed intention of attaining a majority in the country and thus to dispossess the people whose country it had been since time immemorial."

Middle East specialist Martin Kramer says that Asad, while a fervent anti-Zionist until his death, maintained contact with Aryeh Feigenbaum's daughter, Hemdah, and even attended her son's bar mitzvah in New York City. "Asad looked at the Arab-Israeli conflict from a political standpoint," Misch said.

In the Muslim world today, Asad is known and revered. In Pakistan, his books are widely available in bookshops, and in Nigeria, they are distributed free of charge by the ministry of education. In Saudi Arabia, he is held in high esteem by some members of the elite.

Yet Asad's brand of reform Islam remains controversial, as Misch learned the hard way. At the last minute, much to his disgust, a film festival in the United Arab Emirates pulled *A Road to Mecca* from its program. Meanwhile, Misch hopes the film will be bought by distributors in the United States, Canada and, particularly, Israel.

"Asad tried to break down walls between cultures and religions," he said. "He wanted to unite the East and the West. He thought that Islam and democracy are compatible. He is a relevant figure for our times."

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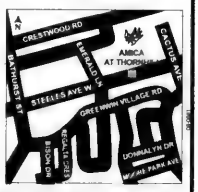

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Rabbi Gemara teaches Gemarah – and life lessons

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Shlomo Gemara, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot, spends almost 13 hours a week in the school's classrooms teaching Talmud.

A few years ago, because he was not teaching as much, he felt like he was losing contact with the students, he said in an interview in his office at Or Chaim, the Orthodox boys' high school that, together with Ulpana, forms Toronto's Bnei Akiva high schools.

A native of Petach Tikva, Rabbi Gemara came to Toronto in 1993 as a shaliach for a four-year stint at the school. After returning to Israel for two years, the school brought him back, and he's been there ever since.

The 49-year-old rabbi was introduced to teaching at a young age when, as a Grade 9 student during the Yom Kippur War in 1973, he and some friends were asked to teach Grade 3 and 4 students because there was a shortage of teachers.

"We thought it would be fun," he recalls. At the time, he was a youth group leader in the Bnai Akiva movement.

The interaction with students and the feeling that he was making a difference were more compelling than he expected. "I actually fell in love with teaching, and it was quite clear to me that I would like to teach in the future."

An alumnus of Bar-Ilan University, where he obtained a bachelor's degree in mathematics, Rabbi Gemara received his rabbinic ordination and teaching qualifications at Kerem B'Yavneh, a hesder yeshiva that combines Torah study with army service.

It may just be coincidence that Rabbi Gemara teaches Gemarah (part of the Talmud), but it seems to be serendipitous as well.

He said that – although he's never been among them – "many people believe that Talmud is one of the most boring subjects."

"I believe this is one of the most exciting subjects, if you teach it properly. It deals with real issues in life, it gives you historical perspective on things, and it forces you to think, which is the most important asset that I believe a high school should equip students with.

"I think my goal in teaching Gemarah is very clear, and this is really to make students understand the text in a precise way, and at the end of the shiur [lesson], I would like them to take something to their own life from the class."

Rabbi Gemara, who says he still understands and can relate to issues of teenagers, believes in using humour as a teaching tool. One year, his students in Israel presented him with a book of his jokes that they had compiled.

Over the past five years, spending time as a rabbi-in-residence at Jewish summer camps, he has become "much more aware of the power of informal activities" and has begun to incorporate more of them into the school.

"They are our teachers..."

He also believes in encouraging students to ask questions and express their values.

Last December, at Limmud: A Festival of Jewish Learning and Culture, he offered a Jewish take on John Lennon's song "*Imagine*."

The topic, an unlikely one for an Orthodox rabbi, came to his attention a few years ago when an Ulpana student read from the song at a school event.

Rabbi Gemara, who was only somewhat familiar with the tune, decided he needed to address the issue quickly, after a shaliach at the school immediately decried the song as heresy.

Doing as much research as he could during a short window of time, within 90 minutes the rabbi was presenting a shiur to the students. Since then Rabbi Gemara – who also teaches adults at Mekorot, a Jewish learning institute for women – has also addressed the topic at a North American principals' conference.

He noted that "*Imagine*" raises "many issues that our sages dealt with. They came up with completely different solutions and ideas, but the questions and the discussion are important, and [students] should know that there are people who think differently." He added that such issues are an adjunct to the school's main focus of teaching Torah.

"I think our job as a Modern Orthodox school is to show students that the outer world has a lot to offer, but you have to be well prepared and well informed in order to really synthesize the outer world and the Torah world together."

"They are our teachers... " will return at the end of September.

A lesson from the teacher: *"I wouldn't be afraid to take any text or any value from the outer world and to confront it with our [Jewish] values, and maybe to learn something good ... Torah values are going to be confronted in the future, and to ignore this confrontation might be disastrous, if students are not prepared to answer and to criticize and to think."*

The Mighty Popo and Friends, with David Buchbinder from the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band on the trumpet performed at the Paul Penna gala. [Sheri Shefa photo]

Anne Golden honoured at Paul Penna gala

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School held its fifth annual fundraising tribute gala last week, honouring someone who embodies the same qualities promoted by the school.

Anne Golden, a key figure in public policy and city-building initiatives in Toronto, as well as the president and CEO of the Conference Board of Canada, was feted at the June 16 event, which boasted an impressive lineup of performers.

Anne Golden

The sold-out event at the Al Green Theatre at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre was hosted by Tony Award winner Bob Martin and was entertained by the Mighty Popo, klezmerist David Buchbinder, the comedy troupe Women Fully Clothed, comedian Seán Cullen, the Canadian Tenors and others.

Before Golden – who served as president of the United Way of Greater Toronto for 14 years until 2001 and was named to the Order of Canada in 2003 – addressed the audience, Aviva Rajsky, the school board president, thanked her for her commitment to community building and for her involvement in the downtown Jewish community.

"Anne, you are known for your dedication and commitment to social justice. How fitting it is, then, for you to be honoured by a school whose mission statement includes a commitment to social justice as one of its core values," Rajsky said. "We pride ourselves on being a unique school, and it is so rewarding to have someone who has been involved with so many other organizations recognize our values."

Proceeds from tickets sales and a silent auction will go to subsidies for families that can't afford tuition at the school, which welcomes students from senior kindergarten to Grade 8 and is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

Golden expressed gratitude for being recognized by a school whose values mirror hers.

"I wanted to accept this honour for several reasons. First, I believe in Jewish day school education. We live in a secularized, fast-paced world, and there seems to be less and less room for our cultural and religious traditions, and I feel that we can't count on our ever-diluted celebrations of holidays to transmit the substance of Judaism to future generations," she said.

"Second, this day school is unique. It serves a population which is extremely diverse. They are committed to helping those who can't pay the full tuition with subsidies," she said, adding that each year, the school manages to raise more than $150,000 for that purpose.

Golden said she loves that the school is in the downtown core, operating out of the Miles Nadal JCC.

"Successful cities have vital downtowns, so providing this kind of institution for people who chose to live in the centre of the city, as we do, is a really important addition to the fabric of Toronto," she said.

"When I see young leaders like the Paul Penna team, who are so dedicated and energized and willing to give so much of themselves to build a stronger community, it resonates with me."

A number of tribute videos to Golden were also screened, including from essayist and novelist John Ralston Saul and Toronto Mayor David Miller.

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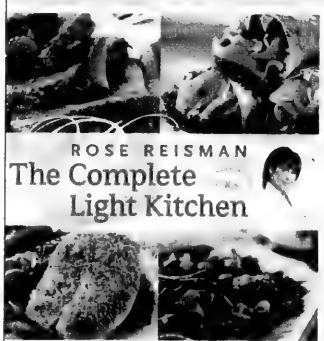

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Trudeau speaks at USDS

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Individuals have never mattered as much as they do now, Justin Trudeau told a group of students at United Synagogue Day School (USDS) last Wednesday.

Justin Trudeau
[Rita Poliakov photo]

"If there are problems in the world, the problems are [caused] by years of little actions by individuals who weren't thinking about the big picture," the former prime minister Pierre Trudeau's son told the students.

Trudeau, who will be running for the Liberal party in the Montreal Papineau riding in the next election, spoke about his childhood, the environment and children's ability to affect the world.

"The decisions we make are extremely important," he told a group of grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. "We don't need you to be leaders of tomorrow. There's something conditional to that– we need you to be leaders of today."

Trudeau emphasized the importance of connecting with children, especially when it comes to helping the environment.

"The coming generations are aware of the breadth of the situation," he said. "Take an example like recycling. It was started in a classroom. The students taught the parents and it spread."

USDS is trying to teach its students the importance of environmentalism. According to Raquel Black, a USDS middle school teacher and incoming vice-principal, the school has integrated Earth-friendly concepts both in and out of the classroom.

"We've been concentrating a lot on recycling and the environment from junior kindergarten up to Grade 8. They learn about different parts of science, recycling, [alternative] energy and current events. This will become part of their future," Black said.

Over the past two years, the school has been implementing various environmentally friendly policies. It has a no-paper policy, which encourages students to use e-mail when submitting assignments. Classrooms are equipped with SMART boards to eliminate paper handouts.

"The school has a green team [made up of about 10 students]. They're responsible for recycling and tree planting," Black said. "If you take something away, you have to give it back. [Students] understand that not everything needs to be wasted."

Trudeau also touched on this concept.

"For the environment, we need to start thinking very differently about how we operate as a society," he said. "If a company pollutes streams and air, the company is making a profit off this. [They] calculate the value of a barrel of oil they sell, they don't calculate the pollution [they create]. The Earth is something we have to care for."

Trudeau, who is a former high school teacher, had no trouble connecting with the USDS students.

"You get away with a lot less with kids, [they're] a lot tougher as an audience. You have to be real," he said. "[Kids are] capable of understanding difficult concepts. You can challenge [them] to step up."

Continued on page 19

Heschel brings Columbia program to Toronto

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Until recently, professional development opportunities for teachers at the Toronto Heschel School did not include anything specifically for new teachers.

This year, however, the school ran an 18-session program called the New Teacher Academy, developed by Columbia University in New York.

Heschel is the first Canadian school to partner with Columbia for the program, which will wrap up this week with a presentation and dinner on Thursday. A representative from Columbia will be in attendance, and a number of educators from other local schools have been invited.

Heschel's head of child study, Tobie Franklin, trained last summer as a facilitator for the program and brought it to the school.

She told *The CJN* that, generally speaking, 33 per cent of new teachers leave the profession within three years, and almost 50 per cent within five years. The program was designed to increase teacher retention and encourage leadership in the classroom, Franklin said.

Standards of the program include leadership, community and "differentiation" – how to teach to students at different levels.

Continued on page 19

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Donor's vision and generosity to change the face of Holocaust education

Survivor donates $10 million for new state-of-the-art Holocaust Centre

Chaim Neuberger with his late wife Sarah.

By Daniel Horowitz

Few people anywhere can attest, firsthand, to the horrific nightmare that was the Holocaust, better than Toronto's Chaim Neuberger.

Neuberger's entire family - his parents, four brothers and one sister - were all killed by the Nazis.

He managed to escape the same fate thanks to the heroic selflessness of a non-Jewish Polish family who took him in - along with nine other Jewish youngsters - and hid them for nine months in secret rooms, closets and even a horse stable, where Chaim would often sleep under piles of straw and hay.

"I remember the family very well; they were obviously very generous," says Neuberger, an affable and fit 79-year-old builder who regularly works out at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre. "The wife would always prepare proper meals for us and slide it through an opening in a closet, or wherever we were hiding at the time. It was this way for all those months until the Russians came and we were all liberated. If the Nazis knew what this family was doing, they would have been killed along with all of us. They gambled their lives for us."

For years after the war ended, Neuberger expressed his gratitude by regularly sending money to the family that saved his life.

Jennifer Ritter

After the war, he decided to leave Poland, travelling to Austria and Italy before ultimately making Canada his home.

It was thanks to a special initiative by the Canadian government that sponsored Jewish orphans under the age of 18 that Neuberger, along with 80 others, came to this country in 1948. After docking in Halifax, he went to Montreal before ultimately deciding to give Toronto a try. His instincts proved correct as, within just a few short years, he began to find success in the city's booming building business.

It was in Toronto that he also found personal success, meeting and marrying his wife of fifty years, Sarah. The couple had two daughters – Edith and Myra - who produced eight grandchildren. Sadly, Sarah passed away six years ago. Today, sixty years after arriving in a new country, Neuberger can still be found working away in his office in the Yonge and St. Clair area of the city. "I enjoy working; it's important to be busy. It's no good when you have nothing to do," he explains. "When I need to relax, the grandchildren give me plenty of nachas; they're good kids. We did okay," he says with a wide smile.

Neuberger, who is normally reticent to share his painful memories of the Holocaust, recently decided to do something on a much grander scale in order to educate others about the dangers of hatred, intolerance and indifference. Through UJA Federation's $400 million Tomorrow Campaign, which is revitalizing Jewish life across the Greater Toronto Area, Neuberger has donated $10 million, creating The Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre.

"Educating people of all faiths about the Holocaust is so important to me; after all, I'm a part of the Holocaust," says Neuberger. "I was the youngest in my family and they were all taken from me and murdered. Holocaust education is so important because nobody lives forever, including my generation. We need what happened documented, so people can see the facts, the photos, and other information. We need to tell the stories. There are those out there who even deny that the Holocaust ever took place. We want to build this centre so that all people, of all ages and all nationalities, will learn the truth, and learn from the lessons of the past."

Upon completion, the new Centre – which will be part of the Sherman Campus on Bathurst Street, just north of Sheppard Avenue - will continue its long-standing tradition of preserving the memory of the six million Jews who died in the Shoah.

Part of the National Centre for Jewish Heritage, The Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre will welcome more visitors than ever before as up to 100,000 are expected to pass through its doors annually.

"Mr. Neuberger's gift is a true inspiration," says UJA Federation chair David Koschitzky. "His personal journey from the horrific experiences of the Holocaust to a man who gives so generously to ensure that the past is never repeated will stand as a shining example for generations to come."

"The generous, visionary leadership displayed by Mr. Neuberger is nothing short of phenomenal," says Lorraine Sandler, chair, Holocaust Centre of Toronto, UJA Federation. "By coming forth and taking the initiative as the lead donor on the new Holocaust Centre, he personifies the Jewish value of tikun olam, repairing the world. Not only will the Jewish community in Toronto, and those from around the world, benefit from what will be an unprecedented centre of learning and culture, but so too will the community-at-large."

"Learning the lessons of hate and intolerance is essential in today's world – especially with the global resurgence of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism," says Jennifer Ritter, director, Holocaust Centre of Toronto, UJA Federation. "Through the Centre, people of all ages, races and religions, will learn the importance of treating each other with dignity and respect."

When it's completed, the new Holocaust Education Centre bearing the Neuberger name will include advancement of all the programming, learning, outreach, educational training and pedagogic material the current centre does, but with the bar raised and at a level second to none. The proximity of the other arms of the National Centre for Jewish Heritage as well as the other partners on the Sherman Campus will lead to a collaborative environment that will enhance the Centre experience.

Lorraine Sandler

"I know how much this project means to Chaim," says Michael Lax, a principal in Neuberger's building company. "This is a man whose life was changed – forever – by the Holocaust, and finally, through the Tomorrow Campaign, he now has the chance to make a positive difference in the lives of so many others. What a legacy this is for him."

"Everybody in my family said nothing but 'yes' when I told them what I was doing with this money," says Neuberger. "They were all so pleased and so proud of this idea. Sarah was such a wonderful lady and I know that if she were here today, she'd be so happy and so proud of what's happening, too. She knows how important it is to share our good fortune with others. It's like what I always say: it's good to have and good to give."

Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre

Helping us to remember our past and dream about our future

By Daniel Horowitz

When its doors open for the first time as the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, an anticipated 100,000 annual visitors will learn the lessons of the Holocaust in a world-class, state-of-the-art cultural facility whose time has come.

As Canada's pluralistic population continues to grow and become increasingly diverse, the new Holocaust Education Centre will play an integral role in promoting discourse around our differences and our similarities in order to nurture a harmonious society.

Part of the new Sherman Campus – one of three new centres of Jewish life being built across the Greater Toronto Area through UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign – the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, slated for completion in late 2011, will replace the current, aging Holocaust Centre of Toronto, established in 1985, building upon its rich legacy with new facilities, exhibits and programs geared to the new millennium, emphasizing history and personal stories.

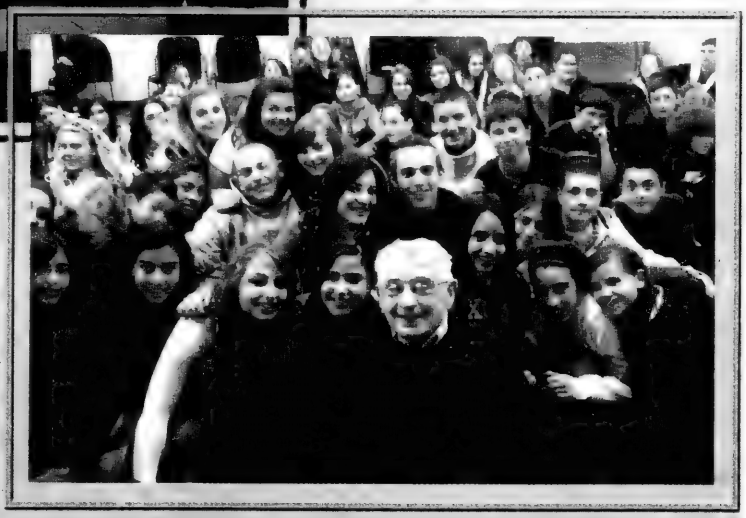
As a living memorial, the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre will honour the indominitable spirit of the Holocaust survivors who came to Canada and the memories of six million Jews who perished. The survivors' miraculous stories of loss, rebirth and renewal will inspire visitors to overcome challenges in their own lives, to choose action over indifference to suffering and to encourage others to do so.

One of the strengths of the new institution will be its ability to present the history of the Holocaust in ways that enable visitors to relate this experience to their own lives today – the values we embrace as Jews and as Canadians, the moral choices we confront, and recognizing that each of us has the power to stand up to bias and bigotry of any kind in our multicultural society.

"There is, first and foremost, a need to preserve the memory and story of each of the six million who died in the Holocaust, and to remember the families, communities, and rich cultural and religious life lost to us," says Jennifer Ritter, director, Holocaust Centre of Toronto, UJA Federation. "Tikun olam, 'repairing the world', is an important Jewish obligation. In teaching about the Holocaust, we endeavour to create a safer world for all. This new centre – with its interactive public galleries and second-to-none teaching facilities – will go a long way toward teaching future generations about the importance of maintaining moral clarity, understanding where choices lead, and about taking responsibility for our own actions."

"Mr. Neuberger's heartfelt and remarkably generous gift to help make this dream a reality shows the magic behind the entire Tomorrow Campaign which continues to make people's dreams into realities," says Leslie Gales, chair, UJA Federation's Tomorrow Leadership Cabinet.

TOMORROW



Holocaust Survivor Alec Eisen with students from Father John Kelly Elementary School at Maple Library, 2007.

The need is vast; the time is now.

- Many new immigrants to Canada come from regions embroiled in racial, religious conflict. The Holocaust alerts us to the painful and deadly consequences of racism and bigotry in our world.
- In the 2001 census, 12,815, or 54.2% of Canada's 23,660 Holocaust survivors lived in the Greater Toronto Area.
- The Holocaust is the prism through which meaningful interfaith, intercultural and interracial dialogue can be fostered.
- It is crucial that survivors' stories be recorded and perpetuated after they are no longer here to tell them. Time is of the essence as the survivor population continues to diminish. Artifacts from area survivors can only be preserved with advanced climate controls, adequate space and proper lighting.
- There are approximately 12 million people living in Ontario and close to five million in the Greater Toronto Area. The Holocaust Centre of Toronto impacts 60,000 people per year. The Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre will reach over 100,00 persons annually.

Published as a community service by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Israeli-based organization helps victims of terror

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

After witnessing the carnage of a 2002 terror attack that killed 12 students in a cafeteria at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Orly Vaknin developed a classic case of post-traumatic stress disorder.

The 28-year-old teacher and pilates instructor from Jerusalem said she was immobilized by anxiety and depression, but she couldn't afford the long-term psychotherapy she needed to rebuild her life.

She was subsequently referred to the One Family Fund, a non-denominational, Israeli-based organization that helps victims of terror.

"They sent someone to my house and two days later, they gave me a cheque for psychotherapy for a year and a half."

Vaknin was visiting Canada recently as an ambassador for the One Family Fund. While in the Toronto area, she took part in a number of fundraising events for the organization, including a 50-kilometre bike ride organized by Daniel Winberg.

The One Family Fund recently held a 50-kilometre bike ride. Participants included, from left, Lauren Albert, her mother Pam, the executive director of One Family, and Orly Vaknin, who represented the One Family Fund in Israel.

Pam Albert, executive director of the Canadian branch of the One Family Fund, said the organization helped Vaknin complete her education and get a career. She was matched with an adoptive family, Tom and Karen Ehrlich of Toronto, who have assisted her financially and emotionally.

The Ehrlichs have visited Vaknin in Israel and she was their guest on her recent trip to Toronto, Albert said, noting that One Family has also helped Vaknin build a support network with other victims of terror.

"She teaches pilates classes to bereaved mothers at the One Family centre. She's like a daughter to these bereaved women, and they're like mothers to her."

Vaknin said the organization helped her forge social ties with people her own age. She recalled how therapeutic it was for her to travel to England two years ago with peers from One Family. She described her ease in connecting with members of the group because of their mutual experience with terror.

"They understood what it's like to be so scared that you feel like you're going to die."

She said one of the activities funded by One Family that helped her the most was her participation in a full triathlon in New York last summer.

"They gave me a coach to train me. This really helped me. When you become strong physically, you feel stronger emotionally," Vaknin said.

"That's what I want to do now. I want to help people with emotional problems deal with their problems through physical activity."

Albert said that six years ago, a group of volunteers in Toronto and Montreal decided to support the One Family Fund after raising $250,000 through their synagogues for victims of the second intifadah, which began in 2000.

"Over 3,500 families are being helped by One Family," Albert said.

She said the organization offers workshops, art and physical education classes, support groups and other therapeutic activities at its centres in Jerusalem and Ranana.

"We run retreats for bereaved parents, wounded couples, and orphans. We help everyone who's been in an attack. We send 350 kids to camps in Israel."

The organization has also hired a psychologist to be a front-line caseworker in Sderot, the Negev town that's under constant bombardment from Gaza.

This summer, 25 Israeli children, many of whom are from Sderot, will be attending two Ontario camps through One Family. Camp Gesher will take five children, and 20 will be going to Camp Timberlane.

As well, a group of Bel Ewart cottagers, organized by Ari Belzberg and Emanuel Greenberg, will be hosting a group of Israeli children at their cottages in July.

Albert said there are many ways people can become involved with One Family, such as through missions to Israel, where participants can connect with victims of terror, as well as through such initiatives as family adoptions, bar and bat mitzvah twinnings, and golf tournaments.

In mid-June, a whirlwind of fundraisers kicked off with a party at Hava Nagila night club organized by Dorit Elbaz and Israeli television host Gila Yefet, of Mifgashim. More than 200 women, many of them Israeli, sang and danced the night away in support of One Family.

The bike ride, which drew 100 participants, and several smaller receptions followed. Upcoming fundraisers include an annual golf tournament on Aug. 11 at Devil's Pulpit, and the Sea to Sea hike in Israel, a five-day excursion from Rosh Hanikra to the Sea of Galilee that runs from Nov. 2 to 6.

Vaknin credits One Family with helping her rebuild her life over the last six years, which has involved learning to cope with the fear she still harbours from the terror attack at Hebrew U.

"I'm teaching in the gym. I'm biking. I keep myself busy. I still have fear in public places," she said.

"You have to accept that you have this [fear]. It's there, but to lead a normal life, you need to figure out how to go on."

For information about the Sea to Sea hike or other One Family Fund events, visit www.onefamilyfund.org, or call 416-644-4955.

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LIFESTYLE Retirement Communities

Ve'ahavta adds night shift to help homeless

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

On one side of a park in downtown Toronto, three men are snuggled up in tattered sleeping bags with cardboard box beds.

"Street help," calls a Ve'ahavta driver as I cower in the background. "We have coffee and sandwiches. Sir? Street help?"

Nobody budges. All three are fast asleep, so we move on.

"Street help," we call to a bearded man with sky-blue eyes. "Would you like some coffee and sandwiches?"

The man nods, moving slightly on his bench. "Just make your way to the van."

My eyes slowly shift to his wheelchair.

"I have no legs," he says.

We promise to bring him some food once we've made our way around.

This is an average shift on Ve'ahavta's Mobile Jewish Response to the Homeless Van (MJRH), although it was the first Tuesday night shift in the program's history.

Ve'ahavta is a Jewish organization that helps the needy locally and internationally. Its programs range from outreach vans and a homework club based in Toronto's Regent Park, to helping impoverished communities around the world.

Every Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday morning, Ve'ahavta staff and volunteers deliver food, clothes and hygiene supplies to Toronto's homeless. Tuesday's shift, which lasted from 6 p.m. to 12 a.m., was Ve'ahavta's first solo night run. In the past, they had partnered with a native group for evening patrols.

"Tuesday night is vastly different than Sunday morning. We're reaching different people in different areas of the city," said Katie Stemeroff, manager of volunteer programs at Ve'ahavta. "We did a needs assessment and found that there were a lot of people on the street late at night and there wasn't a lot of presence."

Alex Cywink, who has worked with Ve'ahavta for three years, emphasized that MJRH isn't just about handing out food.

"There are no vans that do what we do. [The program] addresses physical and humanitarian [needs.] We're supportive, we have an accepting attitude," he said.

The night started off slowly. After packing the van, Cywink told me what to expect, emphasizing the bonus point system.

"You get points if you spot someone before us, and if you make [a client] laugh."

The first man we served took only a bottle of water and a bagel.

"I could hug you," he said, smiling broadly at Cywink.

After stopping for a chat and offering some bagels to another man, we left, searching for more clients.

Cywink and the driver were determined to reach as many people as they could, even if it meant bending a few rules. I learned this as we veered onto the sidewalk, through a bike path and under a bridge.

"This [was] a four-bedroom apartment," Cywink said, pointing to a paved path under the bridge. I thought of all the times I'd complained about the size of my room or my old mattress.

Under another bridge, we found three teens sitting around a crackling fire.

"Do you have any books? I just finished mine," one asked. After another chat and a look through our box of novels, we were off again.

We searched back alleys, ravines, bridges and wooded area, stopping at a moment's notice if Cywink spotted a client.

"There's one!" I yelled, pointing at a bearded man weaving his way through sidewalk traffic.

"Looks like he's booking it [running away]," our driver said, making a quick U-turn.

Most people just took a cup of coffee and some sandwiches, while others asked for socks, pants or shirts.

"It's hard finding pants," said one as he held a pair of black jeans up to his waist.

"I want to find Chris," the driver demanded halfway through the shift.

Chris, as it turned out, was just about to go to sleep when we found him. Sighing slightly, he followed us to the van, asking if possums were edible.

Like most of the people we served that night, Chris was intelligent, articulate and polite. He talked about the evils of Starbucks as he sipped his coffee. He reminded me of one of my friends, who refused to touch a Starbucks coffee for most of high school.

At a crowded park, we found a balding man walking around aimlessly. His clothes were clean and probably new. A large silver-coloured necklace hung from his neck. He clearly didn't belong and he looked lost.

Chris, who is homeless, chats with Alex Cywink, right, of Ve'ahavta during Ve'ahavta's first Tuesday night shift. [Rita Poliakov photo]

"I've never slept outside before," he told us. "Is it safe here?"

When we left, I saw him tearing some cardboard in half for his bed.

While walking through a park, looking for clients, the driver and I started talking about living situations.

"I wouldn't know where to sleep," I said, looking around the park. The driver began to explain the difference between the bridge where the teenagers were staying and Chris' spot under a few trees.

"Chris's place is cleaner," the driver said. "It's his home."

Students impressed by Trudeau

Continued from page 14

During the question-and-answer period, questions ranging from the subjects of Tibet and poverty to Trudeau's childhood were asked.

"Until I was 13, I was just the prime minister's son. I got to travel a lot. By the time I was 13, I'd been to 50 countries," he said.

"My parents tried to make sure I had an ordinary life. I took the school bus to school, but it was followed [by the RCMP]... I used to read Archie comics and [think], 'It'd be so nice to have a normal life in Riverdale.' I just wanted to be normal."

The students were impressed by Trudeau's speech.

"I thought it was inspiring. I like his ideas on the youth perspective," Andi, a Grade 8 student, said.

Danielle, another Grade 8 student, said,"I really liked that he wasn't telling us what to do. It was our choice – we have a choice to do what we want in the world."

According to Trudeau, not everyone needs to become a politician to change the world.

"The way you connect to the world around you will define the way this world is when you're older," he told the students.

"Right now the decisions we make will have a huge impact on the future of this world. Each and everyone of us can become important and powerful."

Teachers invited to program

Continued from page 14

The 10 participants, who were invited to take part in the program, include mostly "new-career teachers" who have been teaching for less than five years, but also a few more experienced educators who Franklin knew were "looking for more support.

"It's an opportunity to get what they were looking for, and I felt the newer teachers could benefit from their experience," she said. Also, participating teachers have the opportunity to write a mini grant proposal and earn up to three graduate school credits, she said.

Drew Rothman, 29, a middle school math and science teacher, has been at Heschel for 2½ years and has been part of the program this year. He said that, for him, it's "good to review" strategies for dealing with different ways that students learn.

Also, he added, "it's important to have a place where we can sit and brainstorm."

On a practical level, Rothman used his $250 grant proposal to facilitate the building of wind generators by his students. "This grant was great, because it really allowed creativity."

"There wasn't anything like this when I started my career," said Franklin.

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Lori Palatnik

Mrs. Palatnik is an author and Jewish educator who has appeared on television and radio, and is well known for her wit, wisdom, and entertaining style. She is a much sought-after international lecturer, and is the author of "Friday Night and Beyond: The Shabbat Experience Step-By-Step", "Remember My Soul - What To Do In Memory of a Loved One", and co-author of "Gossip: 10 Pathways to Eliminate It From Your Life and Transform Your Soul". She regularly appears on radio and television, illuminating classical Jewish wisdom for the contemporary mind and soul.

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John Honsberger with Lunenfeld Graduate Student Kelly Seto

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

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Jewish Life

Drivers wanted

Class Act
By Daniel Held

As an experiential educator, I have multiple professions. I am a teacher, a counsellor and a social worker. I am also a nurse, a truck driver, a carpenter, a plumber, a computer technician, a chef, a shepherd and a travel agent.

At the end of each program I run, I am amazed by the variety of skills needed to put the event together. I thrive on the breadth of experiences and the dynamic nature of my job.

The most important vocation I hold, however, and the profession most needed in our Jewish community, is the bus driver.

I have never sat behind the wheel of a bus. What I mean by a bus driver is an educator who guides the route of students' Jewish education and directs them from one education station to the next. I draw the term "bus driver" from Prof. Jack Wertheimer's article titled *Linking the Silos*.

Jewish education cannot be a one-stop shop. Alone, day schools, synagogues, camps and youth movements cannot provide the holistic experience that a child needs to develop his Jewish self. Jewish students, and even Jewish adults, must find a variety of ways to connect themselves to Jewish living and learning and they need guidance along this path.

As a case study to think about the variety of Jewish experiences, let's consider Suzie, a high school student.

During the day, Suzie goes to school. Ideally, a Jewish day school that offers her richness both in Jewish studies and Jewish experiences. If not day school, she attends a supplementary program of Jewish studies in the evenings after her regular school. Schooling, however, is not enough.

Suzie is a member of a youth movement. There, she connects with Jewish peers, goes on weekend retreats and develops leadership skills.

Suzie is engaged in synagogue life. She goes with her parents on Shabbat mornings but abandons them at the door to go sit – and chat – with friends.

She volunteers once each week – not only fulfilling her mandatory community service hours but also engaging with the community in a way that is meaningful to her.

Suzie has participated in Jewish travel – she's participated in one of countless Tikkun olam trips to New Orleans, South America or Africa. She has been on the March of the Living or a summer Israel program.

For many years, Suzie has spent her summers at a Jewish camp, living Jewish life 24/7.

I spend countless hours with students like Suzie. Helping them find exciting summer experiences and meaningful community service projects. I help drive them from one Jewish activity to the next, challenging them to expand their circle of affiliation. I am a bus driver for Jewish teens.

But we often see on the back of yellow school buses: "Drivers wanted."

We don't have enough bus drivers. We need drivers to guide children from early childhood education into synagogue and school programs. We need drivers to connect the parents of young children to adult education classes and moms and tots.

We need drivers to send our high school grads on long-term Israel programs, to spend a year studying and experiencing all that Israel has to offer. We need drivers to connect them with Hillels and Jewish campus professionals.

Bus drivers serve as the connection point, not only easing transitions through stages of life but also pushing the individual to engage fully in Jewish living. As a driver in a high school, I urge my students to think about Judaism outside of the school, about their summers, their volunteer hours, their sports leagues and their Shabbatot.

While we don't have enough drivers, it is easy to get a driver's licence. Each of us knows people who could be dropped off at a new station and we can all drive the car pool.

Ready for the ingathering

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Through A Sephardi Window

There was once a time when a direct flight to Israel was non-existent, and one had to make a stop somewhere in Europe.

While not too many of us will remember those days – or even the days when passengers would retrieve their own luggage from under the belly of the plane and proceed to walk with their suitcases in hand to the terminal – some of us – the fortunate ones, I believe – will recall when the flight to Israel was still an experience itself.

It all began with the colours and symbols of the national carrier, El Al, which at one time was the only airline to make the journey. Then there were the "Shalom" greetings of the flight attendants, who in those days were still called stewardesses. One sensed that even while still in North America awaiting take-off, one was, at least in part, already in Israel.

Of course, nothing could rival the emotional high upon hearing and feeling the distinct thump of the landing. It wasn't the relief of *terra firma*, but the realization that one had just accomplished something that used to be virtually impossible, and that one had done so with relative ease. The pioneer excitement of the land of Israel was still palpable.

On cue with that thud came the music of the national anthem on the PA system. Then, an immediate roar of spontaneous applause would fill the plane.

All these things seem quite quaint today, if not outright cheesy. We have become more sophisticated and rather jaded. Today, the whole experience is taken in stride. "The Homecoming," even if just for a couple of weeks, is so much more subdued. "Thank you for flying...." is all we may hear.

Then there is the new airport. Everything about it says you have arrived at an up-to-the-minute and quite affluent country. As well, the airport comes to us, instead of us going to it. Its long sleeves extend out like tendons to receive passengers. It is all sparkling, massive, efficient and very, very impressive.

Its architecture is at once modern and Middle Eastern in style, and it is proudly second to none among the airports of the world. It is certainly eons away from that weary walk after a long trip, on a humid runway toward a distant building.

But looking beyond the duty free, the international brands, the shops, boutiques and cafés, there is something eerily unique about this place. Here, from this very space, the vast atrium from which many corridors with gates on all sides extend, people arrive and depart to anywhere on earth.

It will be here that one day, at least for some time, all departures will cease, and instead, this airport will serve exclusively as a one-way portal into the Land of Israel.

On that day, Jews from the four corners of the world will travel on a one-way ticket to Israel, and on that day, the prophecy will be realized: "And I will lift you on the wings of eagles to your land".

For those messianic days, a befitting airport has been built in Israel.

Jewish Life

How Jesus Became Christian by Barrie Wilson, Random House.

Jesus *was* a Jew

Books
Bernard Baskin

After 2,000 years, Jesus still remains a puzzling and enigmatic personality. Yet, writes Barrie Wilson, author of this contentious book, "Of all the Jewish males who ever lived, Jesus was by far the most influential."

Questions abound: did he intend to start a new religion? Did he consider himself the long-awaited messiah? Was his essential message distorted by those who came after him?

It is difficult, if not impossible, to answer these and similar questions because the "real Jesus" is hidden behind four different accounts of him in the Christian Bible. Aside from these Gospel versions, there are virtually no other sources from which to gain any authentic knowledge of his life or teachings.

The Gospels – written from 40 to 90 years after Jesus' death – are filled with gaps and contradictions, encrusted with legendary accretions, influenced by the theological preconceptions of their authors, and concerned with influencing or placating the Roman authorities at the time.

It is helpful to make a distinction between the terms Jesus and Christ and what they imply.

Jesus is a proper name for the Hebrew Joshua; it denotes a Palestinian of 19 centuries ago, around whom the Gospels weave a radiant biography. They indicate that his concern was an ethical and redemptive message to a strife-torn and restive society, addressed especially to the poor and outcast.

Christ, on the other hand, derives from the Greek word for "saviour," closely akin to the Hebrew Mashiach (which means "messiah" or "anointed"). Christ represents the concept of a man-God, not a mortal creature, who came voluntarily into this world to atone for the sins of men and women by self-immolation.

The life lived and the ideas taught by Jesus were in essence a product of his Jewish birth and background. When he was asked about the essentials of his religion, he replied, "Here, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One" and "Love your neighbour as yourself." Both are quotations from the Hebrew Bible, and the very foundation of Judaism's faith.

How Jesus Became Christian is a seminal work by a professor of humanities and religious studies at York University. His major thesis is that the teachings and true personality of Jesus – loyal to his people and faith – were altered by Paul and early Christian leaders to create a radically new religion.

James, Jesus' brother, led a group in Jerusalem that tried to win followers to a new but Jewish way of life. After his death, the movement was eventually "hijacked" by an alternative theology launched by Paul of Tarsus, Wilson says, a Hellenized Jew who contended that the laws of Moses could not bring a person to righteousness and could be ignored or nullified.

Wilson writes, "We tend to think of Paul's movement as just another form of early Christianity. It wasn't. It was a brand new religion entirely." Wilson continues bluntly, "Paul took a popular, charismatic Jewish teacher and transformed him into a universal Saviour." It was a caricature of the earlier faith.

Unhappily, asserts the author, it was Paul's teachings that became in future centuries, the anti-Semitism so pervasive in the Christian world.

Wilson's basic contention is not new, but rarely has it been so plausibly argued and so impressively documented. His style is engaging and meant for a popular audience. This provocative work should be widely read and discussed.

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Hoopoes, *Hatikvah* and menorahs

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Move over, menorah. Hold on, *Hatikvah*. Israel's got a brand-new symbol, the hoopoe.

Perhaps you've heard about the national competition to select an official bird for the State of Israel – and not surprisingly, the resulting controversy. We'll get to the hoopoe in a moment, but to mark this auspicious announcement and Israel's 60th, I thought this would be a good opportunity to look at some of the country's other official symbols.

In an excellent article, art historian Alec Mishory traces the history of Israel's two most famous symbols: its familiar blue and white flag with a Star of David at the centre and its emblem, a menorah cradled by two olive branches. According to Mishory, the search for a flag and emblem represents a balancing act between the use of religious symbols and modern ones with less religious connotations.

I learned that an early version for the flag is said to date back to Zionist Theodor Herzl's proposed white banner with seven gold stars. Those stars would represent the seven hours of daily labour advocated by Herzl. As for the familiar Star of David, unlike biblical symbols such as the shofar, lulav and Lion of Judah, formal Jewish ties to the Magen David are less defined. It was left to the flag's blue and white stripes to be reminiscent of the similarly striped tallit. **[tinyurl.com/6yrpm3]**

As for Israel's national anthem, *Hatikvah* has its roots in 1878 when Naftali Herz Imber wrote a poem titled *Tikvatenu* (*Our Hope*) to commemorate the founding of the Jewish settlement of Petach Tikvah (Gateway of Hope). It was officially confirmed as the Zionist anthem at the 18th conference in Prague in 1933. **[tinyurl.com/33e5oa]** But it would have to wait until November 2004 to be proclaimed Israel's official anthem. **[tinyurl.com34mn52]**

Things moved quicker in the search for an official symbol marking the country's 60th year. Chosen over five other contenders **[tinyurl.com/6dzcr8]**, Ynetnews.com describes the banner as a child holding a blue and white sheet of cloth swirling into the figure 60. And once again, in a move that proves that you can't please all Israelis all of the time, member of the Knesset Yitzhak Cohen has dissed the design. His critique: the child looked "frumpy and should get a haircut." **[tinyurl.com/6js9bb]**

That design was chosen by the Knesset's symbols and ceremonies committee. Unfortunately, not all their work is as pleasant. The task also falls to them to decide official names for Israel's wars, such as what to call the 2006 conflict with Hezbollah. The committee considered naming it the War of the North or the Shield of the North War, before choosing the Second Lebanon War. An official name was needed for use on the graves of the fallen and medals of honour. **[tinyurl.com/6jj5el]**

Unlike most Canadian provinces and U.S. states, Israel does not have an official flower or plant. But Asaf Abir suggests that if Israel did, he feels two candidates would certainly be in the running: the olive tree, mentioned in the Torah and depicted as a symbol of peace. And the sabra, the prickly pear cactus, whose name has come to represent native-born Israelis: thick-skinned and thorny on the outside yet sweet and soft inside. **[tinyurl.com/5px5kt]**

Israel may not have a national flower, but as mentioned, it has joined the ranks of nations with official birds. **[tinyurl.com/d8ug8]** The organizers of the competition, the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel, have created a Hebrew-language page on which you can see all the contenders for the coveted honour, including the yellow vented bulbul, the European goldfinch, the griffon vulture, the spur-winged plover, the lesser kestrel, the barn owl, the Palestine sunbird, the graceful warbler and the hoopoe with its distinctive crest and swooping beak. **[tinyurl.com/2scc25]**

With 35 per cent of the vote, the hoopoe ("*duchifat*" in Hebrew) was the clear leader. Although folklore tells us that King Solomon once called it wise, the *Jerusalem Post* didn't exactly give the bird a royal welcome with the headline, "Dirty, treif, but fit for a king, the hoopoe's our national bird." **[tinyurl.com/3ra4wo]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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B'nai Brith challenges cabinet on war criminal case

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

B'nai Brith Canada has fended off a legal challenge from Nazi collaborator Wasyl Odynsky that sought to prevent it from asking the federal cabinet to reconsider its decision not to strip him of citizenship.

Odynsky had filed a motion arguing that B'nai Brith did not have standing in the case, but the Federal Court's interim decision last week means B'nai Brith can ask a different Federal Court judge to order the cabinet to review its decision last May not to strip Odynsky and Vladimir Katriuk of their citizenship.

At the time, the Harper cabinet examined four cases involving Nazi collaborators who had been found by Federal Court judges to have lied about their wartime activities. The findings made each of them liable to lose their citizenship, but the cabinet stripped only Jacob Fast and Helmut Oberlander of citizenship, leaving the legal status of Katriuk and Odynsky unchanged.

No reasons were given for the decisions, but B'nai Brith lawyer David Matas believes cabinet relied on documentary submissions from Odynsky and the Ukrainian Canadian Congress. The documents, which were revealed during the Federal Court proceedings, indicate Odynsky claimed that he didn't lie about his wartime role as a labour camp guard, that he was not a war criminal, that he had ties to the community and that he had stayed out of trouble in Canada.

Matas said those arguments "are not legally relevant" to the question of whether or not his citizenship should be stripped. "The only relevant question is did he lie" when obtaining citizenship, Matas said.

A Federal Court judge found in 2001 that Odynsky served as a guard in an auxiliary unit at the Trawniki and Poniatowa labour camps and that he did not reveal those facts when immigrating to Canada. Trawniki was a training centre for Ukrainian guards who were enlisted as auxiliaries to SS killing units.

Katriuk had been a volunteer member of Ukrainian battalion 118 in Byelorussia (now Belarus) under the control of the Waffen SS. The unit was implicated in numerous atrocities, including the deaths of thousands of Jews in Belarus between 1941 and 1944. The Federal Court judge who heard the case said, "I find it difficult, if not impossible, to accept [Katriuk's] evidence that he did not participate in any important military operation while his battalion was in Byelorussia."

Matas said prior to making its decision, cabinet should have heard from Jewish groups, which have an interest in the cases. Cabinet also erred by going beyond the scope of its discretion, he said, because the Citizenship Act limits the discretion of the cabinet and doesn't permit it to accept new grounds in deciding whether or not to strip a suspect of citizenship.

Matas noted citizenship cases involving Nazi-era collaborators have languished in the legal system and before cabinet for years. He said he hoped the federal government won't appeal last week's interim Federal Court decision and permit the case to proceed to court to be heard on its merits.

Toews criticizes Arbour, defends Israel

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Conservative MP and president of the treasury board, Vic Toews, called outgoing UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, "a disgrace" for her position on Israel.

Toews uttered the remark last week in the House of Commons in response to calls by Liberal MP Martha Hall-Findlay urging the government to acknowledge Arbour – a former judge on the Supreme Court and international war crimes prosecutor – on her work as high commissioner.

Arbour has "already been congratulated by people of the world over her courage and candour, but here, this Conservative government is remaining silent, humiliating Canada in front of the international community," Hall-Findlay said during debate on June 17.

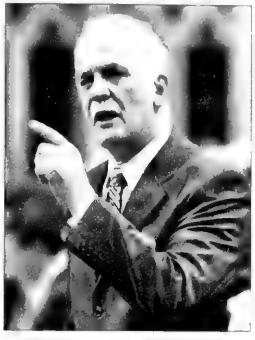
She added that Arbour has helped to "combat abuses and indignities against the world's most disenfranchised. She is world renowned as one of the most courageous and accomplished women this country has ever produced."

Hall-Findlay later asked Toews to retract his comment but he refused.

"The comments that Louise Arbour has made in respect of the state of Israel and the people of Israel are, in fact, a disgrace and I stand by those words," he said.

Afterward, a spokesperson for the PMO sought to mitigate the government's official position on the matter, noting that former foreign affairs minister Maxime Bernier and his interim replacement, MP David Emerson, have both "saluted and congratulated Mme. Arbour on her career. That said, the government hasn't always agreed with the positions she has taken."

Calls by *The CJN* to Toews were not returned by deadline.


Vic Toews

In the past, Arbour has been called to task by Jewish organizations and UN Watch – a Geneva-based watchdog organization led by Jewish Montrealer Hillel Neuer – for a perceived unwillingness to defend the Jewish state and call out anti-Semitism in the face of Arab member states' pressure to isolate and vilify Israel and Zionism in the UN.

UN Watch was particularly critical of Arbour in a report it issued late last year, titled *The United Nations and Anti-Semitism 2004-2007 Report Card*, which said Arbour had been virtually silent on anti-Semitism during her tenure.

It also took her to task for limiting her response to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's Holocaust denial and threats to Israel in a private letter.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee told *The CJN* his organization considers Toews a "great friend" of Israel.

"We've had serious concerns about [Arbour's] assessment of the Middle East," he said. "We've had occasion to engage her a number of times and left those encounters less than enthused about her understanding of the situation."

Fogel added: "Toews was most likely reflecting a frustration that we share in the failure of the UN… to move beyond this chronic vilification of Israel."

A Feb. 7 report in *The CJN* cast Arbour in a more redemptive light after she issued a statement denouncing the Arab Charter on Human Rights for categorizing Zionism as a form of racism.

At the time, Arbour noted the charter was contrary to a UN General Assembly resolution which rejected that linkage. She also criticized the charter for sanctioning the death penalty for children and for its approach to the rights of women and non-citizens.

"Throughout the development of the Arab Charter, my office shared concerns with the drafters about the incompatibility of some of its provisions with international norms and standards," she said.

Frank Dimant, spokesperson for B'nai Brith Canada, said in a statement last week that Toews' remarks were "justified" because Arbour's record on Israel was consistently poor. "She condemned the Jewish State when it sought to carry out [its] right to protect its citizens against terrorist attacks," he said.

Arbour will step down from her position on June 30 and it's speculated that she may return to Canadian politics and run as a Liberal in the next federal election.

Behaviour

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Winnipeg mother says she tried to wipe off swastika

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The mother of two children who were seized from their home after her seven-year-old daughter came to school with a swastika and other markings on her body says she tried to remove the swastika.

"I tried to wipe off the swastika on my daughter's arm before she went to school. I tried with a baby wipe and then nail polish remover. I guess I could have tried harder," she said in a telephone interview with *The CJN*.

The mother said she kicked out her husband, whom she said drew the swastika on the child, once she was served with court documents containing allegations against her by Winnipeg's Child and Family Services (CFS).

"I didn't understand why the school would be so alarmed. Then I saw things [in the documentation from CFS] that my daughter had said [to school officials]. My daughter was talking about a good way to kill a nigger. These aren't things I told her. These would have been things my husband told her," the mother said.

She added: "[My husband] never worked, so he was home with the kids. These are things that he said. I wasn't at home to hear them… There was also a drinking issue. He [my husband] was drinking and was able to hide it from me for a good period of time."

The mother said that she learned from CFS that in addition to the swastika, her daughter had the white supremacist tag of "14/88" on her body when she went to school.

The number 14 refers to a familiar slogan containing 14 words: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." The 88 represents the letters "HH" (H is the eighth letter of the alphabet), which stands for "Heil Hitler."

The mother, who wears a silver necklace with an etching of a swastika around her neck, also told *The CJN:* "I don't know anyone who doesn't know what [the tag "14/88"] means."

She also said that her original lawyer "dropped both me and my husband. I don't know why."

She added: "I have new legal counsel but I would rather not say who… I think that my ex-husband is getting a lawyer from legal aid."

The mother's former lawyer, John Ramsay, did not return calls and his secretary said he is not speaking to the media.

The mother said she is hopeful that an agreement will be arrived at with CFS for the children to be returned to her home gradually, and at first on weekends.

"I know that the CFS social worker is backing me and is not backing [my husband]… Slow integration of the kids back into my home would be the best for everybody," she said.

August Kreis III, the leader of the Aryan Nations, based in South Carolina, told the *Winnipeg Free Press* that his organization is offering to provide the mother and her husband financial, legal and other resources in their efforts to get their children back. The *Free Press* also reported that the words "Aryan Pride" were marked on the seven-year-old's body.

Debra Poskar, legal counsel for the CFS said she couldn't comment on the case, because it's before the courts.

The case was next scheduled to be heard in child protection court on June 23.

Ottawa exhibit chronicles Nazi eugenics policy

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — The Canadian War Museum has recently opened Deadly Medicine: Creating the Master Race, an exhibit organized and circulated by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

Through storyboards, artifacts, photographs and video clips, the exhibit examines how eugenics – the belief that humanity can be improved by encouraging some people to have children while preventing others from doing so – was employed by the Nazis in their quest to create a "master race."

Though focusing on the horror of the Nazis' use of eugenics to "cleanse" Germany of those deemed unfit and undesirable, the exhibit begins by putting eugenics in historical context, which included the belief by many supporters in the United States, parts of Europe and even in Canada in the early 20th century that eugenics would reduce the incidence of physical and mental infirmity in society.

Many Canadians will no doubt be surprised to learn that both Alberta and British Columbia enacted sterilization laws that weren't repealed for nearly 40 years.

The exhibit explores how the use of eugenics progressed in Nazi Germany from a way to control the reproduction and marriage of those deemed biologically "unfit" to an even more sinister method of weeding out those considered "racially" unfit, to ultimately being used as a method of eliminating the country's Jews, among other "undesirables."

One chilling caption lists the conditions for which Germans were forcibly sterilized: "Between 1934 and 1945, an estimated 400,000 Germans were surgically sterilized on account of their 'suffering' from any of nine conditions: 'feeblemindedness,' schizophrenia, manic-depressive disorder, genetic epilepsy, Huntington's chorea, genetic blindness, genetic deafness, severe physical deformity and chronic alcoholism."

"This exhibition provides visitors with an opportunity to explore the origins and rationale for Nazi Germany's racial policies and to understand how such policies contributed to the Holocaust," said Mark O'Neill, the war museum's director general.

Introducing the exhibit at a preview for the media, Susan Bachrach, curator of special exhibits at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, expressed gratitude to the Canadian War Museum for hosting it.

"Everyone in our museum is very excited about this collaboration, and I am very happy that the museum convinced us that the exhibit could be adapted for a bilingual presentation."

Deadly Medicine was first shown at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum from 2004 to 2006 and has travelled to a number of venues since then. Next March, it will be in Berlin. The exhibit will remain in Ottawa at the war museum until Nov. 11.

ש'שאר מ'נ'נ

גידי קורן וחברים

זוכרים את טל דורון

לפני כשנה נכנעה טל דורון בת הארבע לסרטן המוח בבית החולים שלנו. חברי שמעון זר אביב העביר לטל את הספר התקליט של הצוות "זנבות" שלי . אמה, אביה ואחיה התאום נעם החליטו לתעל את הענון והשכול לאנרגיה חיובית שתעזור לילדים אחרים. וכך כתבה לי קים דורון:

"טל ראתה את המחזה שלך "זנבות" ומאז נהנתה ממנו בזמן אשפוזה בבית החולים. אנחנו מתגייסים עכשיו לעזור למחקר של סרטן המוח בילדים ומומינים את הקהילה שלנו להצטרף.

LifeBeat הוא מופע מלהיב שמארגן ומבוצע על ידי רופאים, אחיות,וטראפיסטים שיתקיים בין ה- 19 וה- 21 בינוי.

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מה יהיה

איך מתמודדת מדינה דמוקרטית נגד חמאסטן? איך נשאים ונתנים עם חלאות האדם הנרצעות שבתבל? אלה הן שאלות שההנהגה הישראלית צריכה להתמודד איתן כל יום. מאז מדגדג בקצות האצבעות להכנס לרצועת עזה ולעשות שם סדר, אבל אז נזכרים שגם כשצה"ל היה שם-הוטרדו ישובי עוטף עזה, ואז גם חוזרת ההבנה שהרבה חיילים ישראלים יקריבו שם את חייהם. ומנגד עולה המחשבה הקשה שברגעים אלה ממש אין צבא הגנה לישראל מגן על תושבי ישראל.

לאור זה אולי לא מפתיע ש"מדד הריבונות השנתי" של מרכז רבין מגלה שכמעט ארבעים אחוז מהישראלים תומכים ומקבלים את רעיון הירידה מן הארץ. "שלום טורונטו" מדווח ששליש מן המגזר היהודי פונים לקבלת אזרחות חלופית לעומת שישה אחוז בלבד במגזר הערבי. מדד רבין גם מדווח שממש ברגעים אלה שלש מאזרחי ישראל מצויים בתהליך של פנייה (או שסיימו אותה) לנציגות של מדינה זרה. אלה דברים שדורשים דיון מעמיק על איכות החיים בארץ, כפי שהיא נראית לישראלי שחי שם, ולא זה שרק בא לחופשה. אבל ששאר בינתיים.

איך קוראים לפיל

דברים ששלחה לי חסידה דויד:

איך קוראים לפיל ששם לך רגל?	מפיל
איך קוראים לפיל שאוהב ילדים?	פדופיל
איך קוראים לפיל שהגיע באניה?	מעפיל
איך קוראים לפיל עם מחלת נפילה?	אפילפסיה
איך קוראים לפיל שמפיק סרטים?	שפילברג
איך קוראים לפילה שמקיימת יחסים עם גבר נשוי?	פילגש
איך קוראים לה אם היא מושכת מאוד?	סקסאפיל
איך קוראים לפיל עָרְיוני?	טפיל
איך קוראים לפילה שרוחצת אנשים זקנים?	פיליפינית

מחיר הדלק

עושה רושם שמחיר הדלק יתניחל לתפיל קורבנות. לפי הדווחים- ממש בימים אלה שוקלת "אל על" להפסיק את פעילותה בקיים לא רווחים. להפתעת רבים מאתנו-גם הקו לטורונטו נמצא ברשימה הזאת. יהיה מאוד חבל, כי ממה שמדווחים נוסעים רבים, ומנסיוני האישי-השירות של "אל על" לארץ בימים אלה וזכה לשבחים רבים ומוערך מאוד על ידי הקהילה שלנו.

Petition for Israeli MIAs presented in Parliament

Urges MPs to use 'all reasonable means' to bring about return of missing soldiers

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — As reports surfaced that some of Israel's captured soldiers will soon be released in a prisoner exchange with the Palestinians, a petition was presented to Parliament last week asking that Canada help free them and others being held by radical Islamic groups.

B.C. MP James Lunney stood in the House of Commons on June 17 to present petitions with nearly 10,000 signatures calling on Parliament to use "all reasonable means, including the application of economic sanctions and the severing of diplomatic ties with the governments of Lebanon, Syria and Iran, in order to bring about the return of Israel's missing soldiers."

The petitions – on behalf of Ehud Goldwasser, Eldad Regev, Gilad Schalit, Guy Hever, Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Yehuda Katz, Tzvi Feldman and Majdy Halabi, as well as and on behalf of Eli Cohen, who was hanged in Syria more than 30 years ago and whose remains were never returned – were delivered to Lunney by Renanah Goldhar who, along with other volunteers in Toronto, collected the signatures. Goldhar has been involved for a number of years with helping the families of Israel's missing soldiers.

Pictured, front, are petition organizer Renanah Goldhar of Toronto and Senator Mira Spivak, and, back from left, Aaron Posluns; Paul Merkley of the International Christian Embassy; Jack Silvertone; MP James Lunney; Orit Kremer from the Israeli Embassy; Elizabeth Cheesbrough, executive assistant to MP Joe Volpe; MP Bev Shipley; MP David Sweet; and Michael Mendel and Noah Kochman of the Israeli Embassy.

Following the presentation to Parliament, Goldhar and a number of MPs met with Lunney to discuss the issue of the missing soldiers and Canada's role in helping to free them. Goldhar read an e-mail from Goldwasser's mother that she had hoped to share with all MPs.

"You came here, today, to show your support for three innocent Israeli soldiers kidnapped by the Hezbollah and the Hamas. However, your being here today has a wider moral meaning: in coming here today you are warning the world about the infiltration of Islamic fundamentalism and its dangerous groups, which already operate and live among your communities," Goldwasser's mother said in her e-mail.

Goldhar distributed bookmarks with the pictures of nine missing Israeli soldiers, which she said would also be given to all members of the Canada-Israel Parliamentary Friendship group.

Ontario MP David Sweet said, "We have great compassion. We are great friends. Anything we can do to help, we will."

Lunney added: "Sadly, the people we are dealing with are not known for their good care of prisoners… it would be wonderful, it would be miraculous, to have some of the boys returned to their families."

Orit Kremer, a consul at the Israeli embassy, thanked Goldhar on behalf of the Israeli government and emphasized that "we are doing things all the time to try to get the boys back."

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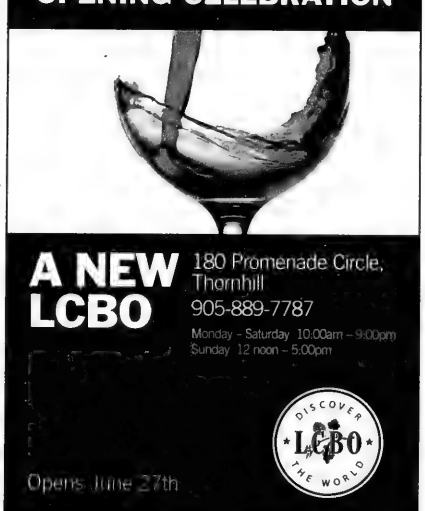

Media advisor explains disproportionate Israel coverage

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Retired colonel Miri Eisen, who has been Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's foreign media adviser since the Second Lebanon War, was here recently to address the women's campaign of the Combined Jewish Appeal.

In her talk, Eisen, who has been at the forefront of presenting Israel's case to the media around the world, focused on why Israel gets a disproportionate amount of media attention.

"There are 340 international media correspondents stationed in Jerusalem. For the last 15 years, the largest contingency of foreign media personnel in the world aside from Washington, has been in Israel," said Eisen, who left her position three months ago in order to complete her doctoral dissertation in security studies at Haifa University.

The mother of three young children and married to a career officer in the IDF, Eisen said that one of the reasons that Israel has so many foreign correspondents is that "the standard of living is much higher in Israel than in neighbouring countries in the Middle East, so it is an attractive location."

In Israel, she said, foreign correspondents "can film anything, because it is open and democratic."

Eisen, who served for 20 years in the Israeli intelligence community, said that in Israel "we have the most critical press on earth."

According to Eisen, all foreign correspondents are responsible for covering not only Israel but the Palestinian territories, and as such they have to pass checkpoints on a regular basis.

Checkpoints are by their nature points of friction, she said, and not always the most pleasant place to be. A lot of what foreign correspondents cover are conflict areas, and so there is little emphasis on regular life in Israel.

"It is difficult for a foreign correspondent not to notice the thriving mood in Israel versus the mood in the Palestinian territories, or in Gaza. The foreign correspondent comes out affected. I can try to put things in context [for them] but it is difficult to stop the feeling they have," she said.

Another reason that Israel gets so much attention is that "Sunday is a slow day [for news], and Israel is the only place in the world where there is a cabinet meeting every Sunday. So this gets attention," said Eisen, who was born and raised in northern California.

Additionally, there are 25 cameramen stationed in Israel and the Palestinian territories for Reuters and the Associated Press, which is a disproportionate amount, and therefore there are more images emanating from Israel than other parts of the world.

Eisen believes that "as bad as Israel's image is in the media, the image of the Palestinians is worse. Ever since Hamas has taken over in Gaza, the world sees the Palestinians as being violent.

Eisen noted that Palestinian spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi is not in the media as much as she used to be. "Hanan Ashrawi is having difficulty with her own [Palestinian] leadership. Many moderate speakers are taking a backseat because if you look at the Palestinian people right now, there are defining their own future, and it's not clear [what is going to emerge]," she said.

In the Second Lebanon War, Eisen said, there were three parallel stories. The first was the story that the Israeli media were telling, which was about Israel responding in a just war to the kidnappings of Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah. It was also the story of Israel having to ready the home front in response to rocket attacks in the north. "The Israeli media focused on whether the bomb shelters were ready," said Eisen.

But four days into the war the story changed for the international media, which began focusing on foreign nationals having to leave Lebanon, and whether Israel's response in Lebanon was proportional. The third parallel story was one that was shown by the Arab media, which was that "Israel wasn't managing to make Hezbollah disappear and look how well Hezbollah was doing.

"There was a real disconnect between the story in the Israeli media and the foreign media," she said.

According to Eisen, the best thing that supporters of Israel can do, "is to talk about Israel, and give the personal perspective of what life is like there."

When asked about the corruption scandal that has ensnared Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Eisen said, "I believe in Ehud Olmert as a person. I worked for him. I don't believe the allegations against him."

She said that she stopped working for Olmert a short while ago, "This had nothing to do with any allegations against him. I left work so that I could see my children more. I couldn't keep all of the long hours," she said.

Miri Eisen

More doctors quit in life support case

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Two critical care doctors have quit working at Winnipeg's Grace Hospital rather than obey a court order to treat Sam Golubchuk, an 84-year-old Orthodox Jewish man who has been on life support since last fall.

A third doctor has refused to act as an attending physician to Golubchuk, but is still working in the hospital's intensive care unit.

Golubchuk is alive today because his children obtained an injunction last November preventing doctors from removing his life support against the religious beliefs and wishes of his family. The injunction requires doctors to treat Golubchuk until a trial takes place in the case. It's scheduled to begin Sept. 15.

The resignation of Dr. Anand Kumar and Dr. Bojan Paunovic leaves only four other critical care doctors working at the hospital. One of them is Dr. David Easton, who refuses to attend to Golubchuk. All three doctors have privileges to work at other hospitals in the city.

In a letter to the hospital, Kumar wrote: "If we honestly continue to follow the court mandate… we will likely have to continue to surgically hack away at his [Golubchuk's] infected flesh in order to keep infection at bay." He added that continued treatment " is tantamount to torture."

Heidi Graham, spokesperson for the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA), which oversees the hospital, said on June 16, that the "WRHA and the hospital have now developed a plan whereby there will be one attending critical care physician of record for this patient [Golubchuk] and that doctor will be supported by two other critical-care specialists. The other critical care specialists are then free to schedule rotations as they wish at the Grace. This will ensure that all patients at the Grace have proper care at all times."

Neil Kravetsky, the family's lawyer, said that "Dr. Paunovic and Dr. Kumar are the original defendants sued for trying to end Mr Golubchuk's life. Their actions now are self serving… The hospital better treat him [Golubchuk], because if not, it is in contempt of court."

Miriam Geller, Golubchuk's daughter says, "This is just a ploy. Dr. Paunovic is head of the ICU at Grace, so how could he quit? I was at the hospital the other day and they called Dr. Kumar on the overhead system, even though this was after the [supposed] day that he quit. This is all a ploy [by these doctors] to do what they want to do. If there's a court order… are they laughing in front of the judge?"

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Nurse who served in 1948 shines the light on others

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

"Listen, I'm not the type that likes to talk about myself," said Miriam Robinson, a veteran of Israel's War of Independence, who would rather sing the praises of the men and women she fought with.

But despite her reluctance to talk about herself, Robinson, who chose not to reveal her age for personal reasons, was eager to share stories about events she witnessed and experienced while fighting to establish a Jewish state in 1948.

Sitting in her apartment, shuffling through old photos, news articles and stories she wrote, Robinson, née Miriam Erlich, began her story when she arrived in Kfar Saba, Israel, from Poland in 1930 with her parents and siblings.

"Kfar Saba didn't have streets, didn't have nothing. The only thing we had was running water," she said, adding that Kfar Saba was a small community of about 3,000 people.

She said her family had a hard time making ends meet, and just a few years after moving to Israel, her father was ready to move back to Poland.

"My mother said, 'No way. I'd rather die here from hunger with my children than be called a dirty Jew.'

"On Sundays, they used to throw stones into Jewish homes in Poland, and my brother was only six when a [Polish man] who was drunk ran after him with a knife, trying to kill him."

Robinson recalled life before Israel's independence, when Palestine was ruled by the British Mandate. She said it was illegal to build kibbutzim, but if a group of people managed to erect a roof on four posts before the British got wind of their plans, they couldn't remove them from the land.

The first kibbutz she remembers was Kibbutz Hakovesh, which was founded by Zionist youth from the Hashomer Hatzair and Hechalutz movements just north of Kfar Saba, but she helped establish Kibbutz Eyal, which was just five minutes from her home.

"We got a piece of land north of the sea of Galilee near the Hula Lake, in '47... We went at night, quietly, and everyone was afraid to open their mouths so the British wouldn't [find out]."

She said they erected a couple of wooden shacks and "it was de facto. They couldn't do anything, the British, once there were houses there."

Miriam Robinson 60 years ago

The conversation often shifted from her own experiences, to those of others she admired and respected. She spoke often about her two older brothers.

Shimshon, the eldest, was described as a gentle boy, a bookworm, but also as a brave fighter in the Alexandroni brigade in the 1948 war.

But it was her second brother, Elazar, who was "the bravest of the brave. There weren't many like him," she said.

"Since he was 10 or 12, he was very active [in the underground movement]. One day we were sitting in the middle of the street. They weren't paved streets – just sand and pebbles. And we were digging, and suddenly, I found a bullet and another bullet and another. I ran to Elazar and said, 'Look! Bullets!'

"He comes, looks and said, 'OK put it back. Tomorrow morning we'll come back and dig everything out.'

"The next morning, we came, we started to dig, but nothing was there. I came back to him, and I said, 'Look, there's no bullets.' And he said, 'What bullets? I don't know about bullets. Forget about it.'

"At night, the Haganah came and took the bullets... He was the first to know everything."

She recalled many adventures during which her brother could have been hurt, but he always escaped harm. The irony, she said, is that after having escaped so many dangers unhurt, he succumbed to cancer at the age of 50.

Robinson, like her brothers, was also involved in the underground movement.

"When the unrest broke, I went back to the kibbutz and took first-aid courses. We were trained with rifles. This was Haganah training, but I joined the Palmach right after," she said, adding that she served as a nurse.

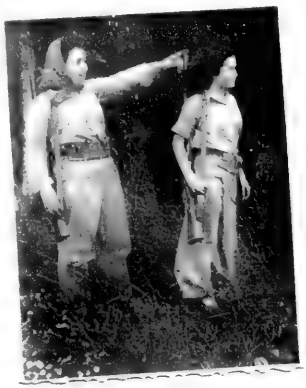
"I didn't even have shoes. They gave uniforms but not shoes. I went with sandals."

She said when she learned of Israel's independence in May 1948, she was happy, as were most others.

"But you know what? My mother was a very clever woman. She worried, and said, 'Yes, it's nice to have independence, but we are going to have a lot of trouble.' She saw it."

She said that even before the Arab nations attacked Israel, some mothers were crying when their children went off to fight, but her mother knew what had to be done.

"My mother told us, 'Children, we have to fight. If we die, we die with dignity and not like cowards...' We didn't think we were going to win this time. Really. But I knew that if I died, I would die with dignity."



Robinson, on the right, stood guard for the Haganah

They were so gentle and nice in one way and so courageous in another way. You wouldn't believe that the people were so strong and powerful."

She told a story of a man named Rafi, who was shot in the stomach five times. The doctors weren't able to remove the five bullets from his stomach, yet once his wounds healed, he went back to fight in the war.

Always looking to shine the light on others who contributed to Israel's victory, Robinson spoke enthusiastically about two men she only knew as Ra'anana and Gavrush, who, she feels, don't get enough recognition for helping to open the Burma Road to Jerusalem.

"Jerusalem was under siege and you couldn't go in or out. The situation in Jerusalem was awful, so three commanders of the Palmach – two of them were Ra'anana and Gavrush – went up with the Jeep... and they helped open the Burma Road and Jerusalem was saved," she said.

From left, Shimshon Erlich, Robinson's (then Erlich) oldest brother, Robinson, and Elazar Erlich, her second oldest brother, stand outside their home in Kfar Saba.

"Gavrush was a little more rough, but Ra'anana was so gentle and so kind to everybody. He was outstanding. You would never believe that behind that was such a rock of a man."

Robinson, who served in the army until 1949, shortly after Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion dismantled the Palmach and dispersed the soldiers to different cities, met and married a Canadian from Winnipeg who was a Machal volunteer.

She currently lives in Toronto and has two sons – one lives in Ottawa, and the other in Spain.

It's been almost 60 years since Robinson served in the army, but her conviction that it is important to fight for the Jewish state is as strong today as it was in 1948.

"It wasn't a sacrifice. It was a part of us."

When she served as a nurse during the war, Robinson said that at their hospital – which was an abandoned building they cleaned and prepared to serve as a hospital – they didn't even have gowns for the wounded. They would sleep in their undershirts and underwear. They didn't have enough dishes, so the wounded ate in shifts. The water came from a well.

Robinson also helped establish a collecting station for wounded soldiers in the Negev in December 1948 to treat the soldiers who fought in Operation Horev to expel the Egyptian army from the area.

But one of the memories that stands out in her mind from her experience as a nurse was that her patients never complained and remained dignified despite their pain.

"They didn't cry, they didn't scream. They just bit into their hands or their lip and whispered for something to ease the pain.

Wounded soldiers and nurses at the hospital

Class Acts

ASSOCIATED TURNS 100: Associated Hebrew School students Gina Desatnik, left, and Lori Maresky ate cotton candy at Associated's centennial birthday bash on June 11 at the school's Hurwich Education Centre on Finch Avenue. Some 2,000 students, alumni, parents and staff enjoyed the entertainment of the Magen Boys, Critters, Elite Basketball, Mystic Drumz, Sonshine and Broccoli, as well as a petting zoo, arts and crafts, and mascots from the Argos, Marlies and Raptors.

LEMONADE SALE: Lucas Mustapic-Viana, left, and Logan Thompson took a turn as part of the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre's recent kids lemonade stand and bake sale that raised some $800 for the United Way.

RED WARRIORS: Middle school students at United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tzedec campus competed with great excitement in their June 13 colour war. Pictured are several members of Team Red, back row, from left, Hailey Adler, Jordana Levman, Aviva Levman, Hannah Markovits, Jennifer Sherman and Jacqueline Levy; and front Jared Cohen, left, and Daniel Weiman.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel tov to Marilyn & David Bisgould on your 50th wedding anniversary! Family and friends love you and wish you many more happy years together!

Mazal tov to David & Esther Gold on celebrating your 50th wedding anniversary. Love, your entire family.

Happy anniversary to Shoshana & Sheldon Hauer June 25. Wishing you many more happy, healthy years together! Love, Ashley, Josh and the family.

Abbey & Steven are engaged. Parents Fran & Marty Wolfe, Simone & Ira Smith. Grandparents, Lena & Murray Rothberg, Lil Abel, Miriam & Stanley Smith.

Mazel tov to Harry Orbach Miller on his recent bar mitzvah.

Tita & Sam Srour, Arda & Harvey proudly announce the upcoming wedding of Charlie to Jenya, Aug. 31 in Florida.

Sisters Leila, 6 and Hannah, 4, join their brother born April 24. Happy relatives include parents Rehya & Wally Yazbek, Bubbie Terri, Nono Luigi and Auntie Evie.

Introducing Jack Nathaniel Ganz, born May 14 to Kristen & Len Ganz. A brother for "big boy" Aaron and another grandchild for Bubbie Arlene.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
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NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINE. What's New deadlines: Thursday, June 26, is the deadline for the July 10 issue and Monday, July 7, is the deadline for the July 17 issue. There is no issue July 24. The July 17 issue will cover events from July 17 to 30. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Sunday, June 29

HADASSAH GARAGE SALE

Help a great cause and bring home some fabulous finds from a street sale to benefit Toronto Hadassah-WIZO run by the Aliyah Chapter. Find household items, small appliances, baby and kid essentials, clothing for all ages, collectibles, furniture, books and more, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. at 148 Fisherville Rd.

WINGATE MEETING

The Wingate Branch #256, Royal Canadian Legion invite all members and interested individuals to their breakfast meeting. 9:30 a.m. at 788 Marlee Ave. 416-782-5024

Other News

THE GIFT OF LIFE

Aish Toronto presents "Why I Donated My Kidney to a Stranger: The Gift of Life," the **Judith Dan** Memorial Community Lecture with **Lori Palatnik**. Wednesday, July 2, 8 p.m. at the Village Shul.

ORILLIA COUNTRY SHUL

The Orillia Country Shul resumes Shabbat morning services July 5 and continues through July and August at 10:30 a.m. This year's leaders are: **Cantor Tom Schwartz**, July 5; **Rabbi Michael Dolgin**, July 12; **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**, July 19; **Rabbi Cory Weiss**, July 26; **Rabbi Dan Gottlieb**, Aug. 2; **Dr. Elliott Melamet**, Aug. 9; **Rabbi Tina Grimberg**, Aug. 16; **Lionel Sharp**, Aug. 23; and **Rabbi Arthur Bielfeld**, Aug. 30. 151 Creighton St. S. Follow signs to Casino Rama, pass the bridge on Hwy. 12, go south one mile. 705-327-7069

YARCHEI KALLAH

The 14th annual Nishmat Yarchei Kallah takes place Aug. 5-7 at Yeshivat Or Chaim. **Simi Peters**, an instructor at Nishmat, the Jerusalem Centre for Advanced Jewish Study for Women, will teach "Exploring the Midrashic Mind." Information and registration, cfnishmat@gmail.com.

TRIPS TO ISRAEL

Beit Halochem offers two ways to experience Israel. A solidarity mission, Sept. 11-23, and a fully supported five-day bike tour of northern Israel, Courage in Motion, and celebrate Israel @ 60 alongside Israel's war veterans. Sept. 14-18. Information, www.cycleisrael.com or 905-695-0611.

Hebrew University Mission, Nov. 2-11. Live, learn and explore Israel through Jewish history, art, music and theatre with Hebrew University faculty. Information, **Merle Goldman**, 416-485-8000.

UJA Federation and **Israel @ 60 Toronto** offers an Israel @ 60 General Assembly mission to Israel, Nov. 9-20. Information, **Iris Glesinger**, iglesinger@ujafed.org or 416-635-2883, ext. 177.

Honest Reporting Mission, Nov. 9-15. The first half of the trip is in Jerusalem, the second half touring the north. Information, www.honestreporting.com/mission/nov2008/itinerary.asp

Jewish National Fund Mission, Oct. 28-Nov. 10. Tour from the Golan Heights to Eilat with a full day in Petra, Information, sharon.lehrer@jnf.ca.

FALL LECTURE SERIES

Temple Emanu-El offers its fall general interest lecture series on Mondays 2-4 p.m. Beginning Nov. 3 with "The American Presidential Election" with **Hugh Innes**, professor of media studies, Ryerson University; Nov.10, "Art in Nazi

Continued on page 29

New project to promote Yiddish in Toronto

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Yiddish Canada in the 20th Century, a new initiative to help groups organize a variety of programs to highlight the contribution of Yiddish language and culture to the fabric of Canadian and Jewish life, is in the planning stages.

Representatives from Toronto synagogues, schools, libraries and landsmanshaften came together recently to begin planning activities for Yiddish Canada in the 20th Century, which will take place throughout the city from September into 2009.

The project is being spearheaded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's committee for Yiddish and centre for Jewish knowledge and heritage, both of which will partner with community organizations to organize the activities for the initiative.

Susan Jackson, who heads the centre for Jewish knowledge and heritage, welcomed the participants.

"The remarkable thing about Yiddish," Jackson said, "is how it has enriched Ashkenazi culture well beyond the spoken language. Literature, music and ethnic identity have been deepened through Yiddish culture, a culture which did not end with the immigration of eastern Europe's Jews to Canada and other shores.

"A vibrant Yiddish culture was planted within our borders, beginning in the early 1900s and ending with an influx of Holocaust survivors in the late '40s and '50s. The multicultural fabric of Canada has been profoundly impacted by Yiddish, which is still being taught, sung and read today."

Committee for Yiddish chair Shelly Friedman outlined the concept behind programming for Yiddish Canada in the 20th Century and spoke about how the community organizations would be assisted by the committee for Yiddish in implementing the projects.

Ethel Cooper, co-ordinator of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's committee for Yiddish

"The project was very well received," said committee for Yiddish co-ordinator Ethel Cooper. "There was enthusiasm for the project and its theme and a call for communication and co-operation amongst the attendees."

She added that other organizations that wish to participate in the program will also be offered help.

"When we partner with community groups," Cooper said, "projects do not have to be in Yiddish, as we hope to interest not only Yiddish-speaking individuals but people who are attached to it culturally."

One of the major goals of this project, she said, is to keep the importance of Yiddish alive.

The representatives at the inaugural meeting received information on possible program ideas and suggested presenters. Topics proposed included the Yiddish press, radio, humour, theatre, literature, music and Yiddish in the haredi community.

Friedman told *The CJN* that the project was created by the committee for Yiddish to celebrate the significance of the Yiddish language and its subsequent enrichment of the tapestry of Canadian life during the past century.

"We should be proud and acknowledge the contributions Jews made during the past century," Friedman said. "These programs will highlight these contributions."

For more information on Yiddish Canada in the 20th century or to participate in the project, call Ethel Cooper, 416-635-2883, ext. 389, or e-mail ecooper@ujafed.org.

What's New

Continued from page 28

Germany" with **Ken Carpenter**, professor of art history, York University; Nov.17, "Fighting the Great Patriotic War: The Soviet Union and World War II" with **Arne Kislenko**, professor of history, York University; Nov. 24, "Five Great Recordings" with **Rick Phillips,** former host of CBC Radio's *Sound Advice*. $30 for the series. $10/lectures. For registration and information, call 416-449-3880.

WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

National Council of Jewish Women hosts a women's support group that meets to network, share, address concerns and have fun, in an informal and friendly environment. 4700 Bathurst St. TTC and wheelchair accessible. For information, call 416-633-5100. This program is free and is open to all women in the community.

JEWISH INFORMATION

Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto has info on community events, holidays, shuls, camps, kosher restaurants, etc. Call 416-635-5600 or visit www.jewishtoronto.com and click on "Doing Jewish In Toronto."

AMPUTEE SUPPORT

Chazak V'Ematz, outreach support for all amputees to help them adjust to life, meets to discuss new products and prosthetic devices. For information and confidential support, call **Ruth**, 416-783-3717.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information about these programs call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts "Jewish Toronto: Sunshine on Spadina," a presentation by **Bill Gladstone**, columnist, genealogist and author of *One Hundred Years in Canada: The Rubinoff and Naftolin Family Tree,* discussing the period between the two world wars. Enjoy a stimulating afternoon, reminiscences, conversation and refreshments. Thursday, July 3, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

PAL Seniors Group is going to Seneca Casino in Niagara Falls, N.Y., Thursday, July 10. Leaving Earl Bales Park at 9 a.m. For information and reservations, 416-398-2424.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Naturopath on "The Importance of Cardiovascular Health," July 16, 1 p.m.; Casino Rama, Wednesday, July 9; Fallsview Casino, Niagara Falls, Wednesday, July 30; Seniors walking group, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.; mah-jong, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Chai Shalom Social Club will be going to see *Jersey Boys*, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. $118, includes orchestra seats and bus. Reservations, 416-633-3838

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Special event movie, Wednesday, July 2, 1-3 p.m. Free.

Memory Boosters, Thursday, July 3, 11 a.m.-12 noon. Free. Call **Amanda**, ext. 126.

African Lion Safari, Wednesday, July 9. Members $60, non-members $70. Ticket and information, ext. 113.

Betel barbecue, Wednesday, July 9, 12-3 p.m. Members $5, non-members $8.

Israeli Festival, Wednesday, July 16, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Ticket and information, ext. 113.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Third annual IsReal Dance Festival, Friday, July 4-Sunday, July 6. Share the joy and fun of Israeli folk dancing in celebration this year of Israel @ 60 at the Al Green Theatre and MNJCC gym. Information, www.israelifolkdancingtoronto.com or strauch2@rogers.com or 905-761-0004.

Between Stages Playwright's Reading Series presents the 2007 Canadian Jewish playwriting competition winner *The Bleeding Season* by Ottawa's **Brandon Marlon.** The play explores the physical and psychological effects of the suicide terrorists on both Israelis and Palestinians. An exploration of the Israeli soul directed by **Ralph Small** with **Lauren Brotman, Jack Grinhaus, Sam Moses** and **Sam Owen.** Sunday, July 6, 2 p.m. Admission, suggested donation $8 at the door. Info, esthera@mnjcc.org or ext. 606.

Fringe @ the J presents three Fringe plays, July 2-13: *Lost Daughter* by **Tara Goldstein** at Al Green Theatre; *The Barbeque King* by **Mark Brownell** in Room 318; and *Taking Liberties* by **Dave Carley** in Room 318. For tickets and information, www.fringetoronto.com or 416-966-1062.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The BJCC has a special block of tickets for the first night of the play *Jersey Boys*, Thursday, Aug. 21 at the Toronto Centre of the Arts. Supporting this event helps give disadvantaged children a great summer at the BJCC's Centre Camp. Tickets, ext. 240.

Volunteers Needed

CIRCLE OF CARE

Do you like having guests for lunch but don't like to cook or can't figure out who to invite? Volunteer for Circle of Care's Let's Get Together lunch for seniors. Come out three hours once or twice a month and help make a senior guest feel special. Coffee and lunch provided. Contact **Selena**, 416-635-2900, ext. 465 or slynch@circleofcare.com.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

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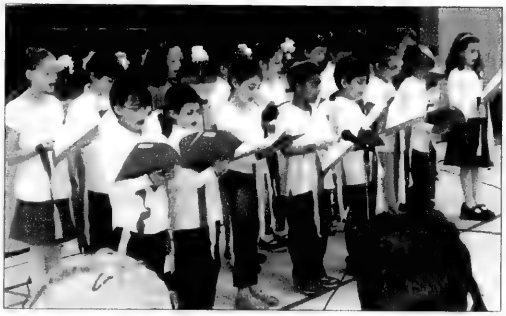
EMUNAH LEAH KIDRON CHAPTER HONOURED: Emunah Women of Toronto recognized the work of the women of the Leah Kidron chapter at a recent Family in Israel dinner. The chapter has supported Emunah projects in Israel for decades. The evening raised funds for two projects – the Ma'ayan Rivka Golden-Age Restaurant in Petach Tikvah, which makes sure that seniors receive one hot meal a day, and Neve Michael Children's Village in Pardes Chana, where children from the age of four to 18 come to escape unstable parenting, violence and abuse. With more than 250 residents, the village provides the children's physical, emotional, spiritual and academic needs. For information about Emunah, call 416-636-0036 or visit www.emunahcanada.org.



SIDDUR CEREMONY: Beit Rayim Synagogue and School recently held a siddur ceremony for their Grade 3 students. The program was organized by their teacher Nurit Levy and Beit Rayim's principal, Rabbi David Eligberg. Each student received a siddur with a specially designed cover that was made by their parents. For information about the school, contact Grace Tetelbaun, 905-889-0276, ext. 32, or visit www.beitrayim.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 22

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Harry Chaplick	Jun 8/08	66 Shields Avenue
Harry Appelton	Jun 5/08	64 Stacey Crescent
Leah (Lena) Sperling	Jun 10/08	364 Shanty Bay Road
Joseph Borenstein	Jun 10/08	3560 Bathurst Street
Susan Greenberg	Jun 10/08	877 Yonge Street
Ray (Rae) Grosberg	Jun 11/08	3560 Bathurst Street (Apotex)
Marsha Silverberg	Jun 14/08	110 Promenade Circle
Bill Lipson	Jun 14/08	484 Steeles Avenue W.
Bernard Reisman	Jun 12/08	138 Weldrick Road, West
Rose Persin	Jun 14/08	133 Torresdale Avenue
Izzie (Max Gold) Goldbli	Jun 14/08	70 Baif Blvd.
Michael Mack	Jun 13/08	85 Skymark Drive
Gloria Goodis	Jun 15/08	1 Emerald Lane
Dr. Saul Cohen	Jun 15/08	1829 Queen Street, East

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The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
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will take place
Sunday, June 29th, 12:00 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
B'nai Torah Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of the late
ETTA (GISELLA) GOODMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 29th, 1:00 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St. north of Major Mackenzie
Beth Tikvah New Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of
ESTHER BLUMA KRAKOWSKI ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, June 29TH
12:00 noon
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Lodzer Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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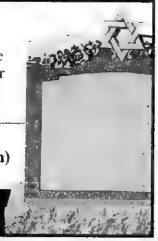

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On Campus

UWO president honoured

By NOAH SLEPKOV
Special to The CJN

Paul Davenport, the president of the University of Western Ontario, was honoured earlier this month by the Jewish National Fund at its annual London Negev Dinner for his "steadfast belief in the importance of diversity, tolerance of ideas, and support for free speech," JNF said.

The June 1 dinner featured a keynote address by Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz, and it highlighted Davenport's accomplishments during his 14 years as Western's president and his strong relationship with the Jewish community.

"Western has one of the largest representations of Jewish students and faculty in Canada," Sheldon Aaron, one of the dinner's co-chairs, said as he paid tribute to Davenport.

"Paul's support and respect for them, as well as those of Muslim, Christian, Hindu and other faiths, has created an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding that many other Canadian universities can only envy. Paul has promoted a culture at Western where students and faculty are encouraged to express their views in a respectful manner."

Under Davenport's leadership, the average grade of students accepted into Western has increased from 72 per cent to 86 per cent, Aaron said.

He also noted that Davenport has helped to attract approximately $462 million in funding to the university. Many of the university's top donors were at the dinner, including Richard Ivey, Sonia and Arthur Labatt, Seymour Schulich, and the Waks family, who recently supported the establishment of a chair in Jewish history.

Davenport's choice to accept the JNF honour became a topic of contention on campus after a small group of professors publicly urged him to reject it. As well, some 100 protesters from a number of Arab groups, including the Canadian Arab Federation, held a peaceful protest outside the hotel where the dinner was held.

Ironically, the dissent helped publicize the event and even encouraged some faculty members to attend the dinner.

Ben Singer, a UWO professor emeritus of sociology, said "that a lot of university people didn't go to the Negev dinners in the past, because they felt that the dinners were for the financial elite."

But this year, Singer said he, along with a few dozen other faculty members and a large contingent of students, were motivated to come to the dinner.

"I talked to several people who told me that they had not planned on going, and then when they saw what was going on at the campus they decided to go for that reason," Singer said.

Frank Simkevitz, executive director of JNF's Ontario region, said the event was "unquestionably one of the largest Negev dinners in London's history."

Simkevitz attributed the event's success not only to the large campus contingent but to Davenport's gregarious personality and ability to engage people.

"There was a joyous atmosphere throughout the evening which really impressed me," Davenport told *The CJN*.

"People had gathered not simply to honour me, but also to celebrate the many achievements of the Jewish National Fund and the people of Israel, achievements all the more remarkable because of the very difficult conditions which Israel must deal with every day," he said.

Davenport, born in Summit, N.J., holds honorary degrees from the University of Toronto, the University of Alberta and the International University of Moscow. He has also been named a Knight of the Legion of Honour by the government of France, and is an officer of the Order of Canada.

He has a PhD in economics from the University of Toronto and has taught economics at McGill University. He has also served as president of the University of Alberta.

QUEBEC CITY TOUR: Grade 7 students from Bialik Hebrew Day School visited the Shalom Quebec Exhibition at the Gare du Palais in Quebec City to commemorate Quebec's 400th birthday. The students took a guided tour of the exhibit and learned about the history and personalities who influenced and contributed to Jewish life and culture in Quebec City over the past 400 years. Pictured, from left, are Jacqui Mincer, Bialik vice-principal Beverley Young, exhibit director Simon Jacobs, Noam Hacker and Shannon Weismann. [Photo courtesy of Evolve Tours]

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Israel incapable of threatening Iran, official says in Tehran

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TEHRAN — Iran said Monday that Israel doesn't have the ability to threaten it militarily. The remarks came a few days after a U.S. newspaper reported that Israel's air force had apparently rehearsed a potential bombing raid of Iran's nuclear facilities.

Iran and Israel have engaged in a sharp exchange of words this month over suspicions that Tehran is looking to develop nuclear weapons, helping to push global oil prices higher.

"They do not have the capacity to threaten the Islamic Republic of Iran," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mohammad Ali Hosseini told a news conference.

He was asked about a *New York Times* report on Friday that quoted U.S. officials as saying Israeli jets had conducted a long-range Mediterranean exercise this month that appeared to be practice for a mission against Iran.

"They [Israel] have a number of domestic crises, and they want to extrapolate it to cover others. Sometimes they come up with these empty slogans," Hosseini said in comments translated by Iran's English-language Press TV satellite station.

On Sunday, Iran's defence minister accused Israel of "psychological warfare" and said Tehran would give a "devastating" response to any attack.

Mostafa Mohammad Najjar told state television that Iran would strongly counter any hostile action with a destructive response that considered all options, regardless of time and place.

Iran would resort to "all means available" if it was attacked, he said.

"Iran will come up with a devastating… response, without any time limit, to any hostile measure against our country," Najjar was quoted as saying, but he also said Iran would not initiate any tension or conflict

On Saturday, the official Iranian news agency IRNA quoted a government spokesperson as saying the exercises show how Israel jeopardizes global peace and security.

Also on Saturday, an Israeli official told the London-based *Times on Saturday* that the Iranians should view the exercise as a warning.

"Read the writing on the wall," the official urged Iran. "This was a dress rehearsal, and the Iranians should read the script before they continue with their program for nuclear weapons. If diplomacy does not yield results, Israel will take military steps to halt Tehran's production of bomb-grade uranium."

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's office declined to comment on the reported exercises, but a senior lawmaker in Olmert's Kadima party said Saturday that diplomatic efforts to curb Iran's nuclear program have failed and that the next one to two years will be critical.

MK Tzachi Hanegbi, who heads the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee, told Israel Radio that the world had to decide how to proceed.

As well, an Israeli military spokesman said of the *Times* report: "The Israeli Air Force regularly trains for various missions in order to confront and meet the challenges posed by the threats facing Israel."

On Friday, the UN nuclear watchdog chief, Mohamed ElBaradei, said a military strike on Iran would turn the Middle East into a fireball and prompt Tehran to launch a crash course to build nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, the European Union was scheduled to agree to a new round of sanctions against Iran on Monday over its refusal to meet international demands to curb its nuclear program, the EU's Slovenian presidency said.

"They are on the agenda to be adopted today," a presidency official said of a two-day meeting of EU ministers in Luxembourg that started on Monday.

The 27-member bloc had not detailed the new measures as of Monday, but EU diplomats have said they will target the financial sector and notably Iran's biggest bank, Bank Melli, with an asset and funds freeze.

The application of further sanctions on Iran was placed on the agenda of EU ministers as a so-called "A Point," meaning its adoption is just a formality.

The United States and the EU agreed this month that they're ready to supplement UN sanctions with further measures aimed at ensuring Iranian banks can't support terror activities.

Iran rejects suspicions that it's seeking the atom bomb and claims it has pursued uranium enrichment as part of what it says is a peaceful nuclear program.

Iran said Monday that it was encouraged by common points between separate proposals put forward by it and world powers aimed at defusing a nuclear dispute, but it again dismissed any suggestion of suspending uranium enrichment.

Hosseini said Tehran is studying an offer of economic and other incentives by six major powers trying to convince Iran to halt activity that the West suspects is aimed at making bombs.

But he didn't say when Iran would respond to the incentives proposal by the United States, Russia, China, Britain, Germany and France, which was handed to Tehran by European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana on June 14.

Iran has put forward its own package of proposals aimed at resolving the row, but diplomats say it ignores global concerns about its enrichment program, which can have both military and civilian uses.

"We believe this common ground is encouraging," Hosseini told a news conference, without elaborating. "We say that this common ground can help with the start of negotiations."

"Time is ripe for these talks and we should not lose this opportunity," he said. "We feel that compared to years past, there is a more pronounced serious will on the side of the other party."

The incentives package offered by the sextet is an updated version of one rejected by Iran in 2006.

Hosseini said Iran would respond to the incentives offer, which includes help in developing a civilian nuclear program and trade benefits, at an "appropriate time," and that it expected the six powers to study Tehran's proposals as well.

Iranian officials have repeatedly rejected stopping enriching uranium as a precondition for negotiations.

Their refusal to do so has drawn three rounds of United Nations sanctions since 2006, and western powers have warned of more punitive measures if Iran rejects the latest offer.

"Suspension of enrichment has no logical reason behind it," Hosseini said. "We believe that no proposals should be made that lead to the Iranian nation being denied its rights."

The United States says it's focusing on diplomatic pressure to thwart Tehran's nuclear ambitions, but it has not ruled out military action as a last resort.

The price of U.S. light crude for August delivery rose on Monday, partly because of concerns over the report that Israel's air force had rehearsed a possible bombing run against Iran.

On Friday, oil prices jumped more than $3 on reports of rising tensions between Israel and Iran.

Energy experts are concerned any conflict in Iran could lead to a shutdown of the Strait of Hormuz, a waterway separating Iran from the Arabian Peninsula, through which roughly 40 per cent of the world's traded oil is shipped.

Schalit family won't drop court bid against ceasefire

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JERUSALEM — The parents of abducted Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit vowed Monday to press on with their legal bid to keep the Gaza-Israel crossings closed, despite apparent pressure from the Defence Ministry.

The opening of the crossings is part of the ceasefire deal between Israel and Gaza rulers Hamas, which came into effect Thursday.

The High Court of Justice was set Monday to rule on the petition. Defence officials say they believe the court will opt against interfering with the government's plans.

Upon reviewing the petition Sunday, the court ordered the state to keep the border crossings to Gaza closed until noon Monday. The temporary injunction was issued to give the government time to clarify the terms of the Gaza cease-fire.

The petition – filed against the State of Israel, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and Defence Minister Ehud Barak – asks the High Court to instruct the government to explain why the truce between Israel and Hamas was not conditioned on Schalit's release.

Since Schalit's abduction in June 2006, his parents, Noam and Aviva, have met many times with government and security officials, including six times with Olmert and three with Barak. According to the petition, during these meetings the Schalit family was promised that any ceasefire agreement would include Gilad's release.

The parents say that keeping the crossings closed is Israel's only means of pressuring Hamas to release their son, and that Israel should hold on to the option of opening the crossings as its only effective bargaining chip vis-a-vis Hamas in talks for Schalit's release.

Noam Schalit, Gilad's father

The court also instructed the cabinet to brief Schalit's parents and tell them how the talks have progressed so far and why the government believes it should open the crossings without first securing Schalit's release.

On Sunday night, Amos Gilad, who is handling talks for Schalit's release as head of the Defence Ministry's political department, met with the Schalits to tell them Israel would not cede any leverage on Hamas by opening the crossings, and that the move would "improve the atmosphere" between the two sides. It would thus benefit efforts to bring home the corporal.

Olmert was scheduled to discuss the matter with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak later this week. Olmert is expected to travel to Cairo for the meeting, along with Ofer Dekel, the government's chief co-ordinator for prisoner deals.

In his review of the post-ceasefire situation at the weekly cabinet meeting, Yuval Diskin, head of the Shin Bet security service, said the price Hamas is demanding for Schalit is not expected to drop following Israel's ceasefire agreement with the organization.

Diskin told the ministers that "Hamas does not regard the deal for Schalit's release as part of the truce." Justice Minister Daniel Friedmann criticized the current deal, calling the fact that opening the crossings is not conditioned on Schalit's release "systemic lunacy."

Defence Minister Barak said efforts to win Schalit's release might fare better during a period of quiet than during fighting, but said at the cabinet meeting that making concessions to Hamas, such as opening the borders, was not likely to be the move that brings him home.

"Those who think we can bring about Schalit's release by opening or closing the crossings are harbouring illusions," he said.

Sarkozy's words 'touch our hearts'

Continued from page 1

Netanyahu's remarks, in which he labelled "radical Islam as the greatest threat to the free world," prompted angry catcalls from the Arab MKs, who heckled the former prime minister.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert applauded Sarkozy for his "determination to root out anti-Semitism in France," and said ties between France and Israel have seen a "revival under your leadership.

"Your words of support for Israel touch our hearts," he said.

Sarkozy, who arrived Sunday for a three-day trip accompanied by an entourage of some 100 businesspeople, cabinet ministers and Jewish leaders, spent the first part of Monday morning at the Yad Vashem Holocaust museum, where he was accompanied by Bruni and Israeli President Shimon Peres.

Prior to Sarkozy's arrival, France promised Israel that it would put the brakes on its rapprochement with Syria until Damascus shows it is willing to distance itself from the axis of extremists, Iran in particular.

During a meeting in Jerusalem Sunday, Sarkozy and Peres discussed Syria. Peres applauded his French counterpart for inviting Syrian President Bashar Assad to a meeting of the Mediterranean nations in Paris on July 13.

The visit, which was to conclude Tuesday afternoon, was also to include meetings for Sarkozy with the parents of Israeli soldier Gilad Schalit, who was abducted to Gaza in 2006. Schalit's father, Noam, is of French extraction, and Gilad holds French citizenship. In his address to the Knesset, Sarkozy offered to assist in efforts to free Schalit and the two Israeli reservists held by Hezbollah since July 2006.

Sarkozy was also to hold talks with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Bethlehem, and with Netanyahu in Jerusalem.

Chair of Yad Vashem Avner Shalev (left) accompanies French President Nicolas Sarkozy and his wife Carla Bruni in the Hall of Names in the Holocaust History museum at Yad Vashem. [Israel Sun photo]

The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism salutes Canada as we mark the anniversary of the country's birth on Canada Day.

Like Canada, United Synagogue is made up of a coalition of like-minded constituent groups, each coming to us with its own traditions and heritage while sharing our fundamental core values. Within the big family of about 700 congregations that is United Synagogue, itself a part of the larger family that is the Conservative movement, each congregation can take what it needs, share what works, and improve those things that need improvement. Each contributes something unique and together we create a vibrant, living Jewish community. Working together, facing and overcoming challenges together, we celebrate our strengths and look forward to a future bright with promise.

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Israel Briefs

Review Israel-Diaspora ties: Olmert

"For the first time since the destruction of the Second Temple, a majority of the world's Jews live in Israel. We must understand that it is possible that the period of massive immigration to Israel is nearing an end," the Israeli prime minister told the Jewish Agency Board of Governors meeting in Jerusalem Sunday. "The time has come to reconsider the link between Israel and Jewish communities around the world," he said. Olmert called for crafting a new approach to Israel-Diaspora relations. "Our main goal is to strengthen Jewish education in Jewish communities, including the study of Hebrew; increase awareness regarding Jewish culture and heritage; instil Jewish values; and deepen the links between world Jewish communities and the State of Israel," he said.

Sarkozy seeks meeting

France's president is trying to arrange a meeting between Ehud Olmert and Bashar Assad in Paris. The Israeli and Syrian leaders are to attend a July 13 conference of European and Mediterranean countries in the French capital, staying on for Bastille Day on July 14. Diplomatic sources said that French President Nicolas Sarkozy wants to host a private meeting between Olmert and Assad amid the events, which would build on the indirect talks their envoys have been holding in Turkey.

Israel seeks Lebanon talks

Israel says the disputed Shebaa Farms would be on the table if Lebanon is willing to enter direct peace talks. Israel made the offer to hold talks last week. Lebanon and Hezbollah claim Shebaa Farms, a small piece of border land, but the United Nations says it belongs to Syria. Israel did not turn over the land to Lebanon when it withdrew from the southern part of the country in 2000. Hezbollah says it continues to arm its supporters due to Israel's continued presence there.

Killers spared charges

Israeli prosecutors have decided not to file homicide charges against Arabs who lynched a Jewish terrorist in 2005. The State Attorney's Office announced that 12 Israeli Arabs who had been under investigation for their role in the death of Natan Eden-Zada, who went on a racist shooting spree in August 2005, will not face the most serious charges for his killing. Instead, the suspects will be indicted for aggravated assault, State Attorney's Office sources said. Eden-Zada, an army deserter and far-right extremist, shot up a bus in the Israeli Arab town of Shfaram, killing four people. He was overpowered by Arab onlookers and beaten to death, with police apparently powerless to extricate him. The prospect of trials for lynch mob members has put more strain on race relations in the Jewish state.

Arms sale opposed

Israel is reportedly opposing the proposed U.S. sale of arms to Lebanon. The Bush administration has until now restricted its assistance to Lebanon's pro-western government to training. But in the face of increased challenges from Hezbollah, the terror group that maintains its own army, some Bush officials now want to end a ban on selling weapons to an enemy of Israel. The deal, according to *Ha'aretz*, would be worth $400 million (US) and would include anti-tank missiles. The Israeli Defence Ministry's liaison with the United States reportedly told Pentagon officials the weapons could be turned against Israel.

Jewish men charged

Two Jews from the community of Susya, in the West Bank – both male, and one a minor – were arrested in connection with an attack on Palestinian farmers that was captured on video. The arrests followed the release of video by the B'Tselem human rights group showing the beating of a Palestinian farmer and his aunt and uncle.

– files from JTA

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Singer's debut CD has an award-winning producer

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

Thornhill native Vivian Nicole Tesler, a 20-year-old singer, dancer and actor, is currently working on her debut pop-rock album slated for release by fall.

"I sometimes have to pinch myself to check if this is really happening," said Tesler between sips of a soy latte during a recent interview at a Toronto Second Cup. "Yet I was a dreamer, and I knew I would make it happen somehow.

"It's a calling. Just like my older sister, who's a doctor, wanted to be that since she was five, it's just something that you know."

Viviane Nicole Tesler

Dancing since she was five and singing since age 10, Tesler participated in several dance competitions each year until she turned 18, as well as appearing in music videos and commercials.

Juggling school, family and her social life wasn't easy. While her friends hung out after school, she came home to eat dinner and then headed to dance lessons, struggling to complete her homework in her free time.

It was difficult for her friends to understand her commitment to her passions, which made her feel different, she said.

Following high school, Tesler decided to pursue singing more seriously. She attended the Randolph Academy for the Performing Arts, where she spent 10 hours a day honing her dancing, singing, and acting skills, and got lead roles in some of the school's musicals.

A while later, she headed to Orlando, Fla., where she won the Fashion Rocks dance competition and earned a scholarship to the Broadway Dance Center in New York. However, visa problems led her to decline the scholarship.

Instead, having caught the eye of Oscar-winning producer John Daly at the competition, she took up his offer to come to Los Angeles, where he helped solve the visa troubles that were preventing her from landing long-term work in the United States.

Tesler got some work in Los Angeles, but she said her manager didn't seem to be working hard at promoting her. She soon ended up suffering with an ulcer, for which she was treated in Toronto.

Thinking she may have to put her dreams aside, she decided to intern as a paralegal at a law firm and later worked at a marketing firm.

Yet fate pulled her back into the entertainment industry six months ago when her parents happened to bump into wills lawyer and professional songwriter Les Kotzer at a local restaurant.

Knowing Tesler was a performer, he asked about her, and her mother mentioned that she had performed the national anthem at the Toronto Marathon earlier that day.

Kotzer listened to some of Tesler's songs on her website and soon decided to work with her. He teamed her up with composer Lewis Manne and arranger Wendy Watson, who have written numerous songs for television, including the theme song for the hit television show *Degrassi*.

A belief in herself and 'thick skin' help singer succeed

Her album's producer is Greg Kavanagh, former member of techno group BKS and winner of seven Juno Awards and 11 Grammy Awards. Tesler is currently seeking a manager to add to her team.

Tesler has been influenced by both contemporary and older artists, including Liza Minnelli, Beyonce, Kelly Clarkson, Billie Holiday, the Supremes, and Judy Garland. With her pop-rock sound, she hopes to bring back "old school" style with a fresh twist, she said.

As she's been performing most of her life, Tesler is at home on stage. "When I'm on stage, that performer thing kicks in," she said.

While Tesler admits that she sometimes feels the pressure to meet others' expectations in the entertainment industry, she has learned to remain true to herself.

"I feel the pressure primarily with body image, but I felt it more when I was younger, more on the diet side. If someone says anything now, I won't sacrifice my health for this.

"You have to be very strong within your beliefs and not let this business eat you alive. It's tough, though, because it's your livelihood."

Tesler credits the values that her parents instilled in her while she grew up in a Conservative Jewish home for keeping her level-headed and out of trouble.

She said the most important thing that other aspiring artists should keep in mind is to believe in themselves.

"However many times people slap you in the face, turn the cheek. If I've ever come across people saying they didn't like what I was doing, I knew that's one opinion amongst many. You have to realize you can't please the world.

"I've had lots of people tell me, 'You're super talented,' and you have to take that with a grain of salt, too. If you let that get to your head, you're never going to progress as an artist," Tesler said.

"I've also learned that talent can take you so far, but perseverance will take you the rest of the way, along with a thick skin."

Tesler said, laughing, that her egotistical side says she would "like to win it all and do it all."

But "if that doesn't happen, I would like to be singing internationally and have people enjoy my music and allow me to do what I do best," she allowed.

"You have to be grateful for the people who were there to help you in the beginning and those who keep you there. Always stay humble, because all of this could be taken away from you in two seconds."

Tesler will perform at Kathedral in downtown Toronto on July 11.

For more information, visit www.vivannicole.com.

Viviane Nicole Tesler, holding microphone, performs at Mel Lastman Square in Toronto this past Israel Day. [Shlomit Kriger photo]

Two survivors reunite in post-Holocaust drama

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Young directors, actors and writers usually dominate at the Toronto Fringe Festival. And then there's 61-year-old Michael Posner and his over 60 cast.

"Most people who are part of the Fringe Festival are usually 30 and under. There's two old guys coming to the Fringe," said Posner of the cast of his play *Damages*.

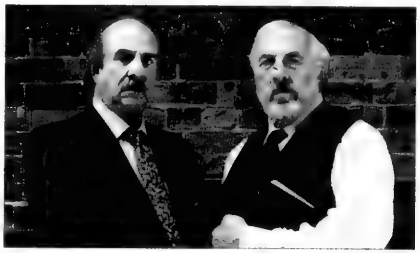
Posner, a *Globe and Mail* arts reporter, has been writing plays for about 10 years, but *Damages* is the first one to be staged.

"The other plays [I've written] are harder to produce. One of the plays has 35 characters. I guess the others either weren't good enough, were too big to produce or too expensive," he said.

The concept of Posner's one-act play is simple. *Damages* explores the relationship between two men who survived the Holocaust together. An act of betrayal has kept them estranged for 30 years. In the drama, Ezra, played by Harvey Atkin, comes to visit Jacob, a rabbi, who is played by Howard Jerome. Jacob demands damages for injuries, as per Jewish law.

"It's about the search for forgiveness, though I'm not sure they get there [in the end]. I guess it's about how deep family pain can be and how difficult it is to deal with," Posner said.

"I don't want it to be perceived as a Holocaust play, it's a post-Holocaust play. It's more about personal sin committed by one of the two men."



Harvey Atkin, left, and Harvey Jerome, appear in the post-Holocaust play *Damages*, at the Toronto Fringe Festival. [Elizabeth Preiss photo]

When casting for the play, it wasn't long before Posner found Atkin and Jerome, who are both veteran Canadian actors.

"In theory, we had infinite choice, but in reality I knew of Harvey Atkin… He's in total control of his acting, both of his vocal equipment and his emotional equipment," he said. "[Then] I asked friends and colleagues for recommendations and Howard's name was used by several. He's just a pro."

Atkin's portrayal of Ezra, a man who turned his back on religion, is fuelled by personal experience.

"Ezra and I have gone through a couple of things that are quite similar. My wife is a child of the Holocaust," he said.

Jerome also uses personal experience to create his role as a rabbi.

"There are aspects to this character that I relate to very much. I even look like a rabbi," Jerome said. "I've played in many different Holocaust-related plays. I have a really big grasp of the madness of it."

Jerome has been studying the Kabbalah for the last 17 years, which helps with his role, he said.

"I've been really immersed… I know a lot about synagogue life and a lot about rabbis."

Jerome believes that while non-Jewish actors could play his role, his connection to Judaism adds depth to the character.

"I'm an actor, I play Italians, Greeks, all kinds of characters. That's the actor's task, that's the job. [But] do [non-Jewish actors] feel it as much in their blood? I don't think so, because it literally is in the consciousness of our people. It does touch me more deeply," he said.

Posner agrees. "I think a non-Jewish actor could do it, it wouldn't trouble me. I sort of felt intuitively that it might get a more sympathetic hearing from a Jewish actor. [Jewish actors] might be able to connect with the material more completely than a non-Jewish actor," he said.

According to Posner, the situation is similar for writers.

"I don't want to say that a non-Jew couldn't have written the play, but I think for me I'd have problems writing it if I were a non-Jew. I'm a secular Jew, not a shul-going Jew, and yet it's part of my DNA," he said.

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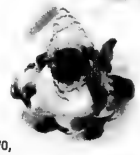

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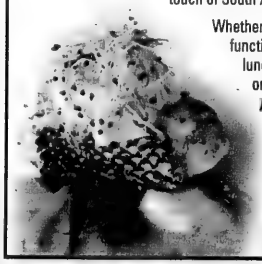

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

HAROLD GREEN JEWISH THEATRE COMPANY SHINES WITH *SISTERS ROSENSWEIG*

By the time you read this, the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's remarkable production of *The Sisters Rosensweig* will have finished its roughly two-week run at the St. Lawrence Centre's Jane Mallet Theatre; the last performance was on June 22. How wonderful for a relatively new company to blossom forth with such a rich and balanced production.

Director **Jim Warren** and artistic directors **Avery Saltzman** and **David Eisner** obviously had excellence in their sights when they set out to stage this semi-autobiographical play from the late Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright **Wendy Wasserstein**. The set was impressive and unstinting, the direction superbly nuanced, the cast (led by **Rosemary Dunsmore**, **Linda Kash** and **Sarah Dodd**) unfaltering. I'll bet their production would have held up well against the first production that premièred on Broadway in 1993 and ran for 18 months.

As the city's only professional Jewish theatre company, the HGJTC has proven to be a great addition to the city's cultural life, not only with this production but with its first offering, **Martin Sherman**'s *Rose*, which recently received five Dora award nominations. We look forward to more great things from the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company. For more information, visit www.hgjewishtheatre. com.

* * *

Unsung Canadian Hero: *God's Red Poet: The Life of Kenneth Leslie* tells the story of a Nova Scotia-born poet and political activist who stood firmly with the Axis powers and against the oppression of the Jews in the United States during the 1930s and '40s.

Born in 1892, **Leslie** was a child prodigy, an assistant preacher and an acclaimed poet who won a Governor General's Award in 1938. Troubled by American isolationism and the rise of pro-fascist and anti-Semitic sentiment in the United States in the late 1930s, he launched a progressive journal of religion and politics and worked to eliminate anti-Semitic references from American educational texts.

A socialist, Leslie attracted the ire of **Senator Joseph McCarthy** and the FBI in the Cold War era, and returned in 1949 to his native Nova Scotia, where he died in 1974. *God's Red Poet*, by Halifax filmmaker Chuck Lapp, makes a convincing case for Leslie as one of Canada's unsung heroes. It premières Wednesday, July 2, 10 p.m. on Vision TV. www.visiontv.ca

* * *

Names in the News

• Toronto biblical scholar **David Mendel Harduf** has produced the 17th volume in his monumental *Transliterated English-Hebrew Dictionary* (chiefly biblical lexicon). The volume covers the words from Stoutness to Stride. $90 from Harduf Books, 11 Plum Treeway, Toronto, Ont. M2R 3J1. 416-663-5467

• Eighty-six-year-old comedian-actor **Carl Reiner** and son, actor-director **Rob Reiner**, were honoured on June 11 by the Israel Film Festival in Los Angeles with the 2008 achievement in film award. Other honorees included actor **Kirk Douglas**, Israeli producer-director **Menahem Golan** and **Jeffrey Berg**, chairman of the talent and literary agency International Creative Management.

* * *

Music and Dramatic Notes

• Hot Jazz with **Sophie Milman** features the rising jazz superstar and her band making her Hamilton stage debut. Milman has been compared to **Ella Fitgerald** and **Sarah Vaughan**. $25, $20, $10. Philpott Memorial Church, 84 York Blvd., Hamilton. July 4, 7:30 p.m.

• Between Stages Playwrights Reading Series presents the 2007 Canadian Jewish playwriting competition winner *The Bleeding Season* by **Brandon Marlon** of Ottawa. The play explores the physical and psychological effects of the suicide terrorists on both Israelis and Palestinians and is "a powerful exploration of the Israeli soul." Directed by **Ralph Small**, featuring **Lauren Brotman**, **Jack Grinhaus**, **Sam Moses** and **Sam Owen**. Suggested donation $8. Sunday, July 6, 2 p.m. Miles Nadel Jewish Community Centre. For more information, e-mail Esther Arbeid at esthera@mnjcc.org.

• Dancap Productions presents *Avenue Q*, about an optimistic college grad in New York with big dreams, a tiny bank account and various neighbours with whom he struggles to find jobs, dates and life's purpose. $50-$100. Elgin Theatre, July 29 to Aug. 31. 416-872-5555, dancaptickets.com.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• 55+ Forward… For Active Seniors presents **Bill Gladstone**, author of *One Hundred Years in Canada: The Rubinoff-Naftolin Family Tree*, giving an illuminated talk on "Old Jewish Toronto: Sunshine on Spadina." Miles Nadal JCC, Thursday, July 3, 1:30 p.m. Phyllis Fien, 416-24-6211, ext. 155.

• Everyone is invited to participate in the third annual IsReal Dance Festival and share the joy and fun of Israeli folk dancing, in celebration of Israel @ 60. Al Green Theatre and MNjcc Gym, July 3, 4 and 5. Contact Yossi Strach, strauch2@rogers.com. www. IsraeliFolkDancingToronto.com

• The 47th annual Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition fills Nathan Phillips Square with hundreds of artists displaying their ceramics, drawings, canvases, glass works, jewelry, metal, photography and sculptures. Outside Toronto City Hall, July 11, 12 and 13.

At the Fringe

The 2008 Fringe Festival is presenting about 135 productions in some 25 venues in downtown Toronto from July 2 to 13. Here are synopses of a few of the plays at this year's festival. For more information, visit www.fringetoronto.com.

• Maya Rabinovitch directs Erin Fleck's *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Abortion*. This play is about religion, feminism and abortion... with puppets! At Theatre Passe Muraille Mainspace.

Cellist Helen Kopec

• Cellist Helen Kopec wrote and performs in *Notes from the Pit: A Monologue with Music*. Kopec lampoons the Deep South's clueless brides (such as one who doesn't understand why *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* is not the best choice of music at her Jewish wedding), humourless fundamentalists and the agony of an orchestra audition. At the Rivoli.

• Sarah Miller-Gavin directs Anna Standish's *Pokeroot and Mistletoe*, in which a teenage boy gets more than he bargained for when Pokeroot, a demon, takes him on as a pet project. At the Helen Gardiner Phelan Playhouse.

• In *Jew for a Day*, Playwright Mark Farmer tells the story of a gentile child who decides he wants to be Jewish. At the Royal St. George's Theatre.

• Tara Goldstein's *Lost Daughter* is a historical drama inspired by William Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. It is set in Toronto in the summer of 1933, a summer of intense heat and widespread unemployment. It is also a summer when gentile youths wear swastika badges to keep the city's Jews out of the public parks and beaches. At the Al Green Theatre in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

• In *The Lesson*, a former student and teacher take on the education system in Eugene Ionesco's absurdist classic, directed by Tracey Bradley. By turns comic and violent, it challenges our conventional assumptions about education and communication. At the Tarragon Theatre Extra Space.

The cast of *How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Abortion.*

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LA rabbi helps youth through surfing

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Nachum Shifren is a most unusual Chabad rabbi.

He helps disadvantaged high school students in Los Angeles by teaching them the joys of surfing in the Pacific Ocean.

Rabbi Shifren is the subject of an interesting Vision TV documentary, *The Surfing Rabbi*, which will be broadcast on June 27 at 10:30 p.m and again on June 30 at 3:30 p.m.

It is part of Vision TV's "Extreme Clergy" series, which follows pastors, ministers, priests and rabbis as they attempt to bring social justice to their respective environments.

A lean, athletic, amiable man in his mid-40s, he considers surfing an integral component of his "holistic growth."

Raised in a secular household, he credits surfing with drawing him into religion. "It enables you to reach beyond your limitations," he says.

Rabbi Shifren got hooked on the popular sport after watching *Gidget*, the 1959 Hollywood movie starring Sandra Dee and James Darren.

"I just got completely sucked into surfing," he says.

What he did not realize then was that Gidget, a blonde and shapely surfer, was actually modelled on a nice Jewish girl named Cathy Zuckerman, who appears briefly in *The Surfing Rabbi*.

'Sucked into surfing'

The film glosses over many biographical details, never mentioning that Rabbi Shifren was born into an assimilated Jewish family in the San Fernando Valley, that he served in the Israeli army and that he lived in an Orthodox commune in Israel.

Instead, *The Surfing Rabbi* focuses on his association with five inner-city youths who are willing to try surfing. Four are Hispanics and one is an African American.

They live in rough neighbourhoods infested by gangs, seared by violence and a drug culture and far from the ocean.

Rabbi Shifren wants to help them by ensuring that they do not drop out of school.

Rabbi Nachum Shifren

On a chilly December day, he and the students travel by bus to Malibu beach, and there they encounter the majesty of the sea.

After the rabbi gives them a pep talk and a demonstration, they venture into the cold water.

And lo and behold, the waves enchant them.

"I felt the rush," exclaims one guy.

"I felt free out there," declares a girl.

Rabbi Shifren has obviously "converted" them and done a mitzvah.

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Novelist's take on Manhattan rivals Bellow, Roth, Mailer

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

Bookstore shelves are full this season of sharp-looking new editions, an unusually ripe spring it seems, for hardcover novels by new and established writers. To stand out in the crowd, an author needs stand-out reviews, and it is Joseph O'Neill's *Netherland* (Pantheon) that has grabbed the loudest praise, both from reviewers and O'Neill's writerly colleagues.

Norman Ravvin

Wrapped in a muted and handsome, old-fashioned dust jacket – bearing a bucolic image of cricketers beneath a bower, the iconic Manhattan skyline in the distance – *Netherland's* advance praise includes this from Jonathan Safran Foer: "Joseph O'Neill has managed to paint the most famous city in the world, and the most familiar concept in the world (love), in an entirely new way."

Praise for *Netherland* has highlighted the city (New York) over love, the implication being that O'Neill's take on Manhattan rivals the great novelistic triumphs of Saul Bellow, Philip Roth, Norman Mailer and Don DeLillo. Manhattan, the centre of postwar culture and power, presents itself as the novelist's grandest challenge.

Like others before him, O'Neill makes use of the city as a stage for what Roth once called the "American berserk," the antic reality of urban life to which fiction can barely hold a candle. The stakes on this theme were upped after Sept. 11, 2001, when New York came to represent not only American possibilities, but the target of hatreds emanating from afar.

I've yet to read a post-Sept. 11 novel that rises to the expectations set by critics. The catalogue of these efforts is growing, with efforts by Martin Amis, DeLillo, Safran Foer, Jay McInerney and, however obliquely, Roth in his recent *Exit Ghost*. One can't help feeling that these efforts have appeared too quickly, just as the rush to memorialize the events at Ground Zero has lead to a logjam of disagreement among varied players, which include victims' families, the New York Port Authority and Manhattan real estate moguls.

O'Neill has let nearly seven years pass before grappling with the dark but recent past, and he, like Roth, approaches the quandaries of post-Sept. 11 New York obliquely. His narrator is a Dutch-born transplanted Londoner named Hans van den Broek, who finds himself living with his wife and child in the Chelsea Hotel when their apartment in lower Manhattan is made unliveable by the disaster.

The events of that crisp fall morning have blanketed the city in an "unfathomable and catastrophic atmosphere," Hans tells us, leaving his family "holed up" at the Chelsea "in a kind of paralysis even after we'd received permission from the authorities to return to our loft in Tribeca."

Hans is a detached observer of all this, but his wife is gravely changed, consumed by "fears of her own, in particular the feeling in her bones that Times Square, where the offices of her law firm were situated, would be the site of the next attack." Hans' most heightened expression of existential angst includes his concern over "whether we were in a pre-apocalyptic situation, like the European Jews in the 1930s or the last citizens of Pompeii, or whether our situation was merely near-apocalyptic, like that of the Cold War inhabitants of New York, London, Washington and, for that matter, Moscow."

Even "near-apocalyptic" is too strong a term to describe Hans' predicament. Though his wife does flee back to London with their son, Hans stays on in New York for the bulk of *Netherland*, musing about his quiet Dutch childhood, the strange energy of his work as an equities analyst and, more importantly, a recovered enthusiasm for cricket, the sport he learned to love as a youth.

Enthusiasm is too light a word here – love affair, great obsession, fanatical attachment would all fit – as O'Neill devotes long passages to detailed, almost philosophical evocations of the cricket life. Hans is reinitiated into a cricketer's devotions by the mysterious Chuck Ramkissoon, a businessman whose spare time is spent promoting the wonders of cricket to Americans. It is this goal, and the connection with a weekend cricket league, which draw Hans back to memories of "marvellously shorn Surrey village greens – the smell of grass when mown in May."

O'Neill is as devoted to the intricacies of cricket as Roth was to glove making in his 1998 novel *American Pastoral*, and as DeLillo was to the hidden world of graffiti artists in his 1997 masterpiece *Underworld*. These two books inform O'Neill's goals in *Netherland*, but while Roth and DeLillo remain focused on American life, the depiction of cricket takes Hans back to England and its colonies, where cricket is a cultural touchstone. In repeated references to the catch phrase, "That's just not cricket," Hans recognizes that the sport, with its arcane rules and code of behaviour, offers not only exercise and camaraderie but a code of ethics.

Ultimately, *Netherland* aims to reaffirm community, whether on the cricket field or in the privacy of family life. At the novel's end, we find Hans far from Manhattan, appreciating "horizons previously unseen," which prophesies "extraordinary promise." To its credit, *Netherland* is not one of the recent cynical efforts to respond in fiction to the dark events of this new century. But the reader may feel, too, that in its characters' flight from New York City, the novel dodges what it proposes as its main theme.

Norman Ravvin's books include the story collections Sex, Skyscrapers and Standard Yiddish *and the novel* Lola by Night. *He is chair of the Concordia University Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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BATHURST-FLAMINGO $1,425,000
Thornhill at its best. 4300 SF customized 4 Bdrm On premium 73'x131' lot, 3 car garage, fabulous salt water pool. Maple & Granite kit., 3¼" hardwood flrs ++. Maxine Povering* Ext 308

CLANTON PARK-HUGE LOT/HOME $649,900
Built 5000+SF on Premium 60'x150' lot. 3 bdrm bung w/family Rm+master Bdrm attrition, 3 baths, full excavated bsmt, central air, live in now & Build later. Maxine Povering* Ext 308

BATH-LAWRENCE $639,900
Don't miss this one! 2 Storey w/kitchen addition, main floor family & powder room, Inground Lap-size pool, c/air, finished basement w/separate entry++. Maxine Povering* Ext 308

THORNHILL WOODS $539,900
Unbelievable value. 4 bdrm Det on wider lot, 2 car garage, 3 upstairs bathrooms, Main flr Family rm, laundry room & garage entry, c/air+vac, huge kit, sunny++. Maxine Povering* Ext 308

BATHURST-MANOR RENO $428,000
Best in the area. 1 Owner home. 3 bdrm bungalow on 52'x115' lot, Reno'd kit & main bath, newer roof, windows, furnace & air cond. Pot bsmt apt w/sep entry. Maxine Povering* Ext 308

PRIME "UPPER VILLAGE" FOREST HILL-$799,000
Fabulous Cherished family home offers oversized living room, And master bedroom, finished basement. Private drive and garage. Steps to shuls and Eglinton shops. Corinne Kalles* Ext 555 / Diane Litchen* Ext 249

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Magnificent custom renovation & addition on 50 x129 ft. lot in a most desirable area. Traditional warmth blends seamlessly with state-of-the-art upgrades! 5 + 1 bedrooms, 6 baths, oak hrdwd floors on 2 levels, huge gourmet Kosher kit. with stainless appls., marble, granite & custom cabinetry; Oak-panelled library with built-in bookcases; 2 gas fireplaces; and other features too numerous to list. **REDUCED TO $1,975,000.** Take a virtual tour at **eichornrealty.com** and call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712 for a private viewing.

BATHURST / VIEWMOUNT
Spacious 4 bedroom, 2-storey family home, main floor family room, master bedroom 4-pc ensuite, gorgeous 40 x 140 south lot, close to Viewmount Park, subway, schools++, $699,000. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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FOREST WOOD RAVINE — PRIVATE RETREAT IN THE CITY
Spectacular 5,877 sq. ft. 2 1/2 storey + fin. bsmt. mansion on a 50 x 215 ft. lot. 6 + 1 bedrooms, 5 + 1 baths,10 ft. ceilings on main floor, 9 ft. ceilings on 2nd floor. Gourmet "Cameo" Kosher kitchen, elevator, marble floors, marble & onyx fireplaces, state-of-the art electronics & designer upgrades throughout. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

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BATHURST / SHELBORNE — NEW PRICE
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BATHURST / VIEWMOUNT
Spacious, custom designed home, breathtaking park views from rear, exquisite oak spiral staircase, oak floors on main, soaring 20 ft. ceiling in living room, large fam. size kitchen w/ centre island, sauna, 2 jacuzzis, 3 balconies, 2 porches, oversized cedar closet++. $1,149,000. Call Akiva Sererbrowski, Sales Representative (416) 787-1712.

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90 ft lot. Over 10,000 sf, 6+1 Bedrooms, Casa Loma Ambience, Gracious Rooms. Marilyn Merrick* 416-488-2875

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Centre Hall – New Kitchen, 5 Baths, Pristine Wood Panelling, Grand Foyer, Main Floor Family Room. Gary Mitchell** 416-488-2875

LOWER FOREST CENTRE HALL $1,798,000
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4 Bdrm w/Large Open Style LR, Formal DR w/Sep Brkfst Area, Off Kitchen, Opportunity to Personlize. S. Merrick* 416-488-2875

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PRIME ARMOUR HEIGHTS HOME
Beautifully Maintained and Updated Home on Quiet Part of a St with a Spacious Yard. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

NEAR WYCHWOOD PARK FAMILY HOME $659,000
3 Bdrms, 2 Baths Fabulous Reno Formal LR + DR, Eat-in Kitchen, Open Concept, Rec Rm, B/I Grge. Marilyn Merrick* 416-488-2875

$625K! ARMOUR HEIGHTS! WONDERFUL FAMILY HOME!
Immaculate & spacious 3bdrm, 2storey hardwood floors, finiished basement. Magnificent 41x125' lot! Patti Pollock*416-226-1987

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Rare Opportunity! 75' x 286' Lot O'looking Golf Course, Nestled at End of a Private Cul-de-Sac. Carolyn Feldman** 416-488-2875

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CONDO - BATHURST/GLENCAIRN, $379,000. Fabulous 2 bdrm, 2 bath suite w/beautiful south west view. Approx. 1175'. Kitchen has Granite counters, pot lights, & breakfast bar. Master w/5 pce ensuite, His & Hers closets w/organizers. Exercise rm., w/wlpool., sauna & rec rm. Central location.

BATHURST/LAWRENCE
$619,000. Bright & Sunny, 2 storey 4bdrm home on 48 x 120' lot on sought - after street. Separate entrance to finished bsmt that includes Rec Room, 4th bdrm + 3 pce bath. Breakfast room w/walkout to yard. Walking distance to synagogues + shopping.

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BATHURST & CENTRE
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New Presbyterian statement angers groups

By BEN HARRIS
JTA

NEW YORK — Just days before it was due to consider a range of motions on the Middle East at its biennial convention, the Presbyterian Church USA released a document on combating anti-Jewish ideas. But Jewish organizational leaders say the statement is "infused with the very bias" it purports to condemn.

The document, "Vigilance Against anti-Jewish Bias In the Pursuit of Israeli-Palestinian Peace," aims to help Presbyterians advance existing church policies opposing Israel's occupation and the construction of the West Bank separation barrier, while avoiding anti-Semitic and anti-Jewish rhetoric.

"The purpose of this resource is to help Presbyterians guard against anti-Jewish bias, even as they make a strong stand for justice, and work in sustained ways for peace," the document reads.

But to some Jewish ears, the document lays blame for the conflict squarely with Israel, avoids any substantive treatment of Arab support for terrorism, and they say it's yet another church statement that appears to hold Israel responsible for the violence directed against it.

An unusually large coalition of 13 Jewish organizations – the Anti-Defamation League, the American Jewish Committee, B'nai B'rith International, and the major bodies of the Conservative and Reform movements among them – harshly denounced the document last week.

The document's release has generated fear that years of Jewish-Presbyterian dialogue following pro-divestment votes in 2004 and 2006 have yielded little fruit.

A feeling of betrayal was evident in a separate protest from the leaders of the Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist synagogue associations, who wrote to the clerk of the Presbyterian Church, Rev. Cliff Kirkpatrick, warning the document "marks a new low-point" in intercommunal relations.

In the letter, the leaders say the statement, which replaces an earlier one that was welcomed by the Jewish community, has generated "deep suspicion" that the Presbyterians are engaging in a "bait and switch."

Presbyterian officials did not respond to requests from JTA for comment. But Rev. Charles Henderson, editor of the interfaith publication *Cross Currents* and a member of Presbyterians Concerned for Jewish and Christian Relations, said the document's authors were not being deceitful. Henderson shares the concerns of Jewish leaders, but thinks the church's pro-Palestinian factions were responsible for amendments to the original document.

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, said, "A paper that supposedly is dealing with removing anti-Jewish bias in fact becomes a paper on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. If you read it through, that's really the major theme. And it presents that conflict in a terribly one-sided way. Ultimately, the anti-Semitism part seems in many cases like an afterthought."

Particularly galling to Yoffie was a lengthy quotation lifted from a recent speech in which he urged Jews to avoid alliances with conservative Christian Zionists like Pastor John Hagee. In that speech, he asserted that they don't have Israel's true interests at heart. The Presbyterians cited Yoffie to support their opposition to Christian Zionists whose beliefs, the document says, "negatively affect" Israelis and Palestinians.

"What infuriates me here is they quoted that and embedded it in a doctrine that is so hostile to Israel," Yoffie said.

In 2004, the Presbyterians became the first Protestant church to endorse divestment from companies doing business in Israel. The vote prompted a flurry of Jewish outreach, leading the church to retreat partially in 2006 with its call for engagement with companies engaging in peaceful pursuits.

After working to help defeat several divestment motions at the recent general assembly of the Methodist Church, Jewish leaders were hopeful that the divestment push could be similarly quashed at the Presbyterian conclave, which is going on this week in San Jose, Calif.

But the release of the new document has darkened the forecast. It updates an earlier statement on the same subject, released in May, that addressed more fully Christian complicity in anti-Semitism and the tendency of Palestinian liberation theology to displace Jews from the biblical story of the Exodus.

In the liberation narrative, Palestinians are also sometimes compared to Jesus on the cross, which implicitly brands Israelis as Christ-killers, in an echo of classic anti-Semitic charges.

Israel, Jordan support Red-Dead Sea canal proposal

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Special to The CJN

AMMAN, Jordan — The depletion of the Dead Sea and the pollution of the Jordan River are common problems to Israel and Jordan.

As a result, Israel and Jordan both support the building of a $3-billion canal between the Red Sea and Dead Sea.

King Abdullah has given his enthusiastic support to the proposed canal, to be built by a group of Israeli and international businessmen and bankers.

The planned "Valley of Peace" initiative, which has been advocated by Israeli President Shimon Peres, would begin with the building of a 166-kilometre-long canal between Israel and Jordan.

The canal would desalinate the water; produce hydroelectric power; yield clean water; and create jobs and booms in tourism for Jordanians, Palestinians and Israelis. There could be a significant increase in the number of new hotels in the Dead Sea area in both Jordan and Israel, as well.

The water crisis in Jordan is apparent as one travels throughout the country.

Dieter Viewerger, a German archeologist who has been leading the excavation of a site at Tel-Zera, in the far north of Jordan, for eight years, said that the country is desperately water-poor. The Tel-Zera site, part of an ancient trade route from Egypt to Damascus via Israel, dates back 6,000 years.

The region around Tel-Zera used to be full of water and was all naturally green, Viewerger said. "There is still green here, but now the wadis are all dry, since the water is being pumped to the growing city of Irbid."

Irbid, which has a large Palestinian refugee camp, has a population of more than half a million people. Since Palestinians have the highest birth rate in Jordan, "Irbid's need for water is going to grow in the future," Viewerger added.

From the top of Tel-Zera, Viewerger pointed to the large Wadi Arab dam and reservoir that the Jordanians built. "The water in the reservoir isn't for drinking, but is for agricultural use only," he said.

Many Jordanian Palestinians come to the town of Umm Qais to look out longingly onto the view of the Kinneret, Israel's source of fresh water.

"There is no water in Jordan. I never go to the beach in Jordan, because to get to a real beach I'd have to drive to Aqaba. This is eight hours away," Ibrahim Al-Arousan said. "There is only one public beach on the [Jordanian side] of the Dead Sea, and it's not so good to swim in."

Wadi Arab Dam in the north of Jordan near Tel-Zera. [Rhonda Spivak photo]

Outside the city of Salt, in Wadi ash-Shu'aib, a valley named after the prophet Jethro, there is a small stream. Jordanian families picnic in the area, and they swim in the stream. "It is a very popular place because there are so few places with water here," Mohammad Janajrah, a tour guide, said.

Current annual water consumption in Jordan is about 200 cubic metres per person, compared with 1,800 in Syria, and 7,700 as the world average. About one-third of the water used in Jordan comes from non-sustainable or non-renewable sources. Extensive pumping from the once-abundant Azraq oasis has brought it to the point of collapse. Azraq's salty brine is seeping into the freshwater aquifers and is turning Amman's water brackish.

"We don't drink Amman's tap water," said Caroline Davies, an American geoscience professor who lives in Amman. "In the summer, Amman suffers from acute water shortages. With the influx of about a half a million refugees from Iraq now living here, the demand for water has gone up."

The Jordanian Water Company (Miyahuna) has announced that it will temporarily suspend supplying a house with water if a resident who receives a warning continues to misuse water. The company sends out inspection teams to monitor water misuse. Jordanians are not allowed to wash a car using a hose or water gardens during the day.

Ayman Fana and his older brother, Christian Arabs from Egypt, came to Jordan to work in the tourism industry. "The Jordanian dinar is worth much more than Egyptian [money]. Jordan has peace with Israel… King Abdullah is a good king," Fana said. "Jordan needs tourism in the Dead Sea. It is good if this [canal] works."

However, environmental organizations in Israel oppose the canal, fearing there will be negative ramifications to changing the composition of the Dead Sea water. They say Israel and Jordan must make agriculture more efficient and increase desalination efforts in order to revive the Jordan River and resurrect the Dead Sea.

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Cubs pitcher plays his best in day games

By ELI SHUPAK
Special to The CJN

Jason Marquis is happy to take the hill every fifth game for the best team in baseball, be it night or day. But his numbers through the first half of the season clearly indicate that he's at his best during the daytime.

That was the case once again when he recently matched up against Toronto ace Roy Halladay in an interleague series at Rogers Centre.

The Chicago Cubs right-hander shut down the Blue Jays' offence, facing just one batter over the minimum in the first four innings, and not allowing a hit until Jays first baseman Lyle Overbay led off the fifth with a single.

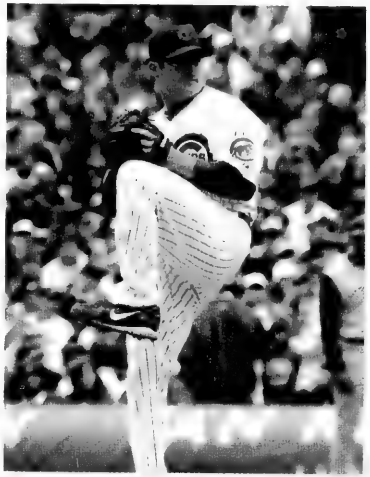
By that time, he had already been staked to a 6-0 lead in a game the Cubs would win 6-2 to improve their record to a Major League-best 44-25.

"I'm a morning person," Marquis said, in trying to explain the nearly 2½ run per game difference between his seven afternoon starts versus his six under the lights. "I'm up bright and early, and now with two kids, I'm up even earlier. I think my body may be more aware at that time of the day."

He would take that one-hitter into the eighth inning before getting the hook after loading the bases on three consecutive singles. Marquis was charged with one earned run on the afternoon when Carlos Marmol walked Matt Stairs to break the shutout.

With the win, Marquis improved to 5-3 on the season, lowering his ERA to 4.24. His afternoon numbers went to 3-0 with a 2.97 ERA, a stark contrast to those at night, 2-3, and a 5.45 ERA.

In matching his longest outing of the season, he boosted his June numbers to 3-0 with a 1.96 ERA. He credits his recent turnaround with a willingness to attack hitters and taking a more aggressive approach on the mound.



Jason Marquis *[Chicago Cubs/Stephen Green photo]*

Prior to this year, June had been his worst month, 5.31 ERA.

A first-round supplemental draft pick of the Atlanta Braves in 1996, the 6-1, 210-pounder grew up in a Conservative Jewish home on Staten Island, in New York City. He's now in the second year of a three-year, $21-million (US) deal that he signed with Chicago as a free agent after the 2006 season.

Marquis was 12-9 with a 4.60 ERA last year for the National League Central Division champions, wearing his favourite number 21 for the Cubs. Ironically, the last person to wear that number in Chicago was Sammy Sosa, who hit his 600th career home run off of him last June.

Marquis went 14-16 with a 6.02 ERA in 2006 for the World Series champion St. Louis Cardinals, but struggled after the all-star break, going 3-10 and being left off the post-season roster.

He became a full-time starter with St. Louis in 2004, posting a career-best 15-7 record, with a 3.71 ERA and a career-high 138 strikeouts in 201 and one-third innings for the National League champions.

Marquis started game four of the World Series that year, turning in the best performance of any Cardinals starter in the series, allowing three runs over six innings.

"I've been lucky and fortunate to be on seven or eight winning teams throughout my career," he said. "Winning makes things a lot easier, especially within the clubhouse."

The 29-year-old, who made his major-league debut against the Blue Jays while with the Braves eight years ago, is one of only seven National Leaguers who have won at least 12 games each of the past four seasons.

In doing so, he became only the sixth Jewish pitcher to win at least 10 games in four consecutive years. The others are Sandy Koufax, Ken Holtzman, Steve Stone, Dave Roberts, and Barney Pelty.

There was talk in the off-season about an Israeli team being fielded in next year's World Baseball Classic. Marquis said if it came about, he would definitely be interested in playing to represent his heritage.

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Let's open up the 'hoods

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

New Views

The latest issue of *Jewish Living* magazine features a listing of the top 10 Jewish neighbourhoods in North America. Thankfully, the list isn't simply a predictable inventory of the 10 largest or most popular Jewish communities on this continent. The *Jewish Living* editors have set a more esoteric, and more valuable, standard for their index: "We have identified neighbourhoods across the continent that are growing, rebuilding, reinventing themselves, unifying their disparate parts, and exploring our traditions in unconventional ways," the author, Lisa Alcalay Klug, explains in a preamble.

"The key word that defines all 10 neighbourhoods is 'vibrant,'" she continues. "Together [these neighbourhoods] form a mosaic of diverse pieces, mixing old and young; singles and families; Reform to Conservative to Orthodox to Renewal and more. They are the new melting pots, bubbling with all the forms of self-expression that represent the Jewish People today."

According to *Jewish Living*, the top 3 Jewish neighbourhoods in North America are Aventura, Fla., (just north of Miami) – "the neighbourhood of choice for young Jewish families seeking luxury in a tropical climate" – Boulder, Colo., – "It's common for residents to support more than one community, attending Chabad one Shabbat and a Reform synagogue the next" – and Lower Merion, near Philadelphia – "Pop into a mainstream grocery store and you can put together a ready-made gourmet kosher meal in minutes."

The sole Canadian entry, Montreal's McGill Ghetto – "it's like New York's Lower East Side but with tree-lined streets" – comes in at number 4.

Reading this list – which admittedly consists mostly of spots I've never spent any time in, the sole exception being eighth-place SoHo/TriBeCa in New York City – got me thinking about how Toronto's Jewish neighbourhoods compare with the top 10. Why didn't Forest Hill, Thornhill, Old Spadina Village, Bayview North, or the downtown core make the *Jewish Living* list?

The answer's simple, actually: while as a whole, Toronto has one of the most vibrant, distinct, diverse Jewish communities in the world, the city's various Jewish neighbourhoods are highly specialized enclaves, developed specifically for one, and only one, kind of Jew.

Let's take a closer look: Thornhill is an Orthodox Jew's dream – it has an abundance of kosher food at the local supermarket, one of the largest Orthodox synagogues in the world, and even a kosher-only Second Cup, but there's virtually nowhere to turn if you're more liberal-minded. The Spadina Village in Forest Hill has terrific ambiance and a progressive shul that's perfect for modern Orthodox and young people looking to get acquainted or reacquainted with their Jewish heritage, but it's small and real estate is expensive. And downtown has great night life mixed with kitchy Jewish artifacts – the Minsker Shul in Kensington Market, the Free Times Cafe – but finding kosher dining is nearly impossible.

Each of these communities is perfect for one specific type of Jew, to the exclusion of other types. This is the Achilles heel of Jewish Toronto: the inability, and in some cases unwillingness, to mix various Judaisms together.

There is potential for one of Toronto's Jewish areas to make it into next year's *Jewish Living* list of the top Jewish neighbourhoods. This city, as a whole, has everything a Jew – any kind of Jew – could ask for. And there are a few signs that a sort of Jewish melting pot might be finally developing in the city – for instance, an egalitarian, open synagogue recently opened only a few blocks from my house, on the outskirts of an Orthodox epicentre.

This is a good start.

All of which is to say that Toronto has all the parts necessary to foster the kinds of Jewish neighbourhoods that are open and accessible to a wide variety of Jews. The only question that remains is whether Toronto Jews want to make that happen.

GRILLED ASIAN FLANK STEAK WITH SWEET SLAW

- 1/4 c soy sauce
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 tblsp seasoned rice vinegar
- 5 c thinly sliced Napa cabbage
- 3/4 c chopped green onions, divided
- 5 tsp minced peeled fresh ginger, divided
- 5 tblsp vegetable oil
- 1 1½ lb flank steak
- 3 tblsp sugar

Prepare BBQ on medium heat. Mix soy sauce, oil, 3 tsp. ginger, and garlic in resealable plastic bag. Add flank steak; seal bag. Marinate 30 min. at room temperature, turning occasionally.

Stir sugar and vinegar in small saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves; remove from heat. Add remaining 2 tsp. ginger. Place cabbage and 1/2 c green onions in medium bowl. Pour vinegar mixture over; toss to coat. Season with salt & pepper. Let stand while grilling steak. Grill steak until cooked to desired doneness. Transfer to work surface. Let rest 10 min. Slice steak thinly against grain. Place steak slices over slaw. Sprinkle 1/4 c. green onions over slaw.

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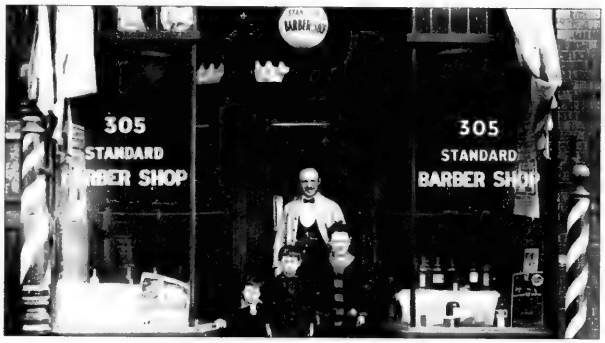

By BILL GLADSTONE

THE BARSH FAMILY OF SPADINA: Benjamin Barsh, shown with children Joe, Sam and Faygie, was music director of the Standard Yiddish Theatre and played viola with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. The family lived in four rooms above their barber shop and welcomed many Yiddish actors – including Molly Picon, Menasha Skulnick, Moishe Oisher and Maurice Schwartz – into their home. Ben and other family members had their own orchestra, played hundreds of bar mitzvahs and weddings, and served as the "pit" orchestra at the Standard.

[Photo circa 1922, courtesy Stella Barsh Rudolph]

Wagman family reunion 'a unique event'

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Several hundred people – to the eighth generation of Ruchel and Isaac Wagman – will gather in Toronto July 3 to 6, for the seventh family reunion.

The family holds a reunion every four years in a different city.

"The first international reunion of the family was held 24 years ago" said David Picov, co-chair with Shari Bricks-Young of the Wagman family's reunion. The two other planning members are Michelle Garshon and Debbie Zeger. All four are fifth generation.

The last reunion, held in Chicago, attracted more than 400 people. The 2008 reunion will be at the Sheraton Centre Hotel on Queen Street West. Family members from across Canada and the United States, and from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, will be in coming.

Picov said the reunion is an opportunity for cousins to make friends for life, "and that's what it's all about."

Bricks-Young described the reunions as "a unique event. Imagine the awe and the wow when more than 300 people gather in one room at one time and they are all your cousins."

Ruchel and Isaac Wagman (Wegman) were born in Bogoria, Poland, a shtetl 150 kilometres south of Warsaw. They married in 1861 and operated a bakery and general store.

After the Kishinev pogrom in 1895 and the institution of repressive measures by the Russian government of the time, the Wagman children and their families began immigrating to North America, and when they were established, they brought other family members.

Picov told *The CJN* that there will be three members of the third generation at the reunion. "The youngest relative is David Perkins… from Rosewell, Ga., who is three months old, and the oldest is Nettie Berkson from Los Angeles, who is 93.

"We will be marking the 150th wedding anniversary of Ruchel and Isaac with a candlelighting ceremony in which representatives from each of the eight branches, as well as one for those who perished in the Holocaust, will come up to light a candle," Picov said.

He added that, as at previous reunions, "we will have a special guest appearance from Ruchel and Isaac themselves, who will join us and kvell over all of their descendents."

The weekend will begin on Thursday with activities planned throughout the day, including a barbecue dinner and karaoke. There will be a family day at Centre Island, a Shabbat dinner and a formal Saturday gala dinner and dance. Also on the roster is a slide show, special entertainment for all ages, a golf tournament, a panoramic family photo, a family tree book and a closing Sunday brunch.

"When people talk about a family reunion," Bricks-Young said, "they speak of a gathering at a park with a potluck lunch, or meeting at Uncle Marv's house where he supplies the hot dogs and you bring your own beverages.

"At the Ruchel-Isaac cousins' club, there is so much more – a true convention of family with non-stop programming geared to all generations.

"Over the years, distant cousins have become close family and friends. The glow and the memories remain with us throughout the years," she concluded.

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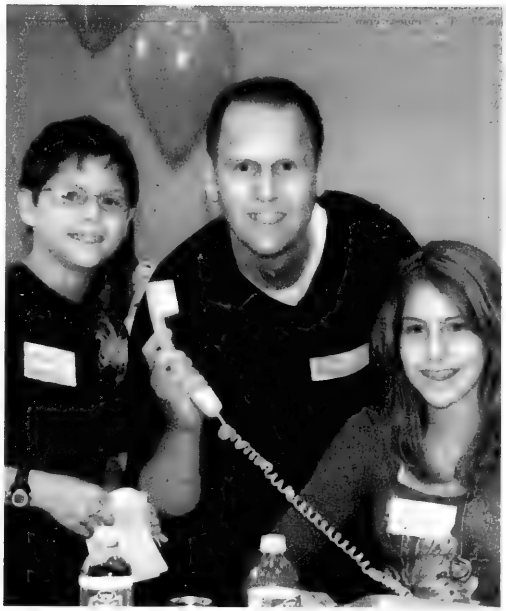

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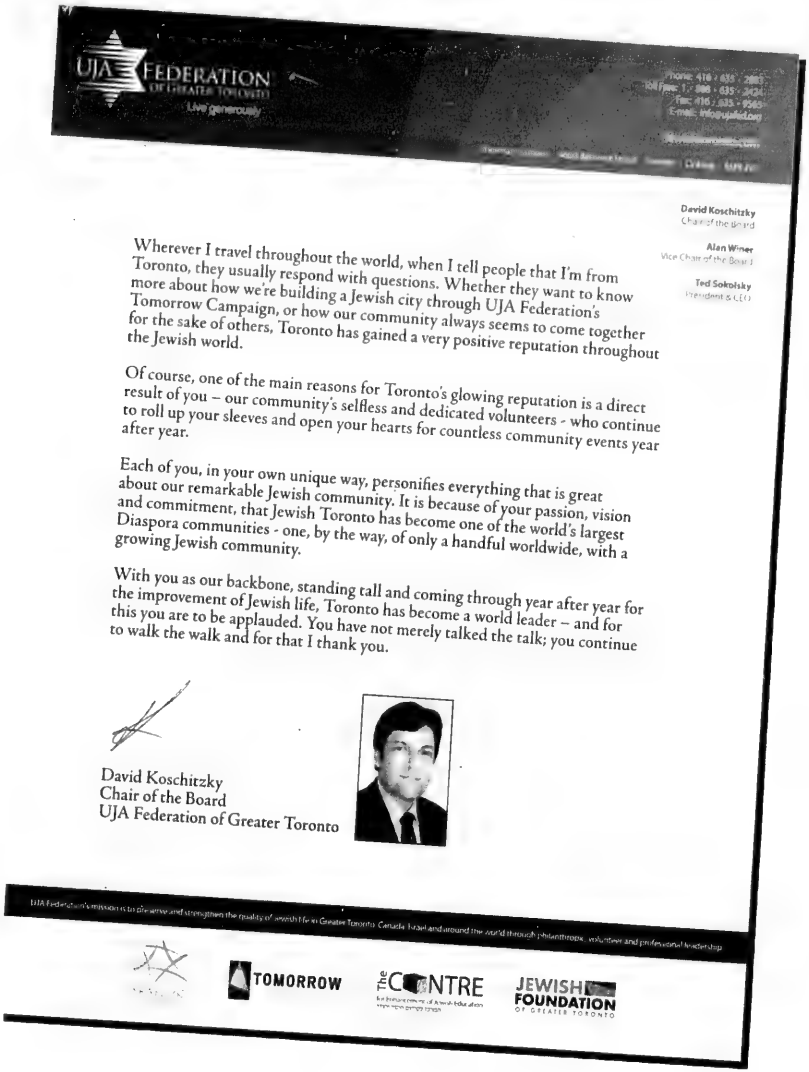
Volunteerism is truly the engine that drives UJA Federation and Toronto's Jewish community.

As the chairs of UJA Federation's Campaign 2009, we are already seeing the enthusiasm and dedication of our community members who have expressed their interest in playing whatever role is needed to ensure the success of the campaign. With the campaign geared towards ensuring a strong and flourishing Jewish future for all of us by creating a new generation of leaders, the ongoing support and generosity of our community's volunteers bodes well for our children and our children's children. Our volunteers are playing a direct, hands-on role in *tikun olam*, repairing the world, and for that, we thank you.

Fran Sonshine Henry Wolfond
Chairs, UJA Federation Campaign 2009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Wherever I travel throughout the world, when I tell people that I'm from Toronto, they usually respond with questions. Whether they want to know more about how we're building a Jewish city through UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign, or how our community always seems to come together for the sake of others, Toronto has gained a very positive reputation throughout the Jewish world.

Of course, one of the main reasons for Toronto's glowing reputation is a direct result of you – our community's selfless and dedicated volunteers - who continue to roll up your sleeves and open your hearts for countless community events year after year.

Each of you, in your own unique way, personifies everything that is great about our remarkable Jewish community. It is because of your passion, vision and commitment, that Jewish Toronto has become one of the world's largest Diaspora communities - one, by the way, of only a handful worldwide, with a growing Jewish community.

With you as our backbone, standing tall and coming through year after year for the improvement of Jewish life, Toronto has become a world leader – and for this you are to be applauded. You have not merely talked the talk; you continue to walk the walk and for that I thank you.

David Koschitzky
Chair of the Board
UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

UJA Federation's mission is to plan, renew and strengthen the quality of Jewish life in Greater Toronto, Canada, Israel and around the world through philanthropy, volunteer and professional leadership

TOMORROW The CENTRE JEWISH FOUNDATION OF GREATER TORONTO

Our connection to the land of Israel

Growing up in many different Jewish communities around the world, the one thing that was a constant was how important it is to have Israel as part of our lives. As I got older, my family and I made it a point of spending as much time as possible visiting Israel. My experiences included participating on March of the Living, going on a gap year program after high school and many other wonderful trips. Having had such amazing experiences, it felt important to spend every day sending as many people as possible to Israel. As part of the Toronto Jewish community, it is gratifying to see the numbers of young adults choosing to spend their summer or longer volunteering in Israel. Israel can change one's life.

We recently celebrated Shavuot, 50 days from Passover, the holiday that celebrates our exodus from Egypt. Shavuot was also the first day on which individuals could bring the *Bikkurim* (first fruits) to the Temple in Jerusalem. It is the day that we celebrate our connection to the land and to the religion. Thus, this holiday is a double celebration: one of our inheriting the Land of Israel and the second of celebrating the revelation at Sinai. As Jews we always have a constant connection to the land of Israel but especially on Shavuot.

We see that very clearly when we read the "Book of Ruth". Ruth decides to follow her mother-in law Naomi to Israel, leaving everything she knows in Moab to venture to a strange land. Ruth accepts not only a new land and people but a new religion, *"Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your G-d, my G-d.* (Ruth 1:16-17)

Today our connection to Israel is as strong as ever. Each year I send hundreds of young adults to volunteer, and like Ruth, leaving a familiar place and going to a strange land to give of their time and love to people they don't know. On page B3 of this volunteer recognition supplement, we recognize a young volunteer who took that time not knowing what the experience would be like and how she was rewarded for her commitment. Yes, that reward can happen anywhere but in Israel we have a connection between all of us that goes back thousands and thousands of years.

This past Shavuot was even more monumental for me. Like Ruth, I am making Aliyah, starting a wonderful journey that has taken a long time to begin. I am leaving my home, my family and wonderful friends to move to a strange and incredible land that I call home. Over 200 others from the Toronto Jewish community will be making that same journey and we wish them much success. See you in Israel!

Michal Kaye is director of the Israel Volunteer Program Centre for Ontario and Western Canada.

Emily Klemensberg shares a smile with students at Eilat's Etzion Gaver public school.

Volunteering in Eilat: The greatest weeks of my life

By Emily Klemensberg

To say that I was excited about embarking on my seven-week trip to Israel this past May would be a major understatement. Before leaving, everyone I spoke to told me how much I would love Israel and how I would have a wonderful time. Little did I know at the time that a simple adjective like "wonderful" was not nearly precise enough to describe what I was going to go through.

After participating on the incredible Birthright Israel program, I decided to extend my trip by volunteering in the Eilat Internship Volunteer Program, funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. Originally, I signed up to assist English teachers in a public school called Etzion Gaver, which has the most students with mental disabilities and behavioral problems. Many of the kids come from abusive and underprivileged homes.

Emily Klemensberg and 5-month-old Djoom.

On the first day, the challenge of communication was quickly brought to my attention. For the first time in my life, I was forced to put into practice the Hebrew I was taught during my 14-year tenure at Jewish Day schools. At first, it was a challenge I had no choice but to pursue until eventually speaking Hebrew became instinctive. From that moment I realized, not only was I teaching them, but in return, they were teaching me.

Initially, this was the only volunteering opportunity I thought I would have in Eilat. However, one of the unique aspects of my program was that they gave the volunteers the ability to explore the city outside the normal tourist hotspots. After school one day, I made my way to a small hotel on the water which not only houses Sudanese refugees, but a daycare and educational facility used while the refugee parents are at work. From the moment I stepped in, I felt as if I walked into another world. First, I saw the older kids playing in the hall. That, in itself, was an amazing sight to see. I then went to a room that had been divided by a large cardboard wall. Staring at about a dozen babies – all ranging from a few months old to four years, two pregnant mothers and a third woman, I was speechless. These precious little people were either sleeping on thin mattresses that were simultaneously used as the only seating in the room, or playing with the donated and worn-out toys. I was immediately drawn to one baby in particular. Her name was Djoom. Only five months old, she was born on the way from Egypt to Israel. Holding her was unlike anything I have ever felt in my life. She fell asleep almost immediately after I first picked her up, and I was overcome with emotion and knew, immediately, that I wanted to volunteer there in the afternoons.

Unlike my volunteer teaching job where I was able to communicate using my inadequate Hebrew, here I found myself in a complete struggle to converse with these Arabic speakers. Thankfully, there was Teresa, a Sudanese refugee herself who was the only refugee who spoke English. Teresa was one of the most graceful and loving women I have ever met, yet she was able to command respect from the toddlers. I became especially close with her, to the point where she felt comfortable enough to share her survivor story with me.

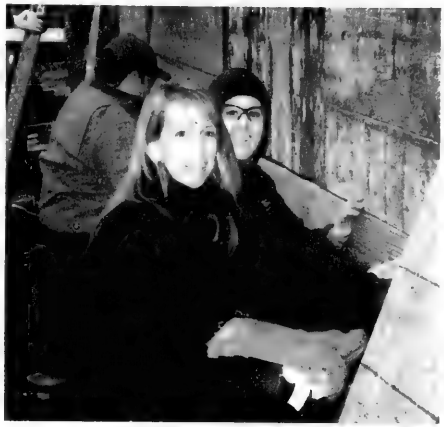
As a granddaughter of four Holocaust survivors, I knew how important it was to listen to a first-hand account of the genocide she witnessed, the cruelty she experienced after she escaped to Egypt and the safe haven she found in Israel.

Saying goodbye to each person was unbearable and by far the most difficult and painful part of my entire journey. But that I was able to make a direct and personal connection to the meaning of *tikun olam*, made it easier to let go. To say that this was a "wonderful" experience is a major understatement. Those weeks were life altering and I can say with one hundred percent certainty that they were the best weeks of my life.

Emily Klemensberg is a 19-year-old, third year student at York University.

Impact Toronto lives up to its name

By Barbra Green



Just over a year ago, the Young Adult Division (YAD) of UJA Federation underwent a strategic revitalization and rebranding exercise. Today, thanks to the group's dedicated and passionate participants, they are living and breathing their new identity – Impact Toronto.

Comprised of volunteers and donors between the ages of 25 and 40, Impact Toronto provides a variety of social and networking programs, annual campaign opportunities and Israel initiatives – all of which form the backbone of this exciting division.

"Because of the diversity of our group we have a wide range of programs from grass roots volunteer days (helping with the elderly or cleaning up a downtown shul) to campaign-focused events featuring well known business, political and cultural leaders," says Ben Mogil, chair of Impact Toronto 2008 and co-chair for 2009. "At the heart of it all we are trying, and are more than ever succeeding, in offering something for everyone."

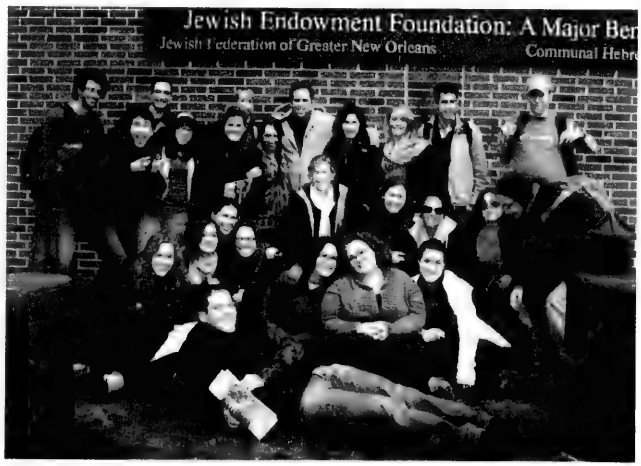
In January, through Hillel International, Impact Toronto assisted in the crucial rebuilding efforts taking place in New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. With hammers and paint brushes in hand, 10 Toronto-area Jewish university and college students helped make a difference in the lives of those displaced and forgotten long after the storm.

"Seeing volunteers help repair homes can bring those who have experienced the devastation, hope," says York University student and project participant Hayley Fisher.

The volunteer work hit closer to home in February with One COOL Day, an annual mitzvah-performing blitz for service projects across the community. About 150 people mobilized to help paint apartments, sort donated clothing for Jewish Family & Child, prepare food for the homeless, help with a Special Olympics bowling tournament and many other initiatives.

Conferences are yet another way for young volunteers to network, get informed and hopefully find the inspiration to take their Jewish involvement and leadership to the next level. In March, 40 members of Impact Toronto traveled to Washington D.C. for a three-day conference for young Jewish leaders across North America. Over 1,000 participants from more than 70 communities took part in the United Jewish Communities (UJC) event.

"This was a chance to expose our young leadership to not only top caliber speakers, but also to reach out to the diversity of our community," says Steven Farber, co-chair of the Canadian delegation.



More than two dozen volunteers from UJA Federation's Impact Toronto, Hillel of Greater Toronto and Hillel of London, Ontario in hurricane–ravaged New Orleans to help repair the devastation.

Volunteer Excellence: The Community Honours Its Own

The men and women on pages B4-B7 have made tzedakah and community involvement constant priorities in their lives. Their unrelenting commitment to Jewish values helps enrich the lives of so many. They received their awards at a recent UJA Federation Awards Night.

BEN SADOWSKI AWARD OF MERIT

UJA Federation created the Ben Sadowski Award of Merit in 1960, the single most prestigious acknowledgement the Jewish community bestows upon a volunteer with outstanding leadership qualities and years of involvement in the Jewish and general communities. With his unwavering commitment to people, Ben Sadowski z"l, the first president of the United Jewish Welfare Fund (predecessor to UJA Federation), embodied the definition of a natural leader. This Award is his legacy to the Jewish community.

Alan and Lorraine Sandler

Alan and Lorraine are a power couple if there ever was one. In their native Cape Town, South Africa, they had extensive experience as leaders of numerous community organizations. Arriving in Toronto in 1976, they brought their deep commitment to the Jewish community as a way of integrating in Toronto, and quickly shared their leadership skills with many and varied organizations. Alan became involved in the UJA Federation Annual Campaign as chair of the Accountants Division, Super Sunday, and the Social Planning and Community Planning Committees, and later as Federation treasurer and president. In addition, Alan was president of JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto and has served on the Boards of USDS, UIAFC, UJC, and the Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park. Lorraine is a chair-extraordinaire – having chaired UJA Federation's Women's Campaign & Advocacy, Super Sunday, Campaign Education, Canada Israel Experience and the Continuity Committee. Currently, she is chair of the Holocaust Centre of Toronto. In addition, she has served on the Boards of Jewish Family & Child and JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto.

"The responsibility of each one of us, taking care of one another in the broadest sense, is a Jewish value that speaks to me. When one searches for social justice collectively, in a strategic and planful manner, the vulnerable are taken care of, the community's needs and infrastructure are tended to and Jewish education is nurtured. This ethical philosophy renews our generations by building for them, modeling for them, and then allowing them to continue the process." **Alan Sandler**

"As Jews we are expected to not separate ourselves from our community. The building of Kehilla welcomes and speaks to inclusiveness, compassion, acceptance of diversity, study of Torah and tzedakah. The community has supported my passion for children and Jewish belonging, combined with my devotion of Israel, and allowed me to spend my creative energy expressing this. In so doing, I have become a part of this Kehilla and my life has been the richer for it." **Lorraine Sandler**

Past Chairs Lederman Award

This Award, named for Harold Lederman z"l, is presented to an outstanding philanthropic leader and volunteer who is also a past chair of the UJA Federation Annual Campaign. Lederman, driven by a keen social conscience and strong support for Jewish communal life, believed in the importance of continuity. His message to future generations was to be responsible, a legacy of a real philanthropic leader.

Warren Kimel

Warren has had a long and illustrious career as a Jewish community leader.

Dedicated, hardworking and generous, Warren has been on the Boards of UJA Federation, USDS, Baycrest Hospital, B'nai Brith Toronto Freedom Lodge and Beth Sholom Synagogue, the last two as president – simultaneously. At UJA Federation, Warren has served as chair of Project Renewal, the P2K Committee and the 2006 Annual Campaign. He currently chairs the UJA Federation Israel & Overseas and Lebovic Steering Committees.

"My volunteer life sets an example for my children and helps to ensure a strong and vibrant Jewish community for today and future generations."

Phil Granovsky Award for Campaign Excellence

This Award honours individuals who exemplify the best in UJA Federation campaigning. When it came to the welfare of world Jewry, few were more committed than Phil Granovsky z"l, who saw Israel and the Diaspora as an extension of his family. Granovsky's selfless legacy continues to help countless people in the community every single year.

Harvey Frisch

No stranger to involvement in the Jewish community, Harvey has had an intensive few years at the top leadership of the UJA Federation Annual Campaign. After canvassing for many years, he became the chair of the Major Gifts Cabinet for Campaigns 2005 and 2006. Little did Harvey know after accepting the campaign vice chair position for Campaign 2007 that it would become an Israel Emergency Campaign. His dedication was infectious and was later asked to serve as vice chair for Campaign 2008. Harvey also serves as vice chair, Camp Ramah in Canada, and has served in leadership positions at Beth Sholom Synagogue, She'arim Hebrew Day School and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

"Volunteering in the Jewish community comes as second nature to me. I learned from my parents at a young age the importance of tzedakah and taking care of those less fortunate than ourselves. If you are lucky enough to succeed and take something out of the community, it is rewarding to have the opportunity to put back into the community. I am truly honoured to have been chosen to receive this year's award. It gives me great naches to be associated with a communal leader like Phil Granovsky z"l."

Gordy Wolfe Award in Jewish Communal Professional Leadership

This Award honours the memory of Gordy Wolfe z"l, the consummate professional who served as executive director of Jewish Family & Child (JF&CS) for 22 years. The Award recognizes a visionary professional communal leader who, like Gordy, has made a substantive difference in the life of Jewish Toronto.

Sandy Keshen

Sandy's active involvement within the Jewish community was sparked by her desire to get a proper Jewish education for her daughter. She started her career promoting inclusion through an early education project at Temple Sinai for children with developmental delays. After the provincial government announced that it was closing institutions in 1971, Sandy helped establish an organization to find a housing solution for Jewish people who were being transferred into the community. In 1973, Reena (meaning joy and laughter) was founded and three years later Sandy became its first CEO. Under her stewardship, Reena has grown from a small and dedicated group to a formidable Ontario organization with international renown, providing a range of support within a Jewish framework.

"Although I have been active in advocating for people with special needs within the general community for over 30 years, I am especially grateful that UJA Federation has established an Inclusion Committee. This demonstrates the commitment of the Jewish community to ensure a place and sense of belonging for everyone. To be recognized by one's peers is the ultimate compliment and I am honoured and humbled to be the first recipient of this award. It is even more meaningful to me because it is named in Gordy's honour. In tribute to him, I hope that we can all continue to learn and grow together."

Volunteer Excellence: Leadership Development Awards

The Leadership Development Awards, established to encourage young men and women to assume community leadership roles, are presented to those individuals who demonstrate extraordinary commitment and service.

Gilbert Palter

Since becoming involved with UJA Federation in 1991, Gil has been a true pioneer, helping create a number of exciting initiatives. He is a founding member of the Young Business Network, the founding chair of ATID, an initiative to develop future UJA Federation leadership, and the founding chair of the National Ben Gurion Society, launching the program first in Toronto and then across Canada. With Ken Tanenbaum, he co-chaired the Business Cabinet for UJA Federation's 2007 Annual Campaign, and together they launched the highly successful *Taking Care of Business* event. Gil is currently the founding chair of the Corporate Partners Initiative. In addition, he has been a member of the United Jewish Communities (UJC) National Young Leadership Cabinet and is an alumnus of both the Wexner Heritage Program and UJC's Flight II Program.

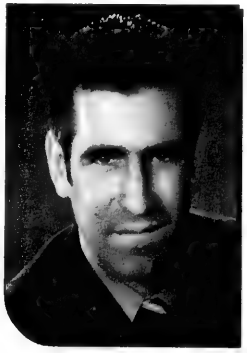
"In 1991 when Elisa and I returned to Canada and started volunteering in the Jewish community, we encountered a generation that believes every organization has to earn its right to be part of our philanthropy, unlike our predecessors who were raised with the understanding that contributing to the Jewish community is not optional. So we have focused our efforts on educating our peers about the importance of contributing to and supporting the Jewish community, ahead of all the other many worthwhile competing causes. I have received tremendous satisfaction over the years contributing to the community, especially by educating people about the critically important work done by UJA Federation and encouraging them to contribute both their time and money to the cause. I have created connections between my business and community contributions, with each one supporting and enhancing the other: doing well and doing good simultaneously. Our family motto is 'with privilege comes responsibility,' and it is a privilege to have the responsibility."

Craig Rimer

Craig has been active in UJA Federation and the Toronto Jewish community since coming to Toronto 15 years ago. Over the years, Craig has served in UJA's Annual Campaign as co-chair and vice chair of the Finance Division. Craig was a member of the executive of the Holocaust Centre of Toronto, co-chair of the Yom Hashoah V'Hagvurah Community Commemoration and a member of United Jewish Communities National Young Leadership Cabinet.

Currently, he is on the board of UJA Federation's Centre for the Enhancement of Jewish Education (The Mercaz) and on Federation's Business and Finance Committee. In addition, he sits on the Board of Direetors of Baycrest, and serves as chair of the Baycrest Finance and Audit Committee and chair of the Baycrest Foundation Investment Committee.

"Growing up in a Jewish home and attending day school instilled in me the importance of giving back. After moving to Toronto, UJA provided me with the volunteer and leadership opportunities to make a difference. It was a whole lot more than just raising money and allocating it. It was a community within a community that dedicated its time to helping the most needy, enhancing the general Jewish experience, remembering the lessons of the past, educating our children, and ensuring the continuance of a safe Israel. Now as a father, I am so much more appreciative of how important it is for these objectives to be realized."



Ken Tanenbaum

Ken began his volunteer career with UJA Federation through the ATID Program in 1992, and went on to co-found the Venture Philanthropy initiative, chair the Major Gifts Dinner, co-chair the Business Cabinet, and co-chair the Bay Street Cabinet. He has served on the Business Plan Review Committee for JTT, the Family Philanthropy Forum, and is currently serving on the Integrated Development Committee, and the Jewish Foundation Board. Ken was part of the inaugural class of Canadians to participate in the United Jewish Communities Cabinet program.

In addition, he serves as treasurer of the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation, following three years of chairing its Finance and Investment Committee. He was active with Mothers Against Drunk Driving, serving as National chairman for two years. He continues to serve the program that he helped found between the Schulich School and the Recanati School of Business which develops export plans for Israeli businesses.

"Working with the outstanding professional team at UJA Federation and the remarkably committed and talented lay leaders in our community has been deeply enriching for me on more dimensions than I could have imagined. For every unit of energy I put into community work, I get many times the investment in return. This path of involvement and commitment was illuminated by my parents and grandparents, and my true hope is that, by our example, Jennifer and I will see our children pick up the torch and carry it for their generation as our community goes from strength to strength."

Volunteer Excellence:
Professional Advisory Committee Award of Excellence

The PAC Award of Excellence of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto recognizes the outstanding contribution made to the Foundation by professionals in our community. It also recognizes the long-term impact their contributions make to lawyers, accountants, estate planners and especially to the charitable organizations who reap the benefit of their efforts. This Award honours professionals who encourage their clients to consider charity as part of their estate planning process and who are the ardent ambassadors and champions of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto.

David Wm. Brown

David is a partner in the independent financial and estate planning firm, Al G. Brown & Associates, which was founded in 1943. He has been instrumental in developing and implementing charitable giving plans to benefit the community. In 1990, David received the Toronto Jewish Congress Leadership Development Award, has chaired the Leadership Development Committee of the United Jewish Welfare Fund and is a past co-chair of the UJA Federation Walk with Israel. He is past Ontario chairman of State of Israel Bonds and Canadian president of The Sanz Medical Centre in Netanya, Israel. David is currently a member of the Professional Advisory Committee and member of the Board of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto. He also serves as president of Associated Hebrew Day Schools and sits on the National Board of the Canadian Association of Gift Planners.

"For me, volunteering my time is another way and an adjunct to giving tzedakah. The advantage of this method, however, is that you get to interact and become friends with other people who have similar goals and aspirations. It is a wonderful byproduct of being involved."

Golda Brown

Golda became a partner in the firm of Al G. Brown & Associates in 1985. She joined her brother, David and father, Al G. Brown, after having been a teacher with a Special Education degree. Golda has served as co-chair of UJA Federation's Insurance Division and has served as a member of the Social Planning Committee. She also served as chair of Toronto Jewish Congress' work group for people with disabilities. She is a member of the Board of Directors of the Baycrest Foundation; a member of the Executive Board of Canadian Association of Family Enterprise (C.A.F.E.); a member of the Executive Board of Mekorot Institute of Torah Study for Women; a member of the Advisory Board of Torah in Motion and a former Board member of Camp Moshava. Golda is a member of the Professional Advisory Committee of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto.

"What I do does not come close to what I gain, meeting and working with the most outstanding philanthropic and caring individuals in our community. Quality of life is best measured by the depth and strength of the relationships we create."

Mac Nisker

Although Mac worked for an accounting firm in his early years, his eye was always on the stock market. In 1953, he joined the firm of Brown Baldwin Ltd. as an investment advisor. In 1964 he bought control of the firm and renamed it Brown Baldwin Nisker Ltd and was the member Seat Holder at the Toronto Stock Exchange for almost 20 years. In the late eighties, the Hong Kong Bank of Canada bought a substantial interest in his company and eventually purchased the rest of the equity. The firm is now called HSBC Securities (Canada) Inc. Until his retirement in January, 2007, Mac focused on managing the assets of some exclusive and prominent high net worth families. He was involved in both support and contributions to some of Canada's leading charitable foundations. During his career Mac was an ambassador of numerous charitable organizations. In particular, his commitment and dedication to UJA Federation and the Jewish Foundation is evident through his vision and actions in ensuring support for the future of our Jewish community.

"It is a pleasure to be associated with the Federation. It is rewarding and I am honoured to have received this award."

Special Community Achievement Award

Sid Freedman

It is through the singular vision of one man, Sid Freedman, that Toronto's Jewish community has been blessed with a community cemetery. In 1968, when he was vice president of Temple Sinai Congregation, Sid had the foresight to recognize that Toronto needed a new type of burial organization not for any particular synagogue, *landsmanshaft* or group, but for the totality of the Jewish community. After much exploration and work with synagogues and organizations, in 1970, Sid incorporated the Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park (THMP), and purchased the land on which Pardes Shalom now sits. Over the years, Sid guided THMP through the development and opening of Pardes Shalom and has stayed a steadfast champion as an Honorary Life President. UJA Federation is honoured to recognize Sid for his tireless dedication to the community for over 40 years.

Volunteer Excellence:
Shem Tov Honourees

The Shem Tov Awards are presented in partnership to leaders representing the highest levels of excellence in volunteer service in Toronto's Jewish community.

LOUIS GREENBAUM
Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (The Mercaz)

Lou has been actively involved as a volunteer in the Jewish community for many years. He is currently a member of the Executive and Board of Directors of UJA Federation, chair of the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus Development & Building Committee, co-chair of the annual Yom Hashoah V'Hagvurah Community Commemoration, and the inaugural chair of UJA Federation's Centre for Enhancement of Jewish Education (The Mercaz). His active involvement also extends to his role of vice chair of the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem, a Board member of the Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park, and a member of the Executive and Board of the Vaughan Health Care Foundation. He is a past president and chair of Associated Hebrew Schools.

GORDON HAYWARD
JACS (Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically Dependent Persons and Significant Others)

For more than six years, Gordon has been an active spokesperson for JACS, reaching out to more than 10,000 youth, leaving them with a much better understanding of life's value. He is a regular at the JACS Thursday night outreach meeting, offering comfort to those who continue to struggle with addiction.

DR. LEON KADISH
JVS Toronto

Leon is currently the immediate past chair of the Board of Directors of JVS Toronto, chair of the Nominating Committee and member of the Executive, Jewish Community Initiative and Strategic Planning Committees. In his early years at JVS, Leon chaired the Immigrant Services Advisory Council and the Jewish Identity Task Force. In November 2001, Leon and Anat Wurtheim, now VP of Program Development, launched CanadaInfoNet, an online interactive resource for newcomers. Leon's involvement at JVS culminated in his becoming chair of the Board from 2004-2006. He has been a member of UJA's Implementation Committee, Board member of the BJCC and a member of the Finance Committee of the Reena Foundation. Currently, he is a member of UJA Federation's Community Security Committee.

DAVID PELTZ
Jewish Family and Child

David has a long history of serving the GTA's Jewish community with dedication and drive, both as a professional and a volunteer. After graduating from the University of Waterloo, he spent six years as a social worker at Huntley Youth Services. For three of those years, David reported directly to the late Gordon Wolfe, beginning a long association with Gordy and Jewish Family and Child. David has served on the Board of Directors for ten years, including a distinguished term as president from 2005-2007. He has also been a member of the board of Kehilla for ten years, including six years on the Executive. At UJA Federation, David has served on the Social Planning and Allocation Committee, and is currently chairing the Joint Management Board of Federation and Reena, overseeing the planned Reena building on the Lebovic Campus.

WILFRED POSLUNS
Baycrest

Wilfred has been actively involved with Baycrest for over eight years as a member of the Board, serving as treasurer from 2001-2003, the Baycrest Foundation Board, serving as chair from 2003-2006, and on several committees, including the Strategic Planning and Finance and Audit Committees. As chair of the Baycrest Foundation, he recruited many new faces to the Board and led a community-wide campaign to raise crucial funding to support a world leader in care, research and education related to aging and the brain.

RON PROSSERMAN
JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto

As chair of JumpStart, Ron's vision and efforts have led to innovative networking opportunities for newcomers, increased outreach to established Canadian professionals, the creation of a new website and marketing materials, and the implementation of an Advisory Board. In the one year that Ron has been involved with JumpStart, over 150 newcomers have gotten meaningful referrals and connections towards helping them re-establish themselves in their professional field in Canada. Continuing his commitment to charity, Ron is a member of the UJA Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto Board, is involved with the UJA Annual Campaign, Just a Second Clothing Store, the Mount Sinai Hospital Foundation of Toronto and the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation.

EVELYN RABKIN-YUDITSKY
Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living

After being introduced to the Bernard Betel Centre in 1991, Evelyn has become a spokesperson and ambassador for the Centre. Active on the Centre Board and providing leadership to the members, she chaired the Volunteer Committee, participated in the Think Tank, the Monitor (the Centre's quarterly program guide) and the Social Action Committee. She started and facilitated "Fun with Yiddish" and "Stories from the Heart." In addition, Evelyn has performed in plays to raise awareness of abuse of the elderly.

DOROTHY SHOICHET
Koffler Centre of the Arts

A past president of the Koffler Centre of the Arts (1993-2000), Dorothy has remained an avid volunteer with the Centre. Currently, she sits on the Gala Committee and the Executive Board. Dorothy is a longtime member of Women's Canadian Organization of Rehabilitation through Training and was an official NGO representative at the UN International Women's Conference held in China in 1995. In addition, she has served on numerous Boards, including Toronto Arts Council, Ashkenaz Foundation, Albert Einstein Peace Prize Foundation, Muki Baum Association for Children with Multiple Handicaps, and Friends of Habimah Theatre.

FRANK TIZEL
Jewish Camp Council of Toronto

Frank has had a long history with the Jewish Camp Council of Toronto, dating back to his years as a camper and staff member at Camp Northland-B'nai Brith, and his continued involvement with the Board of Directors. He has been instrumental in organizing and planning the third Camp Reunion, the first to be held at the camp itself. Frank has always valued the contribution volunteers make to an organization. Under his leadership, the Board began to recognize its volunteers with citations and plaques, a permanent reminder of what their involvement has meant to our community.

HELEN VALE
Reena

Helen was appointed chair of the Reena Board for 2006-2008. An avid supporter and volunteer for Reena for many years, she has served on the Reena Board since 2002 and has been a valuable member of the Reena Foundation's Gala Dinner Committee. She has also served on the Board of the Women's Auxiliary for Baycrest.

WALK WITH ISRAEL 2008

More than 15,000 walkers, sponsors and volunteers walked as one proud community in support of the people of Israel.

Rally for Sderot

UJA Federation and a coalition of co
a rally in February to show their sup
children living in Sderot. The evenin
by noted Professor Alan Dershowitz
satellite, of the Sderot Youth Choir.

YOU mak

COMMUNITY TELETHONS A SUCCESS

Nearly 1,500 volunteers participated in telethons during Campaign 2008. What has become known as UJA Federation's Super Sunday, followed by Super Week, raised more than $2.5 million. In total, over $4 million was donated by more than 6,700 committed donors during telethons.

HOOPS FOR ISRAEL

The 2nd annual Hoops 4 Israel basketball tournament was he
in Toronto in March, attracting more than 130 volunteers in
support of youth at risk in the neighborhood of Kiryat Moshe

mmunity organizations held
port for the men, women and
g featured an emotional address
and a live performance, via

What a birthday party! Over 7,000 people filled Toronto's Ricoh Coliseum on May 8th for an incredible evening of song, dance and fun.

e our community great!

ld

TIKUN OLAM: REPAIRING THE WORLD

Volunteers with Hands On Toronto – an initiative of UJA Federation's Impact Toronto division that matches 25-40 year olds with a variety of "mitzvah projects" – help out around the community.

UJA FEDERATION
Live generously

Adath Israel Congregation

Perpetuates and promotes Conservative Judaism and the Jewish way of life.
www.adathisrael.com

ERIC GOSSIN
"Now, more than ever, our synagogues provide the foundation for Jewish life. Therefore, there can be no greater honour or privilege than to serve the community as president of a synagogue."

Ashkenaz Foundation*

The Ashkenaz Foundation is a community-based non-profit organization dedicated to fostering an increased awareness of Yiddish and Jewish culture through the arts.
www.ashkenazfestival.com

MARVIN SCHIFF
"If the Jewish community lost the Ashkenazi culture and the Yiddish language through which it is expressed, it would lose an essential part of its identity. I am pleased to help in some small way to perpetuate that culture and language."

Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto*

Provides students with an excellent Jewish and General Studies education based on Torah values in a safe and supportive environment.
www.associatedhebrewschools.com

JODI GOTTESMAN AND TRACY ZEPP
"Volunteering allows us to be part of the excitement of our Associated community. Enhancing our children's Jewish experience is incredibly rewarding. It is wonderful that all of our many efforts help strengthen the next generation."

Association for the Soldiers of Israel – Canada

The only non-profit organization in Canada that supports Israeli soldiers on active duty, partnered with the Aguda Lemaan Hachayal. Funds social, education, and recreational programs to ease the burdens faced by young soldiers on duty, their loved ones, and when the unfortunate need arises, their survivors.
asicanada@gmail.com

JUDI MONETA
"The responsibilities placed on the young men and women of the IDF are so far beyond what we ask of ourselves and our children. It is a privilege to do what I can to support the welfare of our soldiers and their families who sacrifice so much to defend the State of Israel."

* Denotes 2007-2008 beneficiary agencies of UJA Federation

On behalf of the State of Israel, I would like to express my profound gratitude to the countless individuals who selflessly volunteer their time and talents through our many community agencies, schools, congregations and organizations. Through their efforts, these dedicated men, women and young adults help build a more cohesive Jewish community which, in turn, preserves and strengthens the quality of Jewish life in Toronto, Canada and Israel.

The willingness of Toronto's Jewish citizens to volunteer and help one another makes it a model community - one emulated throughout North America.

I thank you individually and collectively for your unwavering support of Jewish life in Toronto, the State of Israel and the Diaspora.

Sincerely,
Amir R. Gissin
Consul General

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre – Centre Camp*

A community organization providing quality programs and services that meet the social, educational, cultural, recreational and citizenship needs of constituents.
www.bjcc.ca

BETTY SINGER
"After retiring twelve years ago, my thoughts turned to finding volunteer work that I would enjoy. I started helping out at the Centre Camp office and I have loved every minute of it. The people have become like family."

Baycrest

The mission of Baycrest is to enrich the quality of life of the elderly guided always by the principles of Judaism.
www.baycrest.org

RANDI LANDY
"I love engaging with the members of the Baycrest Community Day Centre for Seniors because I receive a great sense of personal satisfaction and a rich, rewarding sense of fulfillment by volunteering in Baycrest's Adult Day Program."

BBYO*

A youth led, world-wide organization that provides opportunities for Jewish youth to develop their leadership potential, a positive Jewish identity, and commitment to their personal development.
www.bbyo.on.ca

KEVIN GOODMAN
"After having experienced first-hand the unique social and cultural opportunities that BBYO offers to Jewish teens, volunteering as a BBYO advisor allows me to ensure those same opportunities are available to today's Jewish teens."

Beit Halochem Canada

Raises funds to help support the disabled veterans and victims of terror in Israel, and establishes meaningful relationships between the veterans and the Jewish community in Canada.
www.advi.ca

MICHAEL SAX
"As a proud Canadian Jew, I can help the lives of over 51,000 Israeli men and women, who were injured defending the homeland of all Jewish people."

Beit Rayim Synagogue and School

Egalitarian Conservative Synagogue that seeks to enrich the Jewish life of members and Hebrew School students through a celebration of Jewish tradition and love of learning.
www.beitrayim.org

Beit Rayim would like to congratulate our very special volunteers (L to R): Michael Levick, Rachel Szereszewski, (Isabel Siegel, chair of Volunteer Recognition), Henza Miller and Shoshana Deutsh.

Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living*

A learning and wellness centre maximizing the quality of life for seniors.
www.betelcentre.org

HELEN FREEDMAN
"My parents were exemplary volunteers and I wanted to follow in their footsteps. The Bernard Betel Centre was the perfect place for me to contribute and I have enjoyed every moment of it."

Beth Chabad Israeli Community Centre

Addresses the needs of Israeli immigrants by providing programs, services, networking resources and a welcoming community for newcomers to develop a sense of belonging in Canada.
www.chabadisraeli.com

RICHARD SHULMAN
"When I first came to this community I enjoyed its support. Now I feel that it is my turn to give back. I am inspired by the example of total commitment set by our rabbi, and I am helping to expand our understanding of what it means to be Jewish."

Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation

Dedicated to cultivating, developing and sustaining Judaism and Jewish living in accordance with the ideas and standards of the Conservative Movement.
www.bethdavid.com

JUDY JACOBS
"Our synagogue embodies the dreams of its founders, the passion of its clergy and the commitment of its members. Volunteering ensures the strong foundation needed to move forward to realize our vision for the future."

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue

Fosters a full and joyous way of life proudly rooted in a heritage of traditional Conservative Judaism, and committed to Jewish values, education, spiritual well-being and community. www.beby.org

SHEILA AGASEE
"I volunteer for my synagogue because I enjoy office work and working with people. I feel that it is important for our members to have a familiar connection, especially at synagogue special events."

Beth Sholom Synagogue

Enriches the lives of congregants and community through the ideals of Torah, *Gemillut Hasidim* (Social Action) and *Achdut* (Jewish Unity).
www.bethsholom.net

ARNOLD ROSSEN
"I volunteer to strengthen our Jewish community by providing children with a Jewish education including prayer, tzedakah and Israel. These goals mirror UJA. I believe through a strong community we can make a difference."

Beth Tikvah Synagogue

A Conservative Synagogue dedicated to fostering spiritual and Judaic growth and fulfillment through meaningful rituals, activities and exciting educational programs.
www.bethtikvah.on.ca

ARLENE SYLVER
"I have learned that making a difference is not only possible but also extremely gratifying. Seeing the excitement and joy in a child's face around the holidays has become both the reward and reason for my involvement."

Beth Tzedec Congregation

Founded to preserve Judaism, to inculcate belief in G-d and reverence for our heritage, to translate Jewish spiritual values into terms of present day thought and action, to revitalize Jewish traditional practices in synagogue and home, and to cultivate Hebrew language and literature.
www.beth-tzedec.org

PATTI ROTMAN
"Being both a member and volunteer at Beth Tzedec means much more than going to services. I volunteer because I can. Generosity of time gives me personal satisfaction and benefits both my congregation and the community."

Camp Moshava

A religious Zionist camp committed to instilling, nurturing and developing in campers and staff a dedication to and love for a Torah way of life, Israel and the Jewish people, as well as stimulating intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth.
www.campmoshava.org

SAM STOCHINSKY
"The friendships and ties that a child makes throughout the summer will last a lifetime. The values and experiences in summer camp can potentially mould us into the great leaders of tomorrow. Volunteering for Camp Moshava enables me to help make this a reality."

Canadian Associates of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

Dedicated to the advancement of higher education and knowledge while contributing to the growth and vitality of Israel and the Negev.
cdnbgu@on.aibn.com

RALPH SHEPHERD
"The development of the Negev is important to Israel since it comprises 60% of Israel's land mass. I'm pleased to support Ben-Gurion University which plays a key role in the Negev's advancement."

Canadian Friends of Haifa University

Considers the link between academic excellence and social responsibility as its flagship, and service to the community as one of its important goals. Aims to bring the University to the forefront of Canadian awareness; and to cultivate collaborative programs between the University and Canadian institutions of higher learning. www.haifa-univ.ca

MARVIN A. SADOWSKI
"Visiting the University of Haifa, many years ago, seeing Jewish and Arab students walking and talking together, I thought that this institution might be a means of erasing differences. I want to help that happen."

Canadian Friends of Herzog Hospital

Israel's foremost centre for geriatric and psychiatric medicine, treating the effects of advancing age and mental instability using advanced medical technologies, professional expertise, compassion and care.
www.herzoghospital.ca

BERNIE BLACKSTEIN
"My responsibility for tikun olam was instilled in me by my late parents. Volunteering has always been a part of my family's life. It is rewarding and fulfilling to know that our efforts are helping people."

Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn

To promote the independence and dignity of children and adults with special needs throughout Israel.
www.israelelwyn.org.il

SHOSHANA TEITELMAN
"Our best friends are those in whose presence we can be our best selves. The satisfaction and pride I feel when helping with Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn and their wonderful team makes it easy to be my best self and gives me an opportunity to make a difference."

Canadian Friends of Laniado Hospital

Laniado Hospital serves over 250,000 people in Netanya, and is the only Israeli hospital with a no strike policy. Its high standard of medicine is practiced with compassion to all.
friends@laniado.ca

SAMY OUANOUNOU
"Serving on the board of CFLH as treasurer has been most meaningful to me as it allows me an opportunity to serve the Jewish community in Toronto and in Israel. It is an honour to be involved with the hospital."

Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University

Develops and promotes awareness, leadership and financial support for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.
www.cfhu.org

JOHANNA BROOKS
"This wonderful experience has allowed me to learn about Hebrew University's outstanding contributions to the world. Being a volunteer sets a great example for my children, teaching them about tzedakah and the importance of giving back to the community."

Canadian Hadassah-WIZO Toronto Centre

CHW is the largest Zionist women's organization in Canada, providing material and moral support to children, healthcare and women in Israel through our educational and social service programs. In Canada, CHW Toronto Centre is partnered with Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, funding a NICU patient room in its new Women's and Babies facility.
www.chw.ca

BARBI BENJAMIN LEVITT
"I am greatly honoured to fulfill the role of Bazaar chair for the 84th and final Hadassah-WIZO Bazaar. It is with a deep sense of pride that I follow in my mother's footsteps who chaired the Bazaar in 1981."

"On three things the world stands: on Torah, on service, and on Acts of Loving Kindness"

- Pirke Avot

Canadian Jewish Congress*

Works to foster a Canada where Jews, as part of the multicultural fabric of this country, live in and contribute to an environment of opportunity and mutual respect. Advocates on behalf of Canadian Jewry and works in partnership with other Jewish communal organizations to improve the quality of life for all communities.
www.cjc.ca

DR. FRANK BIALYSTOK
"While CJC (Ontario) is primarily an advocate for the province's Jewish residents, it also works with other ethno-cultural groups. Recently, I had the pleasure of advising the Shingwauk Education Trust on a curriculum in Aboriginal Studies in Sault Ste. Marie."

Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation

To support and promote educational, research and patient care programs at Shaare Zedek Hospital Centre in Jerusalem.
www.hospitalwithaheart.ca

DAVID WASSERMAN
"I get a great feeling when I see pictures or hear stories of the wonderful results our fundraising initiatives have at the hospital, but nothing compares to actually walking the hospital halls and seeing the faces of people impacted by our events and campaigns."

Canadian Society for the Weizmann Institute of Science (Weizmann Science Canada)

Expresses commitment of the Canadian Jewish community to help the Weizmann Institute of Science maintain its standards of excellence and its significant scientific contributions to Israel and the world.
www.weizmann.ca

FRANCIE KLEIN
"I am proud to be chair of Weizmann Women and Science, which organizes scientific seminars about research within the Weizmann Institute of Science in Israel. This world-class research institution focuses on finding cures for diseases and advancing science to benefit mankind."

* Denotes 2007-2008 beneficiary agencies of UJA Federation

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham

Non-judgmental and friendly philosophy, with the belief that, regardless of education background or affiliation, it is the inalienable right of every Jewish person to learn and participate in our heritage.
www.chabadmarkham.org

RAYMOND KATZEFF
"The Annual Golf Tournament is an event eagerly anticipated each year. It is extremely satisfying to know that I can set an example for the younger generation in our congregation and to teach them the importance of giving of oneself as a volunteer."

Chabad Torah Tots Pre-School

Offers a warm, friendly and creative Jewish environment where a child's unique style is valued and nurtured by caring teachers. Provides the excitement of new discoveries and development of responsible and independent thought.

ALLISON SOLOMON
"I volunteer because I want to teach my children about the importance of giving back. ... Torah Tots Pre-school @ChabadMarkham offers me a vehicle through which I can share these messages and help to enhance our Jewish communal experience."

Circle of Care*

Supports individual independence and sustains and enhances quality of life in the community.
www.circleofcare.com

FRANCES CHARKOW
"I like being with people and helping out. Everyone at Circle of Care is just great and I've learned that if you do good you get back."

Downtown Jewish Community School*

Provides Jewish students with a basis for Jewish identity in a pluralistic community. Students are taught the concepts and skills necessary to live a Jewish life and to feel comfortable within a Jewish setting. www.djcs.org

EDWARD H. WEINBERG
"As a committed Jew I have always felt it important to take an active role in raising awareness within our community. Helping the DJCS maintain its excellent education for Jewish children, including my own, was a natural thing to do."

* Denotes 2007-2008 beneficiary agencies of UJA Federation

Emunah Women

The largest religious Zionist women's organization in the world. Aims to strengthen religious consciousness, provide social care and religious and secular education for children and youth, with selective vocational and academic training.
www.emunahcanada.org

DEBBIE KURTZ
"I am proud to volunteer for Emunah, gaining inspiration from the Leah Kidron Chapter, this year's dinner honourees. While rebuilding their lives in Canada after the Holocaust, they devoted time to help Israel's underprivileged."

Friendship Circle

A youth-oriented volunteer program that matches children with special needs with teenage/young adult mentors. friendshipcircle@chabad.ca

RAHMA GREENBERG
"My week feels incomplete without seeing my 'special friend.' I think of him as the happiest boy in the world, despite his challenges. He has taught me that, happiness above all, is the essence of life."

Habayit Shelanu Seniors Residences Corporation

A unique living environment designed and developed based on the recognition of the changing needs of older adults. Committed to providing an environment that fosters a positive Jewish identity, and opportunities which facilitate the concept of aging in place. afoss@circleofcare.com

MARLA BORENSTEIN
"I thoroughly enjoy the experience of being associated with a dedicated group of Board Members who are committed to the delivery of quality care for seniors."

Hillel of Greater Toronto*

Through exciting and creative programming and events, promotes Jewish identity, student leadership, and religious and political diversity in a dynamic and inclusive environment for all Jewish students.
www.hilleltoronto.org

JONATHAN VANDERSLUIS
Hillel-City Wide Student Council
"My role in Hillel allows me the privilege of instilling Judaism into the lives of university students in the hope that they will maintain strong ties to Judaism now and in the future."

JESSIE GREENSPAN
Hillel @ Seneca
"One of the most meaningful experiences I've had was participating in International Week where Hillel proudly displayed an Israel table with other middle-eastern countries and everyone came together and shared their culture without any negativity."

ABBY RALPH
Hillel @ U of T
"Shabbat dinners at Hillel have been especially meaningful for me. Not being from Toronto, sitting at dinner with other Jewish university students who live on campus and away from home makes me feel part of a community."

EVA ZUCKER
Hillel @ York University
"When I heard Alan Dershowitz speak on behalf of Hillel in my first year of university, he truly opened my eyes to the importance of Israel advocacy on campus and I was inspired to become more involved in Jewish life on campus."

MAYER ELHARAR
Hillel @ York Glendon Campus
"After two years of thinking I was the only Jewish student on campus, then finding that I was surrounded by at least 50 Jews was like a miracle for me. Founding a Hillel club at Glendon was my most amazing experience. To see Jews connecting with each other is an incredible satisfaction."

DAVID SENI
Hillel @ York Glendon Campus
"Previously the Glendon Campus of York University did not have a Jewish group.... Today Jewish students are united and much closer than ever before. With Hillel's support, I was glad to co-create a Hillel-Glendon club and see it grow!"

AVIHAYIL GENESOVE
Hillel @ George Brown College
"I go to school every day and wear a kippah. It lets people know that I am on campus as a proud Jew, and with Hillel's help I have been able to spread Jewish life throughout the campus."

ISAAC ELFAKS
Hillel @ Ryerson
"I had a meaningful and exciting year representing Hillel and Jewish students on campus. Through Hillel, I was able to experience new and exciting opportunities."

Holy Blossom Temple

A vibrant, liberal, religious synagogue community.
www.holyblossom.org

LINDA AND ABE NEUFELD
"Volunteering provides us with a sense of meaning and purpose and we get so much from volunteering and building our Temple community."

Israel Cancer Research Fund

Continues to be one of the largest sources of private funds for innovative cancer research in Israel. ICRF has contributed nearly $35 million US for over 1,600 research grants involving all major hospitals, universities and cancer research projects throughout Israel. The results of research have a significant impact in Toronto, across Canada and throughout the world.
www.icrftoronto.org

WENDY KADY
"I am proud to be part of ICRF. It is a privilege to work with an organization whose goal is eradicating cancer, while placing Israel in the forefront of the world's scientific community."

Israeli Forum*

A newly established not-for-profit organization representing and catering to the needs of the Israeli Canadian community.
gsarner@ujafed.org

DAVID ZALTZMAN
"Since I arrived from Israel to Toronto four years ago, I have devoted a major part of my time to community building, and what is more important than the children and youth? For me, it was important to have a Jewish community with an Israeli flame such as a Youth Movement (the Israeli scouts) or Hebrew speaking complementary school (Kachol Lavan) – for all the children that attend public school, where they can speak, write, read, sing and play in Hebrew as in every school in Israel."

"One glorious chain of life, of giving and receiving, unites all creatures."

- Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch

JACS (Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically Dependent Persons & Significant Others)*

JACS, an organization led by volunteers, is dedicated to encouraging and assisting alcoholics, chemically dependent persons and their families, friends and associates to explore recovery in a nurturing Jewish environment.
www.jacstoronto.org

GARY GOLDMAN
"As chairman of the Board of JACS, I have truly experienced the joy of helping others who are reaching out and in need. The greatest gift is that which you can give from your heart and I am eternally grateful that I have had the opportunity to do so."

Jewish Camp Council of Toronto*

Provides residential, recreational camping services, geared to the social needs of the recipient, regardless of ability to pay. Camping services for children provide an opportunity to learn and enjoy recreational skills, while gaining independence and self-sufficiency in a caring Jewish environment.
www.campnbb.com

IRV HANDLER
"The Jewish community provided significant assistance to my parents when they arrived in Canada after the Holocaust. Volunteering at Camp Northland is my way of paying back the generosity of the community and ensuring that the next generation enjoys all the opportunities that I was given."

Jewish Canadian Military Museum*

Strives to strengthen the awareness of both the Jewish and general communities to honour Jewish Canadian veterans for their contributions and sacrifices.
arwings1@rogers.com

We would like to thank and acknowledge all our volunteers for their hard work and dedication.

Jewish Family & Child

Supporting the healthy development of individuals, families and communities in Greater Toronto and York Region through prevention, protection, counselling, education and advocacy services, within the context of Jewish values. www.jfandcs.com

RON KING
"As a teacher and a parent I have witnessed the difference a caring adult can make in a child's life. That is why I'm honoured to volunteer as a Big Brother."

Jewish Family & Child – Chaplaincy Services*

CHARLOTTE CAPLAN
"For 13 years, I have offered intellectual stimulation and companionship to the Jewish Culture Club. My greatest joy recently was listening to a 95-year-old gentleman recite the three brachot *before reading of the Megillat Esther."*

Jewish National Fund of Toronto

Given primary responsibility with regard to afforestation and reforestation in Israel. Jtor@jnf.ca

MARVIN DEMONE
"The Jewish way of life is enhanced if Israel is strong. By being involved with JNF, a charity dedicated to reforestation, water development and urban and rural infrastructure improvement in Israel, we help strengthen Israel. I enjoy working with my volunteer friends and the staff."

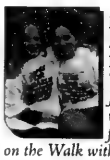
Jewish Women International of Canada

A force for social change dedicated to ending violence against women.
www.jwicanada.com

JODI TANENBAUM
"Chairing JWIC Diva Day 2008 gave me the opportunity to educate women about the issue of abuse and to raise the funds needed to continue the work to end violence against women."

Jews for Judaism*

Dedicated to counteracting the multi-million dollar efforts of numerous cults and missionary groups that target Jews for conversion, offering an extensive variety of preventive education programs, materials and specialized counseling services that keep Jews Jewish.
www.jewsforjudaism.org



MIRIAM ITA CISS AND MIRIAM RIFKA WEISS
"With 10 Jews for Judaism volunteers, we frustrated 'Jews for Jesus' missionaries on the Walk with Israel. Ensuring the missionaries had a bad proselytizing day made us proud Jews."

JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto*

Facilitates the lawful entry and resettlement of Jewish refugees and immigrants arriving in Toronto. Advances their well-being by providing transition and orientation services into the Jewish community and Canadian society-at-large.
www.jiastoronto.org

RAE WASSER
"My volunteerism had been an extremely rewarding, uplifting experience. Words cannot describe the admiration I have for new immigrants. It has been my privilege to have hopefully helped to make their integration into our society easier."

JVS Toronto*

Working in strong partnership with government and business for over 60 years to assist people to achieve their educational and employment potential.
www.jvstoronto.org

MONTY JOFFIN
"My participation in the important work JVS does in training and finding employment opportunities for people from diverse communities and varying skill levels is a fulfilling and rewarding experience."

Kehilla Residential Programme*

Identifies and champions affordable housing initiatives responsive to the needs of the Jewish community. The Agency's mandate is fulfilled through research and education, project sponsorship, development consultation and property management.
www.kehilla.ca

HARVEY TARADAY
"Creating and maintaining affordable housing for the Jewish community is very meaningful to me and is a major reason why volunteering at Kehilla is so important to me."

Kehillat Shaarei Torah

Serving the Bayview-York Mills area, this modern Orthodox Synagogue prides itself on providing an open and welcoming setting where all feel at home.
www.shaareitorah.com

LAWRIE LIPTON
"There is a certain reward that can only be achieved by working in a community environment. Being involved in a small family orientated shul was what I needed at this stage of my life. It is an honour to be able to give back when I have had so much in my life."

Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning

A pluralistic, egalitarian progressive community adult education and outreach centre that, through the study of traditional texts, gives students an opportunity to enhance their identity and understand their heritage.www.kolel.org

BERNIE RILEY
"Kolel is responsible for drawing me back to Judaism. Volunteering is a small way of saying thank you for the warmth and welcome I received - and also a way of supporting superb programming."

L'Chaim Cancer Support Group for Jewish Women

A patient support group for Jewish women who are presently undergoing cancer treatment, offering informal peer support in a non-judgmental, caring and confidential manner, with an understanding of both the cancer experience and issues specific to Jewish women. In addition, L'Chaim is committed to raising cancer awareness in the Jewish community.
lchaim_group1@hotmail.com

L'Chaim wishes to thank all our volunteers who generously give of their time to help newly diagnosed women feel "not alone." We thank you for making a difference and providing the support needed.

Leo Baeck Day School*

A Reform Jewish Day School where families, professionals and Board members strive together to create a child-centered learning environment in which each student experiences a multi-faceted educational program. Students are prepared to be practicing liberal Jews and to participate effectively in a complex, ever-changing Canadian society.
www.leobaeck.ca

CAROL GRUBERT, JODI MARGOLIS AND ROBYN SPECTOR
"Our goal is to help build an ever stronger school community for our children. It is a privilege to provide leadership to the more than 200 committed parent volunteers who form the heart and soul of the Parents' Association."

* Denotes 2007-2008 beneficiary agencies of UJA Federation

Limmud Canada

To celebrate Jewish life and learning in all of its diversity by bringing together Jews of all backgrounds and all ages for a retreat experience. www.limmud.ca

RACHEL COOPER

"Volunteering for Limmud allows me to give back to a community that has provided me with many opportunities. I am proud to be a part of a team that is providing the Jewish community with opportunities for Jewish learning, understanding and growth."

Maccabi Canada

Promotes Jewish identity and traditions through athletic, cultural, social and educational activities for both youth and adults and promotes a bond with the State of Israel, both domestically and abroad. maccabi@maccabicanada.com

MORRIE FRYDBERG

"Born in Israel my goals in joining Maccabi Canada were to raise funds and give new meaning to the athletes going to Israel. Coaching Masters Softball provided a wonderful opportunity to succeed in these efforts."

Mazon Canada

MAZON Canada raises funds primarily from within the Jewish community and distributes those funds, on a non-denominational basis, to Canadian organizations battling hunger on the front lines. Based on the tradition of tikun olam (healing the world), strives to link public awareness about poverty and hunger with the mitzvah of tzedakah. www.mazoncanada.ca

JUDY MALKIN

"The breaking of bread with friends and family that strengthens our sense of community gives me great satisfaction to help an organization whose mandate is simple and direct – feeding those in need across Canada."

Mercaz-Canada

Zionist membership organization of the Conservative Movement and the voice of Conservative Jewry within the Canadian Zionist Federation, World Zionist Organization, and Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael . www.mercaz.ca

MARION MAYMAN

"Mercaz-Canada combines my passion for Israel and my strong belief in Conservative Judaism. That is why, when I was asked last year to assume the position of Mercaz-Canada president, I gladly accepted."

* Denotes 2007-2008 beneficiary agencies of UJA Federation

Mosaic Outdoor Club of Ontario

A volunteer-run, non-profit Jewish organization that offers a diverse range of physical activities, emphasizing the outdoors, enjoyment of nature and respect for the environment. www.mosaictoronto.org

NORM ABRAMS

"As past president of Mosaic, I was able to test my leadership and people skills. Leading our bi-annual weekend getaways was hard work, but always great to hear participants tell me how much they enjoyed themselves! Lastly, I volunteer to show my children the importance of giving back to the Jewish community."

Mount Sinai Hospital

A world-class health care facility discovering and delivering the best in patient care, teaching and research with the heart and values true to our heritage. www.mtsinai.on.ca

HAZEL HENRY

"The hospital started because of a great need in the Jewish community. As Toronto has changed, so has the hospital to become very multicultural, serving the whole community. No work can succeed without a strong support system and Mount Sinai is fortunate to have the 'fabulous trio' in the Volunteer office."

Na'amat Canada

The first to embrace feminist ideals, the women of Na'amat will continue to be innovative leaders in meeting the needs of an ever-changing world. www.naamat.com

MARIEL MICHAEL

"I have always felt that it was my duty to help our brethren in Israel. I chose Na'amat because it's such a wonderful organization."

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada – Toronto Section

A non-profit organization committed to enhancing the lives of individuals within our own community and in the broader multi-cultural community through education, service and social action. www.ncjwc-ts.org

ENA CORD AND BETTIE RAIBMON

"Volunteerism is the act of giving that reflects the true meaning of purpose and enrichment. It is an honour and privilege to serve NCJW, an organization dedicated to making a difference in the lives of people who are in need."

Netivot HaTorah Day School*

An Orthodox Jewish Day School striving for excellence in a full program of Judaic and General Studies, incorporating the *Zioni Dati* philosophy and *Halacha* and *Halachic* principles. www.netivot.com

ZAHAVA SHIELDS

"Volunteering allows me to give back to the school which has provided such a rich experience for my children and also allows me to teach my children, by example, the importance of giving back to the community."

New Israel Fund of Canada

Plays a leading role in promoting the development of a strong civil society and democratic institutions in Israel that reflect Judaism's long tradition of social justice. www.nif.org

SY LANDAU

"The New Israel Fund allows me to help Israel become the 'light among nations' envisaged by its founders, by supporting democracy, religious pluralism and human rights for all its members. I am honoured by this opportunity."

ORT Toronto

Committed to providing innovative education to disadvantaged students here at home and in over 30 countries around the globe. www.ort-toronto.org

SHEILA COLLIN

"I respect the mission and history of world ORT, and my work in strategic planning for ORT Toronto and ORT Canada has been highly rewarding."

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School*

Committed to academic excellence in a dynamic, supportive environment with a distinctive program that integrates Judaic and General studies while encouraging artistic expression and social action as tools for learning. www.djds.ca

DAVID BALE

"When you believe in something, pitching in comes easy. That's why so many devote volunteer time to our school, where kids develop into inquisitive students as well as caring mensches *before our very eyes."*

Pomegranate Guild of Judaic Textiles

Encourages participation and fosters interest in the study and creation of textile art and needlework based on Jewish themes. www.pomegranateguild.ca

LORI GERSHON

"There is no more creative, informed and friendly group of (mostly) women who challenge, inform and inspire each other. It is a true privilege to publish a newsletter which displays our works of Judaic art."

Reena*

Enables people with developmental handicaps to realize their full potential by forming life-long partnerships with individuals and their families within a framework of Jewish culture and values. www.reena.org

LARRY REINSILBER

"I feel Reena helps people live a better life. I enjoy volunteering, valuing the time spent with clientele, helping fulfill needs and relating to each individual. I take pride in being a part of an agency whose staff does an incredible job."

SAR-EL Canada

Encourages and facilitates Canadians in volunteering as civilians on Israeli army supply and repair bases. www.sarelcanada.org

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"For 20 years, it has been my privilege to spend my winters among those beautiful kids of the Israeli army who give up three years of their young lives to ensure the safety of their homeland and the continuity of Jews in this world."

Schwartz/Reisman Centre*

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"We believe that all of us who wish to see a strong and active community must contribute in some way. Volunteering is very rewarding and provides a sense of accomplishment. It is a wonderful way to be involved in the community, turn ideas and visions into reality and meet new friends that contribute endless hours for the benefit of others."

Shaar Shalom Synagogue

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SEYMOUR HERSH

"I passionately thrive on the act of giving. Through Shaar Shalom, to positively touch hundreds of people is the essence of tikun olam and our Shul vision. Helping execute Mitzvah Day 2008, where over 500 people across six synagogues performed mitzvoth, from entertaining seniors to writing letters to our armed forces, was the essence of joy."

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation

A modern Orthodox Synagogue passionately committed to Torah, to Israel and to providing its members and the Jewish community-at-large with unique opportunities for spiritual development through learning and prayer. www.shomayim.org

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When Katy takes on a project, you know it's going to get done. Shaarei Shomayim has been the beneficiary of Katy's single-minded devotion for excellence.

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LAURA ORZY

"The Bar/Bat Mitzvah program is a tangible bond between our young adults and Israel. As a parent and founder of the program, I believe in this important material and spiritual bond for generations to follow."

TanenbaumCHAT*

Striving for excellence in all aspects of education, TanenbaumCHAT provides each student with a Judaic and General Studies education in a co-educational pluralistic community setting. www.tanenbaumchat.org

MARLA ROSENFELD

"As an alumna and parent of a graduate and two current students, I believe that volunteering for TanenbaumCHAT ensures that others benefit from the life-long learning, relationship-building and satisfaction gained through such an enriching experience."

Teatron Toronto Jewish Theatre

Produces Jewish-themed plays from Canada and the world's communities, unveiling the treasures of Jewish tradition, enriching and inspiring the Jewish experience of all theatergoers, leading to better understanding and harmony, while maintaining Jewish values. www.teatrontheatre.com

MICHAËL SANDBERG

"I was always attracted to the theatre and as a handyman I found many areas where I'm useful and enjoy. Lately I started to work backstage during the shows and I found that theatre people are so nice I keep on coming back for more."

Temple Har Zion

Fosters commitment to Judaism through the mitzvoth of worship, study and good deeds, in a warm inclusive environment. www.templeharzion.com

BONNY AND IAN KATZ

"By enriching the lives of others, we have enriched our life. That is why we proudly join other devoted volunteers who strive to make our Temple, our community and our world a better place."

Tiferes Bais Yaakov

Instills the joy and excitement of *Yiddishkeit* and a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Torah, *Mitzvos*, *Middos Tovos*, and *Ahavas Yisroel* in students so they are equipped to function successfully in today's society and become contributing members of their community and Klal Yisroel. www.tiferesbaisyaakov.com

HERSCH KANNER

"Tiferes Bais Yaakov is a young dynamic high school for girls. It is a uniquely warm environment where the students are challenged academically, religiously and socially. It is a pleasure for me to watch as these girls become contributing members of our community."

Torah in Motion

Dedicated to exploring the intellectual richness and spiritual depths of Judaism and to applying that wisdom to everyday challenges. By creating a framework for dialogue among Jews of all ages and backgrounds; together with some of the Jewish world's best leadership, program participants examine today's challenging issues.

SUSAN DEROSA

"As a Torah in Motion volunteer, I find it exhilarating to work with this dynamic team offering consistently outstanding local and on-line programming, presenting some of the Jewish world's most extraordinary thinkers."

Toronto Heschel School*

Envisions an educational community in which students develop an appreciation for learning, mutual respect and cooperation, love of Judaism and an understanding of the role of Jews and Judaism in the broader community and in the world. www.torontoheschel.org

SHIRA LESTER-COHEN

"As a Heschel parent, every volunteer opportunity is meaningful. From sitting on the Board to accompanying senior kindergarten to the matzah factory, each experience has allowed me the privilege of helping build our wonderful Heschel community."

Toronto Jewish Free Loan Cassa*

Provides interest-free loans to members of the Jewish community for personal, educational and economic opportunity Start-Up Business needs. www.tjflc.com

MERVYN MCCARTHY

"For over 30 years that I have participated, I have seen numerous requests covering personal, education and business opportunity loans. The volunteers and staff repair the world with this very special agency."

United Synagogue Day School*

A nurturing and respectful community that strives to provide excellence in integrated Judaic and General Studies programming, focusing on the needs and growth of students in order to foster a lifelong love of learning. www.usds.ca

BRIAN KLAR

"Supporting Jewish education at USDS is a strategic activity that sustains the Jewish identity and literacy of generations to come. Seeing the excitement and pride of students at their graduation and knowing they will be among our future community leaders is reward itself."

Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee

Raises the consciousness of all of its members to the world's ills, and actively engages in efforts to repair the world's inequities and imperfections, as part of the Jewish value of *tikun olam* – "repairing the world." www.veahavta.org

NINA KOLUNOVSKY

"I volunteer with Ve'ahavta because it allows me to fulfill what I consider to be the most important aspect of Judaism, repairing the world. Whether talking with Toronto's hungry or with Bat/Bar Mitzvah students, emphasizing our common humanity helps keep me grounded in G-d's world."

Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto*

Believes that every child has potential and deserves united efforts in providing therapies and learning strategies that will improve the quality of life for both the child and their family; strives to battle prejudice and encourages inclusion; and works towards increasing acceptance of children with special needs in the community. www.zareinu.org

BRIAN FURMAN

"Knowing that great things are being done to help the special children at Zareinu is inspiration enough to volunteer for such a dedicated organization. I am happy to do whatever I can because it is so fulfilling to see the lives of the children and their families, being enriched."

"The Jewish people, ever since David slew Goliath, have never considered youth as a barrier to leadership."

- President John F. Kennedy

* Denotes 2007-2008 beneficiary agencies of UJA Federation

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Committed to preserving and strengthening the quality of Jewish life in Greater Toronto, Canada, Israel and around the world through philanthropic, volunteer and professional leadership.

www.jewishtoronto.com

Annual Campaign

DAVID C. GREEN
"I never really thought much about philanthropy until I came home from serving in Europe in WWII. That experience greatly affected me. I saw some of the horrors of the Holocaust firsthand and realized the importance of building a strong Jewish community. In 1948, I started fundraising by knocking on doors. Today, I make a great many phone calls as a canvasser and I'm at UJA several times a week. I've watched six generations come up through UJA and I've met a lot of nice people over the years."

Women's Campaign & Advocacy

FELICIA POSLUNS
"Being involved in our dynamic Jewish community through UJA Federation is extremely enjoyable and rewarding. I know that the reach of UJA's work in Toronto, Israel and around the world improves the lives of Jews everywhere. The emotional benefits that I receive from my volunteer efforts in a team setting are immeasurable. I hope that my participation in community work encourages others to get involved and inspires my children to continue our family tradition of Jewish community leadership and tzedakah."

Holocaust Centre of Toronto

DORIS AND RAMMY ROCHMAN
"Educating students about the Holocaust and becoming upstanding citizens is more critical today than ever. As docents, we are proud to be part of this important work. To change lives is to do tikun olam!"

Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto

FAIGIE ABRAHAMOVITZ
"As a volunteer at JIST, I have the opportunity to help people access the wonderful network of Jewish organizations. When people call, they appreciate reaching a real person, as opposed to a computerized message, and I enjoy being that person."

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BUNNY BERGSTEIN
"After retirement I sought a community project where I could make a contribution. Fortunately I found the OJA. Now I take pride in our efforts to preserve Ontario's Jewish history in a program where volunteers are truly appreciated."

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"...the greatest reward for doing is the opportunity to do more."

- Dr. Jonas Salk

We gratefully acknowledge the support and generosity of The Canadian Jewish News. The Volunteer Recognition Supplement is coordinated by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

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This Week

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National

Natan Sharansky talks to *The CJN*.
Page 3

Man in legal battle over life support dies. *Page 16*

Heebonics

Straight-up rock that's faithful and spiritual.
Page 28

Arts & Travel

Ben Stein takes on the Darwinists. *Page 29*

Gladstone Variations returns to landmark hotel.
Page 31

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions....10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 14
Family Moments 19
On Campus 19
What's New 20
Obituaries and Notices 22
Yiddish Column 22
Israel & the Jewish World 25
Heebonics....28
Arts & Travel....29
CJN Profile 32
Books & Authors....33
Classified 34

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Seeds sprout after 2,000 years

Israeli researchers have grown new life out of some ancient seeds found among the archeological effects at Masada, the fortress palace in the Judean Desert built by King Herod. This young date palm tree is now 26 months old and has reached a height of 121 centimetres. Israeli scientists hope the sapling will help restore a species of biblical trees.
[*RNS/Reuters photo*]

Israel, Hezbollah reach prisoner swap

By ROY EITAN
JTA

JERUSALEM — Two years after they disappeared into Lebanese captivity, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev are returning to Israel. But it's unlikely to be a happy homecoming for the army reservists' families.

According to Israeli assessments, Goldwasser and Regev died as a result of the Hezbollah border ambush in which they were captured and which triggered the Second Lebanon War.

By a vote of 22-3, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's cabinet on Sunday approved a German-mediated deal under which Goldwasser and Regev would be returned soon.

In exchange, Israel will free five jailed Lebanese terrorists, chief among them Samir Kuntar, who is serving a life sentence for a bloody 1979 attack on the northern town of Nahariya. It also will release the remains of dozens of slain Lebanese.

Freeing Kuntar will effectively be the Olmert government's declaration that Israel is giving up on Ron Arad, an airman missing since he bailed out over Lebanon in 1986. Kuntar had long been billed as a "bargaining chip" for Arad's return.

"This is an issue of the highest moral order," Olmert said in remarks broadcast before the five-hour cabinet debate.

The heads of Israel's Mossad and Shin Bet intelligence services had argued against surrendering prisoners should it transpire that Goldwasser and Regev did not survive the July 12, 2006, ambush in which Hezbollah took them into Lebanon. The guerrilla group has refused to provide any word on their condition.

Continued on page 26

Israelis gathered last week to plead for Gilad Schalit's release from his two-year captivity at the hands of Hamas. "The time has come to decide. Return Schalit," reads the sign in the hands of the young girl in the forefront. Subsequent to the rally, the government voted in favour of an exchange with Hezbollah that will facilitate the return of Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser to Israel.
[*RNS/Reuters photo*]

CJN wins award

WASHINGTON, D.C. — *The Canadian Jewish News* won a Rockower Award for newspaper excellence at the annual conference of the American Jewish Press Association (AJPA) in Washington D.C., last week. Founded in 1944 for English-language Jewish media in North America, the AJPA represents some 250 newspapers, magazines, journalists and affiliated organizations in the United States and Canada. The first-place award was for excellence in editorial writing for newspapers over 15,000 in circulation and for all magazines and websites. It was the 13th time in the past 14 years that *The CJN* has won a Rockower Award.

Chukat
Candlelighting: 8:44
Havdalah: 9:50
Greater Toronto Area

Israel-Diaspora relationship to change, Olmert says — see page 25

The News in Brief

CANADA

Ed. Director Retires

OTTAWA — Ontario's only Jewish director of public education retired last week after a 37-year career, the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board said last week. Lorne Rachlis took the job in August 2003 when the board was under provincial supervision after failing to balance its budget. It was created in 1998 out of a merger of two local boards. After almost five years of school closings and a reorganization, its budget is balanced, the board said. A member of Temple Israel Ottawa, Rachlis also served as a superintendent with the old Ottawa school board and education director of the Avon Maitland District School Board.

JCC Vandalized

KELOWNA, B.C. — Police are investigating after the Okanagan Jewish Community Centre in Kelowna, B.C., was spray-painted with anti-Semitic graffiti and swastikas on June 21, causing $500 in damage, Canwest News reported. An adjacent day care, some cars and a nearby school were also hit. An anonymous person cleaned the building by the next day, CTV News reported.

Flag Removed

TORONTO — The Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies (FSWC) is praising World Vision Canada's decision to remove the Palestinian flag in its correspondence with supporters. In a child sponsorship document, World Vision included the flag and labelled it the "Flag of Jerusalem West Bank Gaza." In a response to the FSWC, World Vision said that its "use of the Palestinian flag was not intended as a political statement or an indication of taking sides" and that it would be removed.

WORLD

Comedian Fined

PARIS — A Paris appeals court upheld charges against a French comedian for making anti-Semitic remarks. The court fined Dieudonne M'Bala M'Bala nearly $11,000 (US) for calling Holocaust remembrance "memorial pornography" at a news conference after a 2005 show in Algeria.

PM HONOURED: B'nai Brith International's (BBI) Ottawa-based president, Moishe Smith, presented Prime Minister Stephen Harper with BBI's highest honour, the Presidential Gold Medallion for Humanitarianism, on June 27 in Ottawa during BBI's board of governors meeting and B'nai Brith Canada's Annual Leadership Policy Conference. Past recipients include former Israeli prime ministers David Ben-Gurion and Golda Meir, and former U.S. presidents Harry Truman and John F. Kennedy. B'nai Brith spokesperson Frank Diamant said Harper's support for the safety of the Jewish people and the war on terror made him worthy of the award.

Hate Letter Targets Elderly Woman

BARRIE, Ont. — Police in Barrie, Ont., are investigating a letter that was received last week by as many as 30 neighbours of an elderly Jewish woman that contained racial slurs, the *Barrie Advance* reported.

Police were notified immediately of the letter campaign and treated it as a hate crime. However, when they investigated the purported authors of the letter – the Jewish woman's neighbours – they concluded that their signatures had been forged.

The neighbours have been embroiled in a dispute with the woman. The letter asked for help in getting the Jewish woman out of the community.

Police spokesperson Sgt. Dave Goodbrand said the letter writer's motivation is unclear.

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Sharansky on tour promoting identity, freedom

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

"If you really want to defend freedom in this world, start from your identity. Start from your people, your religion."

So says human rights activist, author, former refusenik and ex-MK Natan Sharansky.

He argues that in a world now embroiled in an ideological battle between the forces of radical Islam and democracy, the only way for freedom-loving nations to emerge victorious is to strengthen their identities and not dilute their national character by allowing newcomers to subvert their culture.

Now chair of the Shalem Center's Institute for Strategic Studies – a centrist Israeli political and social think tank – Sharansky was in Toronto last week promoting his newest book, *Defending Identity: Its Indispensable Role in Protecting Democracy*.

In an interview with *The CJN*, Sharansky discussed the central theme of his book and how Diaspora Jews need to encourage their nations' leaders to stay strong in the face of challenges to democracy from those espousing radical Islam.

"In today's conflict of civilizations, the confrontation with Muslim fundamentalism, the free world has no chance to win if they will keep seeing identity and freedom as enemies – if they see it as a zero sum game, that the less identity you have, the more chance for peace," he said.

Using Europe as an example, Sharansky said that as a society, Europe is "much less protected" from Muslim fundamentalism than Israel, because of its acceptance of what he calls "post-nationalist" thought.

"For the last two generations, Europeans tried to play down and undermine [national] identity, because they believed that is the way to peace and stability… after suffering two awful world wars caused by national identity," he said. "The way they treat multiculturalism is through moral equivalence. They cannot permit that there will be one cultural centre. You must give all rights to everybody, and you cannot impose on them your principals, your norms, including the norms of democracy."

As a result, Europe now has a culture "razed" of identity and susceptible to a take-over from within.

"There is a small [Muslim] society which has no obligation to democracy, but which has a very strong identity, and Europe feels helpless," Sharansky said.

"A society without identity against a society with strong identity has no chance. Why? Because society without identity is a society where there is nothing to die for," he said, adding that the words of John Lennon's song *Imagine* are not words that lead to peace, despite their intent.

Natan Sharansky
[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

"Lennon's dream… was how good to have a world without religion, nations, borders, states… where there is nothing to die for and to think that that is the way to peace," Sharansky said. "On the other hand, there are people who are saying 'We will kill you. We will [beat] you because you love life and we love death. We have such strong identity fighting for this community or faith… we are ready to sacrifice our lives.'"

The answer to those people, and to ensure democracy can survive, is to fight just as hard for freedom and democracy as identities, he said.

"I found out in my experience, that not only are freedom and identity not enemies, they are allies," Sharansky said. "When we were fighting for freedom in the Soviet Union, the KGB tried to make you concentrate only on one thing: your physical survival. And if you focused only on your physical survival, you had no chance to resist the KGB," he recalled.

Continued on page 12

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From the editor's desk

Cleopatra was known to have often visited the Dead Sea to have the benefit of its mysteriously healing and beautifying salts and minerals. Herod and his retinue of wealthy Judeans, of course, vacationed very close by, atop his magnificent Masada winter home. They, too, undoubtedly dipped their limbs into the thick sea-lake.

Since ancient times, there has been an unbroken caravan of curious, needy and simply sybaritic visitors seeking to comfort themselves in and through the mesmerizing waters of the sea.

Last month, through the co-ordination of the Israel Government Tourism Office, *The CJN* was invited by the Daniel Dead Sea Resort and Spa of the Tamares Hotel Group to be a guest at the hotel for two nights.

The motor journey alone was a unique visual touring delight.

Our starting point was the history-infused peak of Mount Scopus. Once through the recently opened tunnel under Scopus, we emerged into the starkly distinct beiges, browns, greys and golds of the Judean Desert.

We headed south along winding roads that traversed not only geography but the constant accompanying sensation of time as well. By the time we arrived at the Daniel Resort approximately one hour later we had descended nearly 1,000 metres to the very lowest spot on the planet – the Dead Sea – almost 400 metres below sea level.

To the many visual delights we experienced in getting to the hotel, we would soon be adding an array of new physical and inner delights from actually being there.

The view from our ninth-floor room was due east, past the far shore of the lake to the ancient hills of Moab in Jordan. At night, we stared at a round, silver-dollar full moon that hung in the darkened mid-sky almost, it seemed, tantalizingly within our grasp. Its fully formed image reflected white in a long trail across the centre of the black, unstirring lake below us.

Through the centre of the cavernous lobby, full of light and sun, we descended in the transparent glass compartments of the elevator to the hotel's spa where we would imminently experience a veritable nirvana of healing and relaxation.

There are three pools in the spa: a Dead Sea water pool and two smaller, adjacent cold-water and sulphur pools. Beside the pools are three different steam rooms.

One cannot swim in the waters of the Dead Sea. The water is simply too dense, almost 10 times that of ordinary sea water, too thick with salt and other mineral matter. The body floats but does not remain submerged. Nor indeed does the "floater" wish to submerge himself or herself. The taste of the water is awful. Moreover exposure to the eyes or the mouth can be harmful. But the warm, turgid Dead Sea waters were a soothing balm to the body and especially to arthritic knee joints.

We saw people from all over the world partaking of the magical, mineral, soupy waters of the Dead Sea, voluble, noisy proof of the fact that sufferers of rheumatic, arthritic and various skin conditions flock to the Dead Sea at all times of the year.

The healing mysteries of the Dead Sea water are the core of the hotel's attraction. But that attraction was considerably enhanced by the rich menu of nearly 20 different massages, 16 body and nine different facial treatments offered in the spa.

The mud wrap was a special experience. Pavel, the expert spa technician, covered most of my exposed body with large dollops of soft, warm, thick, black mud scooped from the sea merely metres away from the quiet, dimly lit treatment room in the spa. I lay on the treatment table for more than 30 minutes listening to the music, totally calm and relaxed, enveloped in the wondrous mud, feeling its glowy warmth in the depth of my aching joints.

A long, hot shower washed away the mud. Then, in a different room, still tingling warmly from the close, tight feeling of the mud on my body, I had a classic, Swedish massage.

The combination was exhilarating.

After a time, the exhilaration evolved into a feeling of gentle lassitude and restful inner tranquillity.

To complement the feeling of tranquillity that flowed from the spa treatments, the large outdoor, flower-shaped swimming pool offered recreation, exercise and relaxation.

The dry, hot sun, constant blue-sky, mysteriously therapeutic water and mineral-laden mud seemed to affect everyone at the hotel. For there was an overwhelmingly happy ambience throughout.

Energized by our short two-day stay at the Daniel Dead Sea Resort we headed north to climb high again through the desert and into the hills to the capital of Jerusalem.

–MBD

See]N CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

[Photos courtesy of Keren Hayesod]

RESCUE AT ENTEBBE: On June 27, 1976, two Palestinians and two Germans hijacked Air France Flight 139 after it left Athens on its way to Paris. The plane was diverted to Entebbe, Uganda, where three more terrorists joined the hijackers, with the complicity of the Ugandan government of Idi Amin. The captives were separated by religion. Some 105 Israelis, Jews and crew members were kept hostage. An Israeli commando force rescued the hostages on the night of July 3 and the morning of July 4. Three hostages lost their lives in the crossfire of the rescue. The elderly Dora Bloch, a hostage who had been taken to hospital earlier was killed by the Ugandan government after the rescue. All seven terrorists were killed. Yonatan Netanyahu, inset, the brother of future Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, was the only Israeli commando killed. Seen here are the hostages as they arrived safely at Ben-Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv.

Birthright Israel alumni give back

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

More than 60 Taglit-Birthright Israel alumni spread out across Toronto last Sunday for a tikkun olam day.

Started in the spring of 2005, tikkun olam day takes place twice a year and is sponsored by Toronto's Birthright Israel Alumni Community (BAC). It is a chance for Birthright Israel alumni to reconnect to the Jewish community, in Toronto and Israel, through various volunteer projects.

Volunteers participated in six events throughout the Greater Toronto Area, some of which included working alongside Reena clients; playing bingo with seniors; making care packages for the poor at the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living; and organizing storage units at Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee.

"However small, the work is going towards bettering people's lives," David Goodman of Toronto's BAC said. "The most impact will be the [project] at Ve'ahavta. The storage facility could be an amazing resource to them."

The event reinforces experiences alumni had on their Birthright Israel trips.

"When we bring people to Israel... we do a number of experiences and tikkun olam is one of them," said Goodman. "We definitely want to keep that consistent. When they come home, we want to give them the opportunity to do similar things."

Volunteers participated in six events throughout the Greater Toronto Area

Jessica Pezim, who helped out at Bernard Betel, said her desire to help the Jewish community started in Israel.

"I had a great experience on Birthright [Israel] and I wanted to come back. We did an incredible tikkun olam day [in Israel.] It encouraged us to want to do so much more."

Cayla Spagat, a trip leader who volunteered at the Bernard Betel, also emphasized the trip's importance in terms of volunteer education.

"It gives [participants] a chance to pay it forward. We're given a gift on the trip, it gives them an outlet to give back," she said. "The trip helps them understand their roots better. If you don't have some way to continue, the feeling will dwindle."

Dana Lengyel, a Birthright Israel alumni and volunteer, agreed that the tikkun olam day reinforced the principles she learned on her trip.

"Birthright [Israel] was the best trip I ever went on. I don't want to lose the friends and sentiments. I have to do my part," she said.

Lengyel worked with Reena clients, making beaded butterflies for children in Sderot.

"It's so insignificant in our daily lives, but it can brighten up a kid's day," she said. "It makes me feel happy that I can make a child in Israel happy."

Jen Weisz, who went on a Birthright Israel trip in December 2006, also made beaded butterflies at Reena.

"They're so cute," she said of their handiwork. "It's a gift, the act of giving makes people smile."

While quite a few volunteers came out last Sunday, Goodman was expecting a better turnout.

"During this time of year, it's difficult because a lot of alumni are out of town," he said.

Shira Webber of BAC, who ran the beaded butterfly activity, agreed. "It's hard right now – people are at summer camp," she said. "But we had a good turnout, [around] 20 people came."

Taglit-Birthright Israel alumni made beaded butterflies with Reena clients last Sunday during a tikkun olam day.

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Bar mitzvah boy raises awareness for Sderot

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

It's common for boys and girls to get anxious ahead of their bar or bat mitzvahs. Whether it's stage fright about singing in front of family or slipping up during the parshah, nerves can jangle.

But the only thing newly bar mitzvahed Josh Wine was nervous about was whether he could raise enough local awareness about the embattled residents of Sderot.

This year, as part of his studies at Bialik Hebrew Day School, Wine – and all students in their bar or bat mitzvah year – was obliged to pick a tikkun olam project to work on.

For Wine, the choice was clear: Sderot.

While visiting family in Israel in April, Wine and his parents, Nina and Aaron, met with Sderot resident and activist, Alon Davidi, chair of the Committee For A Secure Sderot – a grassroots organization dedicated to "[bringing] to light the ongoing lack of security and defence of the city of Sderot."

Davidi told the family about a project the residents of Sderot had embarked upon – to build a shelter-Gymboree attached to a local grocery store where their children can be safe during rocket attacks.

According to the committee, more than 6,900 Qassam rockets have been fired at Sderot over the last six years by Hamas and other terrorist groups operating out of Gaza.

Aside from causing deaths and injuries, the almost daily missile barrage has disrupted day-to-day life, triggered an economic downturn for the community and scarred the psyche of young and old alike.

"In school, we learned that Gaza has been attacking Sderot. Israel is an important part of my life and I wanted to do something," Wine told *The CJN* just two weeks after his bar mitzvah.

Wine returned from his Israel trip with 500 rubber bracelets, each one inscribed in Hebrew with the words "Sderot is in My Heart" courtesy Davidi, and commenced selling them at school to raise money for his mission prior to his bar mitzvah.

"All my friends think it's a great cause. And everyone at Bialik knows what's happening in Sderot now," Wine said. "My plan is to have as many people wearing these [Sderot bracelets] as possible."

As of last week, Wine said he had just 50 bracelets left after selling them at school and handing them out at his bar mitzvah.

"On the place cards at my bar mitzvah, we [wrote] that a contribution had been made to Sderot," Wine said. "It started conversation… and was good for generating awareness. It also helped [guests] to want to help Sderot more."

In all, over the course of the last few months Wine has successfully raised more than $5,000 for the project.

Total cost for the Sderot Gymboree project is estimated to be around $187,000.

Wine's donation is being handled by local philanthropist and Sderot activist, Rachelle Bronfman.

Josh Wine, centre, poses with his Sderot bracelets as Rachelle Bronfman, left, and his mother Nina, stand at his side. **[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]**

As co-executive producer of a June 15 fundraising concert by Israeli world music star Mosh Ben Ari, Bronfman was instrumental in helping raise more than $40,000 for the town of Sderot via ticket sales, she told *The CJN* last month.

Wine credits her with helping raise his awareness of the situation in Sderot and also with facilitating his act of chesed at the bar mitzvah.

"I see to it that every single penny is used to help Sderot," Bronfman said. "There's no administration costs. Everyone in Sderot is waiting for this project to happen."

Bronfman is passionate about helping the people of Sderot and was inspired when she heard about Wine's bar mitzvah fundraising effort. It has since become her newest pet project in aid of the committee.

"I decided this could be an amazing project where kids could individually make a difference. We'll be promoting this to the community," she said. "In one fell swoop, Josh really made a difference. If other children or parents are interested in similar projects for their bar or bat mitzvahs, they can contact me personally."

As a token of appreciation for his work on their behalf, the committee sent Wine a commemorative certificate of thanks and Bronfman presented an additional red leather bracelet with the word "Sderot" on it as a keepsake.

For more information on the bar/bat mitzvah program, contact Rachelle Bronfman at rb18@sympatico.ca

To learn more about the Committee For A Secure Sderot visit,
www.matesderot.com

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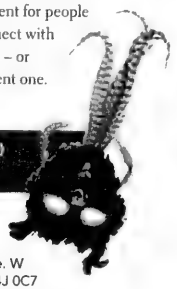

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Foundation drums up excitement for 100th anniversary

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

While Jews around the world are still celebrating Israel's 60th anniversary, the country is also gearing up for a new round of festivities in 2009.

Next April, Jews around the world will begin toasting Tel Aviv-Yafo, the country's largest city and commercial centre. Israel's only bona fide metropolis will be 100 years old next year, and dozens of cultural and sporting events will be held over an eight-month span in honour of this historic milestone.

On a recent trip to Toronto, Admiral Abraham Ben-Shoshan, director general of the Tel Aviv Foundation, challenged Canadians to mark the centennial by getting involved with the foundation, a non-profit organization that bankrolls education, social welfare, heath, cultural and environmental programs to improve the quality of life in the city.

He equated the 30-year old foundation, which is funded by an international network of donors that includes Israelis, to "the right arm of the mayor," explaining that the non-denominational organization identifies social, educational or cultural projects within the city and connects them with private and corporate donors. "The foundation helps the mayor achieve beyond what the city budget can afford."

He said Ron Huldai, Tel Aviv's two-term mayor, set a goal of completing 150 projects in the fields of education, social services, arts and culture, and sports and recreation. In the last six years, this goal has been achieved with the help of supporters of Tel Aviv-Yafo around the world.

Ben-Shoshan noted that 40 per cent of Tel Aviv residents, or 140,000 people, live below or at the poverty line. "We have to take care of them."

In fours years at the foundation's helm, he said he has learned a lot about the city's social problems and the disparity between rich and poor residents. The ongoing challenge is to find ways to "bridge the gap."

He stressed that the high level of educational, health and cultural programs funded by the Tel Aviv Foundation is one of the best ways to minimize socio-economic inequities.

Ben-Shoshan pointed to the gains made by the foundation in early childhood education, noting that prior to the foundation's founding, there were few early childhood education programs for disadvantaged children. "The mayor said that we should help every child. We began renovating buildings to provide pre-kindergarten enrichment programs. Today there are 8,000 children enrolled. That represents a 45 per cent increase in enrolment.

"The children come from 8 a.m. to four in the afternoon, and we serve them hot meals."

He said another problem area identified by the mayor was the high dropout rate among high school students in the southern part of Tel Aviv. "This is a more deprived area of the city, with a dropout rate of 31 per cent."

The foundation built libraries and resource centres in all the schools. "We bought books and computers, and we hired teachers to help the students to do their homework."

Ben-Shoshan said feeding the soul through the arts was another aspect of the work. "We wanted to open the children to new experiences, like exposure to the opera. We built music centres where the students could listen to music and get enriched."

Within seven years, the initiative paid off. The dropout rate fell from to nine per cent from 31, he said.

Ben-Shoshan also touted the achievements of Hemda, a high-level science education centre that is a resource centre for 18 high schools. "The place has state-of-the-art laboratories. It is staffed by teachers trained at the PhD level."

He highlighted some of the foundation's many success stories. It has funded more than 400 projects, including 14 health centres, 15 music conservatories, numerous sports and recreational centres and parks and outdoor playgrounds, as well as social, health and nutrition programs for the elderly.

Ben-Shoshan said that one of the programs that has been very well received and needs to expand is the establishment of social clubs– right now there are two – for Holocaust survivors. (He estimated that of the 80,000 seniors living in Tel Aviv, 30,000 are survivors.)

Many of these people are child survivors who were previously isolated from other survivors, he explained. "The social connections they are making now changed their quality of life. The net effect is unbelievable."

For more information about the Tel Aviv Foundation, visit telavivfoundation.org.

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Wretched choices

The Israeli cabinet voted on Sunday to conclude an exchange with Hezbollah to bring back Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, the two Israel Defence Forces reservists who were kidnapped by Hezbollah two years ago. It is believed however, sadly and painfully, that only the bodies of the two men will be returning to their families and to their country which they served. The men are believed to be dead.

The agreement was reached through the mediation of United Nations hostage negotiator and intelligence expert Gerhard Konrad. It is reportedly a complex, four-staged process that will also provide some information about missing Israeli airman Ron Arad, who was shot down over Lebanon more than 20 years ago, in 1986.

In exchange, Israel will reportedly ultimately release the craven and vicious Lebanese terrorist Samir Kuntar, who murdered a Nahariya man and his four-year-old daughter in 1979. Four Hezbollah terrorists and 50 Palestinians in Israeli jails will also be released.

No one should bear any illusions or utter any self-delusions about the nature of the other side. It is a terrorist group, the surrogate of the regime in Tehran, which holds a vice-like grip on the very throat of the government of Lebanon.

That there is still no definitive statement from Hezbollah concerning Regev and Goldwasser's condition speaks to the inhuman cruelty of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and his terrorist minions. His refusal to grant the Red Cross access to the soldiers violated every norm of international relations. But then, Israel has bitterly learned that the only norm to expect of Nasrallah is the norm of bloodshed.

The exchange is expected to take place by mid-July. The timing will be orchestrated by Hezbollah to cap its celebration of the second anniversary of the Second Lebanon War. To be sure, the occasion will be a hysterical festival of hatred.

Israel will have to grit its teeth at that time in the face of imagery that will surely infuriate and enrage. And the criticisms in Israel of the exchange will all be valid: once again, the Jewish state negotiated with terrorists; the agreement will encourage other kidnapping attempts by terrorists; and the military might of Israel was exposed as being impotent in these circumstances.

Though the vote was 22-3, the debate in Israel's cabinet was said to be emotional. In the end, of course, the need to bring the soldiers back to their families carried the day. The promise that no IDF soldier will be left on the field of battle remains sacrosanct.

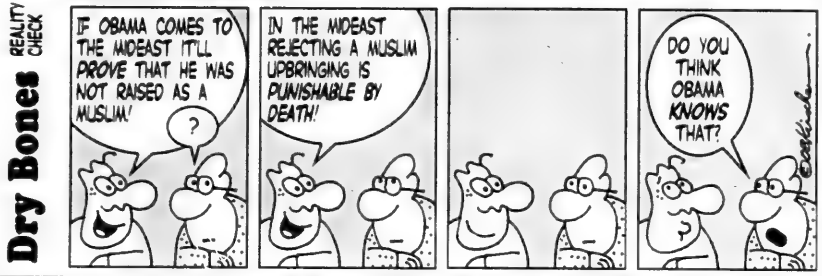
This promise, this belief in the sanctity of life is the elevating quality and the timeless, eternal value that gives Israeli society its strength and resilience. And it is precisely this quality and this value that distinguishes the Jewish state from the cruel enemies it fights.

Israel had wretched and harsh choices. But in the end, it had to bring the soldiers home.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The Israeli government decided to restore the old Jewish quarter of Hebron, despite opposition from western governments – including the United States – and from Israeli peace groups. The impetus may have come from the murder of Aharon Gross in the central Hebron market.

Editorials & Letters


Dry Bones REALITY CHECK
IF OBAMA COMES TO THE MIDEAST IT'LL PROVE THAT HE WAS NOT RAISED AS A MUSLIM!
?
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?

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Jewish prayer at Queen's Park

It warms the heart to hear that the government of Ontario will be instituting a rotation of opening prayers in the legislature as a token of respect for and appreciation of the various faith groups in this province ("Jewish prayer to be part of Queen's Park rituals," *CJN*, June 19). I propose that the Jewish prayer be as follows: "Dear Master of the Universe, open the hearts of the honourable members of this legislature who are entrusted with the governance of the province of Ontario. Allow them to understand that true equality and justice for faith-based groups rest not on mere tokenism, but rather on a solution to the longstanding unfairness in faith-based educational funding in this province – a situation that sets Ontario apart from all other democratic jurisdictions in the world. Grant the honourable members the insight and wisdom to remedy this situation speedily and in our day. Amen."

Jerrold Landau
Toronto

* * *

Defending Israeli policy

Michael Helfield's letter ("Ceding the Golan," *CJN*, June 26) in response to my own letter, makes essentially moot points. Israel is talking to Syria and Hamas. Whether Helfield likes it or not, this is the case, and as far as many of us are concerned, this is a good thing. I find it to be beyond chutzpah that someone is criticizing me for criticizing Israel (which I regularly do on issues with which it transgresses moral boundaries), when, in this specific case, I am defending the actual policy of the Israeli state. I take serious issue with being called by implication, as it were, "anti-Semitic," and am disturbed that *The CJN*, a publication that is supposed to represent the entire community, would publish this. As I say, I'm the one defending existing Israeli policy here.

Jordy Cummings
Toronto

* * *

Jews and guns

Many *CJN* readers have family and friends living in the United States and enjoy taking holidays in a number of American cities now beset by gun violence, such as Washington, Chicago, Cleveland, Orlando or Phoenix, to name but a few. Every year, some 12,000 American civilians are shot.

After Chief Justice Antonin Scalia announced the U.S. Supreme Court's ill-advised and closely contested (5-4) decision declaring that home ownership of handguns for self- defence is now an official constitutional right, an American Jew, California Senator Dianne Feinstein, immediately denounced this latest bit of American gun *meshugas*.

It is also salient that half of the dissenting judges were Jewish, namely Ruth Bader-Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer. Even though the National Rifle Association keeps funding chimera-like branches such as Jews for the Preservation of Firearms Ownership, most Jews are uncomfortable with heavily armed civilian populations, perhaps as an offshoot from the days of the pogroms. Many would agree that the heavily armed settler movement poses a unique threat to Israeli democracy, and that the assassination of prime minister Yitzhak Rabin by an armed fanatic and the massacre of Muslims at prayer perpetrated by Baruch Goldstein were low points in Israel's history. Most Jewish physicians and public health workers know that guns stored in a person's home are far more likely to result in the suicidal death of the owner or his teenage son, a family homicide, or the death of an inquisitive child than they are to be used in one of those incredibly rare instances of a successful defence of the home or family members.

It is now open season on all jurisdictions in the United States that have sane gun control, and, not coincidentally, substantial Jewish populations, cities such as New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Washington D.C. America is now being gripped by an epidemic of violence, and things are about to get a whole lot worse. Regardless of what your readers think of Toronto's Mayor David Miller, they should get online and sign his petition for a national handgun ban, at www.toronto.ca/handgunban.

Ron Charach
Toronto

* * *

People search

I am trying to locate my "long-lost" family in Montreal. My late mother's eldest brother, Lazarus Teitlebaum, immigrated to Canada, settling in Montreal, when he was a teenager. I am trying to find his descendants. I have copies of his three daughters' marriage details from the synagogue records. Sarah married Oscar Soltânov in 1929, Tilly married Victor Marcus in 1930 and Ethel married Sam Segal in 1939. Tilly and Sarah had sons who would hopefully still be alive. I'm coming to Canada in July, and it would be so lovely to meet my Canadian family. If anyone has any information about them, I would be delighted.

Mandy Glancy
Manchester, England
mandyglancy@hotmail.com

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Perspectives

Brutal attack on youth reignites French Jews' anger

By DEVORAH LAUTER
JTA

Angry and frightened Jewish youth gathered in the 19th district of northern Paris last Monday evening, June 23, to show support for a 17-year-old Jewish boy who was brutally beaten with metal bars while on his way to synagogue the previous Saturday evening.

Hospital officials said June 23 that Rudy Haddad was temporarily out of a medically induced coma and was "doing better."

But his improved condition did little to quell anger among French Jews over the latest shock to their community.

Angst has intensified in areas such as the 19th district, where inter-ethnic violence between Muslims and blacks of immigrant origin and the Jews living among them has grown more frequent.

The tensions continue despite a general decline in the number of anti-Semitic attacks since the period between 2000 and 2004, which saw a sharp increase.

To many, the June 21 incident was an unexpectedly violent yet anticipated result of such a divisive atmosphere.

The incident, which has grabbed headlines here and renewed debate about the surge of inter-ethnic violence, also has raised new questions about whether the French authorities are doing enough to protect the Jewish community.

While French officials were quick to condemn the attack, most fell short of identifying the crime as anti-Semitic, saying the police first needed to complete their ongoing investigation.

On June 24, Paris police were still looking into possible motives for the beating. Five teens, aged 14 to 17, have been questioned. The Paris public prosecutor on the same day opened a probe into the "anti-Semitic character" of the attack.

The probe will determine if Haddad's unidentified attackers are guilty of "attempted murder aggravated by an anti-Semitic character" and "group violence with aggravating circumstances," Prosecutor Jean-Claude Marin said at a news conference, the AFP news agency reported.

Marin said Haddad was beaten in circumstances related to a string of fights pitting young Jews against young blacks that took place that afternoon and evening.

The prosecutor said investigators believe Haddad was targeted because he was a member of a Jewish band of youths and not necessarily because he was "a person of Jewish origin."

French President Nicolas Sarkozy told reporters while visiting Israel last week that he was "particularly shocked by what happened to a young French boy, on the pretext that he was wearing a kippah," AFP reported.

In an initial presidential statement June 22, Sarkozy denounced the attack but did not draw such conclusions.

The daily *France-Soir* reported June 23 that police sources believe Haddad was involved in a dispute between Jewish and black boys and was attacked two hours later, when he was alone. Various reports cited between 15 to 30 young blacks attacked.

Chief Rabbi Gilles Bernheim

Police confirmed that Haddad had been held for questioning with three friends in 2007 for involvement in an inter-ethnic dispute.

Yet to many in the Jewish community, especially in the poor, multi-ethnic 19th *arrondissement*, where the incident took place, few doubted that Haddad was targeted because he was wearing a kippah and was an identifiable Jew.

On June 24, France's newly elected chief rabbi, Gilles Bernheim, shifted his stance on the anti-Semitic nature of Haddad's attack.

The day before he had told the French media that it was "probable" but "not certain" that Haddad was beaten because he was Jewish. But that morning he told French Radio J, a Jewish station, that the incident was "something vile and notoriously anti-Semitic."

While Jewish leaders in the 19th district were discussing the possibility of an organized response to the incident, 150 Jewish youth and some adults spontaneously met near the scene of the crime on June 23 for a second consecutive evening to protest the attack.

"It was senseless, and it could just as well have been me because I'm Jewish," said David Sebban, 17, who spoke with his hands clasped before him, visibly angered and saddened.

As he spoke, a crowd of young Jews rushed to testify of their growing fears for their security in the neighbourhood. Some said they would like to take revenge on the next group of "Arabs" they crossed, referring to Muslim immigrants of North African origin.

"When I go out, I go out with a big group, and if someone calls us a 'dirty Jew,' we fight them," said David, 15, who declined to give his last name.

Most of the kippah-wearing boys and observant girls spoke soberly of increasing tensions in the neighbourhood, which includes the largest Jewish community in Paris.

Though no official statistics exist, community leaders estimate that 25,000 to 30,000 Jews live in the 19th district, while roughly 200,000 live in Paris and its suburbs.

The district had the largest recorded number of anti-Semitic incidents within the French capital in 2007. Last year, 29 incidents were recorded there, compared to 15 in 2006. This contrasts with two or three reported incidents in areas closer to central Paris in 2007.

"We don't want to go out of the house anymore," said a petite Helena Sitbon, 15, who spoke as she leaned against her friend, nervously playing with her gold Star of David charm necklace.

Sitbon said that since June 21, she has been calling her girlfriend to come pick her up from the house, because she is afraid to go outside alone.

"Before we were afraid, but now it's much worse. Where are we?" she begged to know, as those around her nodded and called for unity among their Jewish "brothers and sisters."

Officials and community leaders have noted a recent rise in inter-ethnic skirmishes among neighbourhood youths. They often take place on Saturdays, when many of the neighbourhood's low-income Jews gather between Shabbat morning and evening services at a large, nearby park and are more easily identifiable.

Haddad's violent beating is a reminder of the 2006 anti-Semitic killing of Ilan Halimi, who was kidnapped and tortured before his body was left near railroad tracks just outside Paris.

The latest incident has prompted some to question the French government's response to the ever-present threat of anti-Semitism in French society. Some Jews in the 19th district expressed their frustration June 23 with officials and the French media for declining to identify the June 21 incident as clearly anti-Semitic.

"The government makes an effort," said Joseph Cattan, 60. "But if everything they've done until now still hasn't worked, it means they need to do more."

Yet CRIF, the umbrella organization of the Jewish community, and the International League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism thought the government's swift and firm condemnation of the attack was appropriate, due to the sensitivity of the case.

"I think their reaction was sufficient," said Marc Knobel, a CRIF representative and a researcher on anti-Semitism in Europe. "It was quick, and it shows that those in power take this very seriously. They showed their solidarity, and reminded everyone that hurting a Jew is the same as hurting France. There is nothing as powerful as saying that.

"If it was not a question of anti-Semitism, then Sarkozy would not have reacted immediately."

Knobel was among many community leaders who warned that though they believed Haddad was attacked because he was recognized as a Jew, the government was right to exercise great caution before publicly announcing any motives for the crime. Every reported anti-Semitic act further frightens the Jewish population, which has become more insular since this decade's overall rise in anti-Jewish violence.

"We saw a rise in anti-Semitic violence since 2000, which discredited our country," Knobel said, adding that acting without precaution would be irresponsible and "dangerous."

Other Jews said that police authorities and newspapers such as the daily *Le Monde* tended toward a purely gang-related explanation for the attack, because they were ashamed of their failure to ensure the safety of the country's Jewish population.

"They'll try to do everything to turn this into a common offence," said Rabbi Michel Bouskila, the 19th district Jewish Community Council president. "If we say it is anti-Semitic, it means they have failed. It says the government hasn't done anything."

Some of the adults gathered around a tree-shaded intersection in the rue Petit, beside a kosher cafe, said they were aware that many of the country's non-Jews accused them of "overreacting" to the threat of anti-Semitism.

"In the press, they don't talk about so many of the daily anti-Semitic incidents that happen, because they're not important enough, and because we're so used to it, we don't report most of them," said Patricia Tahar, 56, a mother of two. "It's only the big, violent attacks that make it into the press, so of course the French don't understand why we are scared."

'They wanted to kill my son,' mother says

PARIS — The mother of a teen victim of an alleged anti-Semitic attack in Paris says her son "doesn't remember anything."

Corinne Haddad, whose son Rudy, 17, was beaten and put into a coma for motives French prosecutors believe are linked to his Jewish identity, spoke out June 25 for the first time since the incident.

She told the French daily *Le Monde* and other media outlets that her son was "not a hoodlum."

"They wanted to kill my son," she told journalists.

Many in France are debating whether Rudy was attacked because he was wearing a kippah or whether the violent beating was the result of gang-related activity.

France's public prosecutor conducting the investigation into the matter told reporters he believed the answer lies somewhere in between and was a result of inter-ethnic group violence "aggravated by an anti-Semitic character."

The five teens held for questioning since the June 21 attack were released June25 but will be recalled for further testimony in the case.

The five, aged 14 to 17, have been labelled "assisted witnesses" by the Paris judge, which puts their status between suspect and witness, news reports said.

Various reports cited between 15 to 30 young blacks attacking Rudy.

Corinne Haddad told reporters that her son was "doing much better."

"Physically he has bruises all over his body, his arms and his face. He has stitches on his head and suffers from a lot of pain from his head," she said. "He is weak, but the doctors say that he'll make it.

"He doesn't remember anything, absolutely nothing. He asked, 'Did I dream?' He saw the bruises on his arms and asked, 'What's this?' He hasn't seen his face yet."

The day of the attack, "Rudy was going to synagogue, I'm certain," Haddad said. "I think he was alone. They wouldn't have left him, the others, they wouldn't have abandoned him like that.

"My son is not a hoodlum. I'm an education counsellor in high school. I work with youth. I taught him moral values. He has friends of all religions, of all races."

Haddad is from the northeastern Paris suburb Pantin and was known to regularly spend time in the 19th district of Paris, where a large community of observant Jews live.

Angst has intensified in areas such as the 19th district, where inter-ethnic violence between Muslims and blacks of immigrant origin and the Jews living among them has grown more frequent.

Haddad said she was aware of fights at the Buttes-Chaumont park in the 19th district, "but I thought they were little incidents."

"Rudy never talked to me about big fights," she said. "Anti-Semitic insults, yes, but nothing very serious.

— *D.L (JTA)*

Opinions

I give, therefore I am

Charity is strange, because people are naturally selfish. People daydream about new cars and jewelry, not about old people in soup kitchens. Yet, people give charity. Why?

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

We give because we love. Humanity is one big family, and it's instinctive to love your family. A few weeks ago, I visited a foster home in Be'er Sheva for troubled teens. Immediately, feelings of compassion stirred in my heart, as if these kids were long-lost relatives.

Love dilutes our instinctive greediness, and motivates us to share with others.

But love is only part of the charity story. Giving charity transforms us into true human beings.

Man is created in the image of God. Being in the image of God is a large burden. It means that we're expected to emulate God the creator and become partners in creation. As Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik put it: "When man, the crowning glory of the cosmos, approaches the world, he finds his task at hand – the task of creation. He must… repair the defects in the cosmos… Man, the creature, is commanded to become a partner with the Creator in the renewal of the cosmos."

Man is driven to fix the world, to be a true partner in creation. Giving charity is an existential need. Or, to put it in other words: I give, therefore I am.

Existential charity doesn't stop at the recipient. World-fixers want to inspire everyone to join them in their mission.

My friend Peter fled Hungary in 1957. Peter had received a visa to go to Vancouver, but when the train from Quebec City stopped in Montreal, he and two friends decided to jump off. Frightened they might get caught by police, they hid in a broom closet.

Late at night, they ventured back into the station and a volunteer from Jewish Immigrant Aid Services was waiting on the platform. He had seen the boys jump off the train, but couldn't find them, so he waited at the station to make sure they had a place to live and some pocket money.

A few years later, Peter tracked down the volunteer and went to visit his small walk-up apartment. There he met the man's widow. The volunteer had died a short time earlier.

Peter wanted to give this woman of modest means some sort of a gift. He insisted that it was simply to honour her husband.

To this, the woman replied: "You want to honour my husband? Then do as he did".

From that day onward, Peter has devoted himself to community work. What Peter does today was inspired years ago by that selfless volunteer, one of God's partners in creation.

And like his anonymous benefactor, Peter can say: "I give, therefore I am."

Obama gets Zionism – why don't our youth?

True, at the annual meeting of AIPAC, the legendary American Israel Public Affairs Committee, in Washington, D.C., the most powerful American politicians tell some of the most powerful American Jews exactly what they want to hear. True, at the meeting in June, Barack Obama overstated his commitment to a united Jerusalem, and then backtracked, causing great controversy. True, during the heat of a presidential campaign, anything one says that is positive about one candidate is perceived to be an endorsement of him, regardless of the writer's intent. Still, it's worth focusing on Obama's remarkable riff about Zionism – and challenging Jews in the United States and Canada to learn at least this from America's Democratic presidential nominee.

Gil Troy in Montreal

Early on in his address, Obama recalled the influence of a Jewish counsellor of his at a summer camp the young Barack attended in the early 1970s. Obama said: "I first became familiar with the story of Israel when I was 11 years old. I learned of the long journey and steady determination of the Jewish people to preserve their identity through faith, family and culture. Year after year, century after century, Jews carried on their traditions, and their dream of a homeland, in the face of impossible odds."

Obama explained that as a young man cut off from his roots, not knowing his father, this quest to return and this deep sense of rootedness moved him. "So I was drawn to the belief that you could sustain a spiritual, emotional and cultural identity," Obama proclaimed. "And I deeply understood the Zionist idea – that there is always a homeland at the centre of our story."

There are three powerful ideas embedded in this short paragraph. Obama offers a compelling "holy trinity" if you will, explaining some of the ways Jews have maintained our identity for thousands of years, despite adversity. Obama talks about "faith, family and culture." He speaks about one's "spiritual, emotional, and cultural identity." I could add history, the land, and tradition as well. I talk about national and historical identity, too. But what's important is that Obama recognizes Judaism's multi-dimensionality. Judaism is not "just" a religion. Jews are a people sharing a common past, certain cultural traits, enduring family values, a binding faith, an interconnected fate in the present, and, we hope, an inspiring and glorious future.

Second, in this speech and elsewhere, Obama talks about the common modern quest for roots, for an identity. He understands that there's more to life than making money and spending money. True success, true fulfilment, comes from knowing who you are – having a deep, enduring, historical identity.

Both the United States and Canada are remarkable countries, welcoming immigrants throughout the world. But both countries, particularly with today's modern consumerist popular culture, encourage a kind of historical amnesia, a disconnect from our Old World past. True, Canada is officially multicultural and more sensitive to those concerns than the United States, but the lure of the "I," of the here-and-now of modern culture, overrides those rhetorical and ideological differences, enticing all of us to jettison our historical identities.

Finally, Obama appreciates the value of having a homeland as an anchor, as a repository of our past, our values, our story – and our future. We need to imagine sometimes what it must have been like for our grandparents and great-grandparents who were cut off from that homeland. We need to imagine sometimes what it must be like for kids like the young Obama, who, while welcomed into the American heartland, know that they are different, know that they have another identity and wish to reconcile it all.

We need to ask, "Do we always remember to keep our homeland – the homeland of Israel – 'at the centre of our story' as modern Jews?" Have too many of us, in the comforts of North America, forgotten how lucky we are to have Israel as an identity anchor? How many of our well-educated, sophisticated 40-year-olds speak as eloquently as Obama did about the power of the Zionist idea historically – and to us personally? And if Obama is willing to say "Yes we can" to our Zionism, how come so many of our youth are not?

Israel: from 60 to 120

The recent Israeli President's Conference, convened and masterminded in Jerusalem by Shimon Peres, was an extraordinary event. Subtitled "Facing Tomorrow" – or in Hebrew, simply *Hamachar*, Tomorrow – it followed the festivities for Israel's 60th anniversary and celebrated the country's myriad accomplishments in many domains. World leaders, presidents and high-ranking officials of many nations gathered in respect and friendship.

But the conference was more than simply congratulatory. Beyond the exhilaration of the moment, beyond the hoopla of a birthday gala, it was a gathering of brain power to look toward the future – as the presenters took to repeating – from 60 to 120.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Most impressive were the open and in-depth discussions about the problems that Israel faces in this new century. While security remains an ongoing concern, it was the soul of the country that many of the participants – writers, political scientists, lawyers, professors, politicians – addressed, on many levels and in different realms. Without diminishing the complexity of what was discussed, I would say that two themes emerged as central: poverty and solidarity.

At the start of the conference, writer Amos Oz recalled a news report in the 1950s about a little girl who said she went to bed hungry at night. The country, Oz remembered, was shocked. Hunger? In Israel? A hungry child? How could that be? How could we allow it? The Knesset, the media – simply everyone, as Oz remembers it – became preoccupied with resolving the problem of poverty in Israel, a crushing poverty that sent children to bed with empty bellies.

Today, Oz noted with sadness, many go hungry, but no one feels shocked. The gap between the haves and the have-nots keeps widening, and the ethos of care – the sense of responsibility for the have-nots – seems to have diminished. The solidarity that defined Israel in the 1950s – an Israel far less materially endowed than today's – seems to have given way, in more affluent times, to special interests and self interest.

This dual focus – responsibility for eradicating poverty and its attendant problems, and reinvigorating a sense of social solidarity – was echoed throughout the three-day conference, from many angles and by many speakers, from educators and philosophers to politicians and high-ranking government officials. Indeed, it was reiterated by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu at the closing session of the conference.

To be sure, Israel in its second half-century is different from Israel in its first decades. Then, it was easier to maintain the sense of cohesion and belonging in a small and more homogeneous population, especially with the very creation of the state in living memory of most of its inhabitants. Today, Israel is blessed and challenged with a booming population, and one of increasing diversity. Not only have Jews from a vast array of cultures made aliyah, but Israel is home to foreign workers separated from loved ones by thousands of miles, and it's a haven to refugees from genocide and persecution in places such as Darfur.

None of the conference participants suggested that renewing social solidarity was an impossible goal, a pipe dream, a child's idyll. Rather, the responsibility for one's neighbours was seen as integral to the deep ethos of the country and profoundly Jewish. While it may sound like an ethereal goal compared with the more practical and tangible problem of poverty, it's the ethical commitment that underlies resolving other concerns.

Many tourists visit Israel without ever facing the country's poverty head-on. Dazzled by the country's spiritual, natural and physical richness, and awed by its progress in so many industries, most visitors never venture into an overcrowded classroom, an inadequate apartment, or foreign workers' quarters. And most countries, celebrating a significant milestone with international dignitaries and other invited guests, would not draw attention to such things.

But this conference demonstrated that Israel is not like most countries. At 60, Israel can rightly revel in its achievements – the creation and maturation of the state itself, against great odds; its inventiveness in areas such as agriculture, high tech, renewable energy sources, medicine; and its literary and cultural production. At the same time, its highest office encourages and fosters open, public and transparent discussions of problems and challenges that need to be solved.

In hosting, Peres brought honour to the office of the president and established his legacy for generations to come.

The Kirshner File

The Passing Parade....

They died recently, leaving footprints in time...

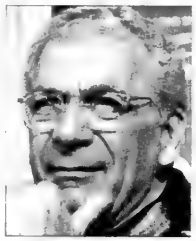
Sydney Pollack, a major figure in the Hollywood movie industry, directed films such as *Out of Africa*, *Tootsie*, *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*, *The Way We Were* and *Three Days of the Condor*. **Jules Dassin**, a film director, made *Never on Sunday*, *Topkapi*, *Brute Force*, *The Naked City* and *Night and the City*. **Abby Mann** (Abraham Goodman), a screenwriter, won the Academy Award for *Judgment at Nuremberg* and an Oscar nomination for *Ship of Fools*. **Peter Zinner**, an Austrian refugee from Nazism, was the film editor who worked on the first two *Godfather* movies.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Malvin Wald conceived and co-wrote *The Naked City*, a prototype of modern police dramas, and wrote scripts for TV shows *Perry Mason*, *Peter Gunn* and *Have Gun – Will Travel*. **Mel Tolkin** (Shmuel Tolchinsky), a member of Sid Caesar's TV writing team, was the lead writer for *Your Show of Shows* and its successor, *Caesar's Hour*. **Julius Harry (Jack) Kuney** produced and directed some of TV's earliest shows, including *The Play of the Week* and *Look Up and Live*. **George W. George** (George Warren Goldberg) was a film and Broadway producer whose credits included *The James Dean Story*, *Ben Franklin in Paris* and *Dylan*. **Alvin Colt** was a Broadway costume designer (*Guys and Dolls* and *The Crucible*) and **Peter Howard** (Howard Weiss) was a Broadway arranger (*Chicago*, *Annie*, *Hello, Dolly!*). **Cyd Charisse** (Tula Elice Finklea), an actress/dancer, was partnered with Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly in musicals such as *Singin' in the Rain* and *The Band Wagon*. **Suzanne Pleshette**, a TV and movie actress, appeared in *The Bob Newhart Show*, *The Birds*, *Fate is the Hunter* and *A Rage to Live*. **David Groh**, a television and film actor, starred in *Rhoda*, *General Hospital*, *Law & Order* and *Victory at Entebbe*. **Harvey Korman**, a comedian, was on *The Carol Burnett Show* and in *Blazing Saddles*. **Paul Sills** (Paul Silverberg), hailed as the godfather of the modern improvisational sketch comedy, was a founder of the Second City theatre company, whose alumni include Dan Aykroyd and Mike Myers.

Murray (Dusty) Cohl, a Canadian lawyer, was the co-founder of the Toronto International Film Festival, founder of the Floating Film Festival and executive producer of *The Scales of Justice*, a CBC radio and television series. **Ruth Wallis** (Ruth Wohl), a cabaret singer, composed a succession of novelty songs with risque titles such as *Hopalong Chastity*, *Johnny Has a Yo-Yo* and *Stay out of my Pantry*. **Sherry Britton** (Edith Zack) was one of the queens of the burlesque stage in New York City.

Freddie Fields (Feldman), a Hollywood talent agent, was one of the founders of the Creative Management Associates agency, and his clients were, among others, Steven Spielberg, Paul Newman, Henry Fonda and Fred Astaire. **Iris Burton** (Burstein), a child actors's agent, represented Kirsten Dunst, Joaquin Phoenix, Tori Spelling and Corey Feldman. **Warren Cowan**, a Hollywood publicist, represented Doris Day, Bette Midler, Frank Sinatra and Elton John. **Paul Wasserman**, a publicist to rock stars, represented the Rolling Stones, U2, the Who and the Beatles.



Sydney Pollack

Simon Michael Bessie, a book editor and publisher, edited the works of Elie Wiesel and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and was a co-founder and president of Atheneum. **Aaron Asher**, a HarperCollins book editor, edited Christopher Browning's *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution* and Raul Hilberg's *The Jewish Catastrophe, 1933-1945*.

Helen Yglesias (Helene Bassine), a novelist, wrote *How She Died*, *Sweetsir* and *Family Feeling*. **Elaine Dundy** (Brimberg) wrote the novels *The Dud Avocado* and *The Old Man and Me*. **Eliot Asinof** wrote *Eight Men Out*, which was made into a movie. **Arturo Vivante** was the author of more than 70 short stories for *The New Yorker*. **Stephen Marlowe** (Milton Lesser) wrote the Chester Drum crime novels. **Steve Gerber** created Howard the Duck, the Marvel Comics hero. **Eugene Ehrlich**, a lexicographer, wrote 40 dictionaries, thesauruses and phrase books. **Dan Laurence** (Daniel Hyman Goldstein), a scholar and bibliographer, was considered the leading authority on the British playwright George Bernard Shaw.

William Frankel was general manager and editor of London's *Jewish Chronicle*, the world's oldest continuously published Jewish newspaper. **Wilf List** was *The Globe and Mail's* labour reporter for some 40 years. **Frances Lewine** covered the White House and Washington for the Associated Press from the 1950s onward. **Cornell Capa** (Friedmann) was a photo-journalist on the staff of *Life* magazine and Magnum Photos and was the founder of the International Center of Photography in New York. **David Gahr** specialized in photographing preeminent singers, from Janis Joplin and Joan Baez to Pete Seeger and Johnny Cash. **Will Elder** (Wolf William Eisenberg), a cartoonist, helped set the tone for *Mad* magazine's comic identity. **Ted Key** (Keyser) was the creator of the Hazel cartoon. **Joseph Solman**, a painter, was a founding member of the modernist school of American art. **Klaus Perls** was a major art dealer in Manhattan.

Joshua Lederberg

Larry Levine, a recording engineer, helped create the "wall of sound" technique in such hits as *Be My Baby* and *Unchained Melody*. **Joel Dorn**, an Atlantic Records producer, worked with Roberta Flack and Herbie Mann. **Bebe Barron** and her husband, Louis, composed the first electronic score for a feature film, *Forbidden Planet*. **Dan Fogelberg**, a singer and songwriter, had hits like *The Power of Gold* and *Leader of the Band*. **Gloria Shayne Baker** (Shain) composed the Christmas classic *Do You Hear What I Hear?* **Leonard Rosenman**, a movie composer, wrote the scores for *East of Eden*, *Rebel Without a Cause* and *Bound for Glory*. **Natalia Karp** (Weissman) was a Polish-born concert pianist. **Siegmund Nissel** was the second violinist of the Amadeus Quartet, **Melvin Berman** was the principal oboist for the Canadian Opera Company, and **Neil Chotem** was a Canadian composer and conductor. **Sam Gesser** was a Montreal impresario. **Ilyas Malayev** was a musician and poet in Uzbekistan and the U.S.

Murray (Dusty) Cohl

Jerry Zucker, an American scientist and businessman originally from Israel, acquired Canada's Hudson's Bay Company. **Irvine Robbins** of Winnipeg was a co-founder of the Baskin-Robbins ice cream store chain. **Martin Kimmel** of the Kimco Realty Corp. was the biggest builder of strip malls in the United States. **Murray Klein**, a Holocaust survivor, was one of the principals of Zabar's, the legendary Jewish gourmet food shop in Manhattan. **Paul Gordon** owned Gordon Food Service, one of the largest food distributors in North America. **Harold Alfond** of the Dexter Shoe Company opened one of the first factory outlet stores in the United States.

Joshua Lederberg, a founder of the field of molecular biology, won the 1958 Nobel Prize for medicine. **Murray Jarvik**, a psychopharmacologist, was instrumental in the development of the nicotine patch. **Judah Folkman** was a groundbreaking cancer researcher. **Herbert Saffir** created the five-category system for describing hurricanes. **Joseph Moses Juran** helped establish the field of quality management. **Irving Bluestone** was one of the chief negotiators for the United Automobile Workers union. **Milton Klein** was a Montreal Liberal party member of parliament. **Sam Walsh** led the Communist party in Quebec for 28 years. **Tom Lantos** was the only Holocaust survivor to serve in the U.S. Congress. **Howard Metzenbaum** was a Democratic U.S. senator from Ohio. **Michael Rossman** was an organizer of the Free Speech Movement at the University of California in the early 1960s.

Jacob Coleman Hurewitz was a Columbia University Middle East scholar and the author of *The Struggle for Palestine* and *The British Empire in the Middle East*. **Gerald Feldman**, a historian specializing in 20th century Germany, wrote *Army, Industry and Labor in Germany, 1914-1918*.

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Sharansky says be prepared to fight

Continued from page 3

Sharansky spent nine years in prison before finally being released and making aliyah to Israel in 1986.

"In order to resist the KGB, you had to feel there are things which are more important than your physical life. This could be the history to which you want to belong, community, faith… these are things that if you feel them very deeply, then your own physical survival is not the most important thing. The survival of that people, or community or that faith is more important to you."

When asked about Israel and its current identity, Sharansky said he thinks Israelis should reject any "post-Zionist" arguments that say the country should belong to all of its citizens and not just be a Jewish state.

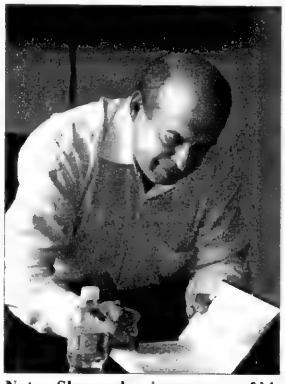
"The only way to protect freedom in this part of the world, to keep Israel a democratic country among others, you need passion, devotion and commitment of national identity," he said.

Asked what Diaspora Jews can do to help Israeli identity and themselves by extension, Sharansky responded they should resist all "attempts to delegitimize Israel. Today, it's very popular this idea that Israel should be a state of all its citizens and not be a Jewish state. And it's an extremely dangerous idea. It will bring the triumph of [Muslim] fundamentalism."

Sharansky argues that ever since the 1993 Oslo peace accords, the peace process between Palestinians and Israelis has been tainted and consistently collapses due to the failure of western leaders to aggressively promote a sense of democratic identity in Palestinian civil society.

"The fact that they have such a leadership, a big share of that blame is on the free world – on America, on Israel, on Canada as well. Because the idea of Oslo was to find a strong dictator to… keep the Palestinians under control," he said.

"So when we try to bribe and build by giving more and more money to create one of the most primitive, cruel and corrupt dictatorships [under former Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat]… the Palestinians' only choice after 15 years of this dictatorship was either to support their own noble terrorists – who maybe want to kill all the Jews, but are at least taking care of them – [while] we constantly, systematically refused to support those democratic dissidents who are in Palestinian society. We didn't think they had enough power to be supportive. As a result, we helped dangerous forces to become more powerful."



Natan Sharansky signs a copy of his new book last week in Toronto.
[Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

Sharansky called the current, fragile truce between Israel and Hamas a "demonstration of our weakness," saying that Hamas wasn't even acknowledging the agreement as a truce, but rather as a short-term strategic manoeuvre to buy time to get more weapons for a renewed struggle against Israel.

"We will have to fight, unfortunately," Sharansky said.

"I do believe in coexistence and peace with Palestinian society by encouraging building civil society. I don't believe that we can negotiate that peace with those who ideologically and practically are not ready to accept our existence as a right or a fact, and are ready to sacrifice all their lives to destroy us."

In the meantime, for Sharansky, the best way to shield the democratic world from those who identify with tyranny is to be as prepared to fight and die for freedom.

Would he consider returning to political life to help Israel maintain its identity?

To this, Sharansky smiled, shook his head and quipped, "I was nine years in prison, I was 10 years in Knesset. So no, not back to the Knesset."

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Greater Toronto Area

Royal Military College appoints another Jewish principal

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Joel J. Sokolsky, the incoming principal of Royal Military College of Canada, Canada's only military university, has big plans.

"I want to raise its profile within Canada by inviting personalities from the worlds of business, scientific research and the arts to spend time at RMC as visiting scholars," said Sokolsky, the school's current dean of arts, in an interview last week.

Joel Sokolsky

Sokolsky, whose appointment takes effect Aug. 1, hopes to expand student and faculty exchanges as well.

His appointment was announced in May by Defence Minister Peter MacKay during convocation ceremonies at RMC, which was established by an act of Canadian Parliament in 1874.

The college was opened two years later, and since then, its graduates have distinguished themselves in the Canadian Forces.

A political scientist, Sokolsky has had a long association with RMC, having started as a faculty member in 1986.

Born in Toronto in 1953, he holds a BA from the University of Toronto, an MA from the School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University and a PhD from Harvard University. He then did post-doctoral studies at Dalhousie University.

The recipient of several scholarships and awards, he is an expert in Canadian and U.S. foreign and defence policy, contemporary maritime strategy and international security relations.

The author and co-author of a number of books, monographs and articles, his works include *Sea Power in the Nuclear Age: The United States Navy and NATO, 1949-1980* and *Canadian Defence Policy: Decisions and Determinants*.

He has also taught at Dalhousie University, Duke University and Bridgewater State College, and has served as a consultant to the Canadian government in defence policy, U.S. foreign and defence policy and modern naval strategy.

His wife, Denise, is an artist.

The Sokolskys have three children, Jared, Mark and Rachel.

Sokolsky was hired as RMC's acting dean of arts eight years ago and was named dean in 2001.

The son of Leonard and Rose Sokolsky, he is RMC's second Jewish principal after John Cowan, the current principal.

Asked whether RMC would have selected a Jewish principal 50 years ago, he replied that Canada has matured into "a more tolerant and welcoming country."

RMC has been part of this evolution, he noted.

"Our predominately civilian academic faculty, the military staff and our undergraduate officer cadets and graduate students increasingly reflect the diverse and rich character of Canadian society today," he said.

"At RMC, I have only encountered an attitude of respect and civility toward individuals, regardless of background. This spirit, combined with a dedication to scholarship as an essential component of professional military development, has made RMC a most rewarding and enjoyable place to pursue an academic career."

Although RMC is a military university, it offers degrees in social sciences and humanities, apart from those in science and engineering.

"All undergraduate officer cadets take a core curriculum that includes the sciences, social sciences and humanities," Sokolsky explained.

Expert in Canadian and U.S. foreign and defence policy, contemporary maritime strategy and international security relations

In recent years, RMC has established a writing centre and added a degree in psychology to its roster of degrees.

As principal, Sokolsky wants to build on Cowan's achievements and enhance RMC's role as an incubator of new Canadian officers.

He encourages high school students to consider studying at RMC.

"We provide an excellent undergraduate education, and upon graduation, a commission as an officer in the Canadian Forces," he said.

"Even if you do not pursue a career in the military after your initial commitment, this is a great place to start. You will serve your country and the world while acquiring experience, knowledge and skills that will be invaluable in later years.

"Our graduates have gone on to be leaders in a wide variety of professions in the private and public sectors."

For more information, visit RMC's website at www. rmc.ca.

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Jewish Life

A GPS for the Jewish soul

By RABBI DEBRA LANDSBERG

Without the aid of satellites, microwaves or the U.S. Defence Department, our rabbis developed the earliest GPS (global positioning system).

Unsurprisingly, it was designed for a radically different kind of navigation than the one you might find in a rental car. Why? Our rabbis weren't wrestling with spatial geography, other than the direction of Jerusalem. What our rabbis urgently needed to do was impress on the Jewish world a GPS for cultural, historical and ultimate navigation. A GPS that – rather then simply saying, "Approaching exit on the right" – calls out Jewish time and space.

The rabbis constructed time as the key to raising consciousness beyond the immediate. They transformed the simple calendar into an intricate device for a Jew to locate herself in time, space and head space. A date approaches this summer, for example, when Jews are to recall the destruction of the first and second temples in 586 BCE and 70 CE. It's a challenge for most of us to remember what we were like as a younger person only 10, 20, or 60 years ago. For an entire people, the challenge is even more formidable.

Tisha b'Av dictates that every year, we must look unsparingly at our reflection in the days of yore of the Jewish nation and see that the destruction of the Second Temple was wrought by *sinat chinam* (senseless hatred) among Jews. Tisha b'Av demands of me – a liberal woman rabbi – that, for one day at least, I must examine my core beliefs by a yardstick beyond the radically modern values we live our lives by: egalitarianism, social justice, and pluralism.

I must ask myself where these values fit in the scheme of embracing Klal Yisrael, including all those who do not embrace me and those who denigrate the very essence of my beliefs. The prevention of another devastation caused by *sinat chinam* requires painful choices and comes with no guarantees. Nonetheless, having a day in a calendar that constantly calls us to account is the necessary discipline required for Jews not to lose their bearings.

In truth, we all have at least a fleeting sense of the ideas located within the calendar: repentance, thanksgiving, communal destruction and redemption. However, without setting aside the time, it's hard to internalize such abstractions. We need time to reach into our hearts and minds to locate our unqualified honesty, humility and communal reflection. It requires a determination to transform simple ideas into the stuff of our souls. Jewish time, if you allow it, will do the work of moulding and forming consciousness.

The Jewish calendar – based in Torah and detailed by the rabbis – includes about 260 such purposeful days each year. From every Shabbat to Sfirat HaOmer to the Three Weeks to the Ten Days of Repentance and onward, Jews live in defined and defining time.

With all of that said, at this moment we are at an eerily quiet time in the calendar. We have long completed our seven weeks counting up to Shavuot, and we are weeks away from the count between the 17th day of Tammuz and Tisha b'Av. Our GPS is giving few directions or guidance.

Yet, it is in this emptiness that we can perhaps renew our ability to embrace the calendar. We can, at our pace and best suited to our needs, roam the Jewish world. We will not get lost or fall off the map. Rather, we may find that our Jewish journey becomes the destination. A few practical suggestions: go to urj.org/torah and subscribe to 10 Minutes of Torah, or explore myjewishlearing.com or www.hartmaninstitute.com.

Rabbi Landsberg is spiritual leader of Temple Emanu-El in Toronto.

The daughters of Zelophehad

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

In the Torah readings coming up, we meet an unusual family. They are unusual in the sense that they are a family of five sisters who find themselves in what they consider to be an unfair situation.

Unfairness is not part of the covenant as they understand it, and so they decide to express their concern. This makes them astounding sisters. Introduced in text as the daughters of Zelophehad, these sisters innovate Judaism and teach us about the complexities of covenant, leadership and community. What makes them so astounding is that they didn't intend to change the nation. They simply intended to address a question.

Just before the nation approaches Israel, as the portions of the land are being allocated, these women come before Moses with a plea for their family. Their father died without leaving any sons. With no sons, there will be no inherited land portion given to the family, and the father's name will subsequently disappear.

The daughters proclaim their father's innocence of any crime, saying that justice would determine that they, the daughters, inherit the intended land portion, even in the absence of male family members. Their plea is for justice on a personal level, since on a national level, it makes no difference whether any single family inherits or not, since these are tribal land affiliations. The question is only a question of justice.

Moses brings their case before God, who not only affirms their rights, but consequently changes the inheritance laws of Israel for all time. And immediately afterward, God tells Moses that he will die before entering the land of Israel. Moses asks that God designate the next leader who can bring the people into the land, and Joshua is named.

These two events, occurring one right after the other, bring the strands of covenant to the forefront. The entire discussion begins with a plea for justice. Zelophehad's family will have no future without a grounding element. The women have rightly understood that the grounding element must be the land of Israel. They are correct.

Moses has a designated family tribe, Levi, and he has left sons. There is no grounding question. However, he, as leader, is concerned with the grounding of the nation. His statement that God must designate the person to come after him is to understand that land alone will not suffice. Leadership is essential. By designating Joshua, God has stated that leadership must come from shared history and vision.

The final step occurs when God states that Joshua must continuously consult and follow the words of Eleazar the priest. Jewish spirituality is to inform everything.

Yet these fundamentals of covenant began with the appearance of five women, sisters, speaking on behalf of their father. The midrash in Exodus Rabbah speaks of a parable of a king who had one daughter. He loved her greatly, and as she grew, her expressions of love grew, so that the king began to call her his sister, and even later, he called her his mother. The daughters of Zelophehad began as daughters, but they presented their case as sisters and ultimately guarded the direction of justice and covenant as matriarchs.

With these ingredients – justice, land, leadership and spirituality – everyone is ready to move forward. It all began with women who had the courage to speak on behalf of justice.

Jewish Life

The birth of western civilization

By ALEX GROPPER

The end of the Bronze Age was a cataclysmic event in the history of the Mediterranean – archeology has provided us with ample evidence of the swath of destruction that brought it about.

The fall of the Bronze Age saw the end of a system that had taken almost 2,000 years to establish itself. Some have even compared it to the fall of the Roman Empire at the start of the Middle Ages. As with the fall of Rome, some scholars saw the end of the Bronze Age as being succeeded by its own Dark Age.

Past Forward

Recent excavations are changing this picture, however. In his excavations in south-eastern Turkey, one of my fellow board members at the Canadian Institute for Mediterranean Studies, Prof. Tim Harrison of the University of Toronto's department of Near and Middle Eastern civilizations has found some exciting new evidence of cultural continuity. Some scholars are now looking here for clues to the origins of the enigmatic Sea Peoples, one of the major agents of the mass destruction, amongst whom we find the Philistines of the Bible.

It is fascinating that the earliest evidence we have of Philistine pottery in Israel is identical to the last stages of Mycenaean pottery on the Greek mainland. A number of years ago, the eminent Israeli archeologist and recognized authority on the Philistines, Trude Dothan (dubbed by some as Mrs. Philistine) told me of the remarkable similarity of the floor plan of the earliest Philistine temple in Israel at Tel Qasile (now on the grounds of the University of Tel Aviv) and a Philistine temple on Cyprus. They were virtually identical to a late Mycenaean shrine at Mycenae on the Greek mainland.

The Mycenaeans were responsible for the destruction of Troy, according to many scholars. This raises some intriguing questions about the relationship between the Philistines and Mycenaeans, and whether the Philistines were involved in the Trojan War.

If this is the case, we have two of the most important formative events in the history of western civilization occurring at roughly the same time – the Exodus from Egypt and the Trojan War. It also pits these two cultures in a life and death struggle much earlier than hitherto believed.

It was out of the events surrounding the end of the Bronze Age that western civilization would be born some three centuries later in the Mediterranean. The eighth century BCE saw key elements emerge that would become the foundation of what we now call western civilization, including the birth of Greek culture as exemplified by the emergence of Homer around 770 BCE, as well as the first Olympics, which legend says were held in 776 BCE.

Halfway across the Mediterranean, in Italy, legend places the founding of Rome in 754 BCE. It was also at the end of the eighth century BCE that the Greeks would establish their first colony in Italy on the island of Ischia in the Bay of Naples (Naples being another Greek colony that was established shortly thereafter).

Opposite Italy, in North Africa, the Phoenicians established the colony of Carthage, which would be engaged in a life and death struggle with Rome for control of the Mediterranean some five centuries later. The Phoenicians were closely related to the ancient Israelites and both spoke dialects of the same language – Canaanite. The Phoenicians of Tyre were allies of Israel. One of their kings, Hiram, provided Solomon with builders and material to construct his Temple. One of their princesses, Jezebel, was married to Ahab, son of Omri, king of the northern kingdom of Israel. She was the archetype of the evil woman whom the prophets condemned.

The eighth century was also a high point in the prophetic movement and witnessed the careers of such great figures as Isaiah, Micah and Amos, and this movement would play an important role in establishing the moral foundation of western civilization. But it was another Phoenician invention, the alphabet, that made possible the transmission of these lofty ideals to future generations.

Jewish genetics

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The Internet has been criticized for being a worldwide waste of time. And far too often, those criticisms are valid. But used properly, the Internet can be a critical tool for joining communities and perhaps even saving lives. This is particularly true for people searching for information about Jewish genetic illnesses who can meet others also looking for answers and support.

The best place to start is at the Center for Jewish Genetic Diseases website. The centre has supplied online information and web links about genetic diseases more common among Ashkenazi Jews, including Bloom's syndrome, Canavan disease, Familial Dysautonomia, Fanconia Anemia, Gaucher disease, Mucolipidosis IV, Niemann Pick disease, Tay-Sachs disease and Torsion Dystonia. **[nfjgd.org/]** You'll find more information at the Chicago Center for Jewish Genetic Disorders **[jewishgeneticscenter.org/]** and the Canavan Foundation. **[tinyurl.com/4n4xdx]**

Once you have read through all the websites, you may want a personal connection. An excellent way for someone trying to learn more about a rare Jewish disease is by meeting others who are facing similar challenges. You can join that worldwide community through e-mail lists such as the one for individuals concerned with Gaucher disease and similar genetically based diseases. To join the list, you will need to verify your identity as well as explain your interest in the community. **[tinyurl.com/4lhqog]**

Like most North American Jews, I am of Ashkenazi descent and was curious about why this background is so often associated with genetic illnesses. Writing in *Moment* magazine, Beryl Lieff Benderly pointed out the discomfort felt by many whenever a new genetic illness is associated with Ashkenazi Jews. "Scientists have not discovered so many 'Jewish' genes through any evil conspiracy or nefarious plot, but simply because we Ashkenazim are a geneticist's dream of a research population. Highly inbred, bound by intense loyalty, often identifiable by names or culture, geographically concentrated, densely organized into countless voluntary associations, well educated, health conscious, and numerous enough to provide experimenters real statistical power, we are easy to reach and rally whenever scientists need volunteers." **[tinyurl.com/55ld5r]**

Sephardi Jews also carry genetic disorders but as Dr. Gideon Bach of Jerusalem's Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center explains, the way these diseases appear is quite different than in the Ashkenazi population. "The high-frequency genetic disorders specific to Ashkenazim are different from those of the surrounding populations [Poles, Germans]. Sephardim, however, tend to share hereditary diseases with their host population. This is believed to result not from intermarriage, but from natural selection. Kurds and Kurdish Jews, for example, have a genetic predisposition toward thalassemia, an inherited blood disorder. Crippling though thalassemia can be, it protects healthy carriers against a severe form of malaria, and may thus have been genetically selected." **[tinyurl.com/4arxr8]**

Speaking of thalassemia, several years ago, Montrealer Stanley Diamond discovered that he is a carrier of a mutation of the beta-thalassemia gene. **[thalassemia.org]** The gene doesn't affect carriers themselves but could be a "ticking time bomb" for descendants who marry other unsuspecting carriers. Since beta-thalassemia is so rare among Ashkenazi Jews like Diamond, there is a good chance of misdiagnosis – unless families at risk are contacted. As an expert in genealogy, he has spent years tracking down and warning other carriers. **[tinyurl.com/4hn27n]**

Although the list of genetic illnesses is formidable, there have been some successes since Tay-Sachs came into the Jewish consciousness in the 1970s. **[tinyurl.com/5cgl8e]** In January 2005, *Ha'aretz* reported that the "Jewish disease" has been almost completely eradicated. Hadassah University Hospital geneticist Prof. Gideon Bach said that accomplishment can be attributed primarily to the fact that the general public in Israel is advised to carry out genetic tests to diagnose the disease before the birth of the baby. In the event an unborn baby is diagnosed with Tay-Sachs, the pregnancy is usually terminated. As well, Bach credited the work of screening conducted among haredi Jews to determine whether prospective couples would be likely to produce children with genetic illnesses. **[tinyurl.com/3n4lur]**

Next time, a look at Jewish genetic screening.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Winnipeg man in life support controversy dies

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Sam Golubchuk, the man at the centre of a legal battle involving the question of who has the right to make end-of-life decisions for medical patients, died in hospital June 24 of natural causes while still on life support.

The death of Golubchuk, an 84-year-old Orthodox Jew, means that the legal battle in his case over whether doctors have the right to remove a patient's life support against a family's wishes and religious beliefs will not be decided ultimately in court.

At Golubchuk's funeral, Dr. Joel Zivot, a critical care specialist who is Jewish, came forward to say that he had contacted Golubchuk's children and agreed to care for Golubchuk in his remaining days after three doctors at Winnipeg's Grace Hospital had refused to do so.

Zivot told those in attendance: "After I heard other physicians had concerns about treating Mr. Golubchuk, I called Mr. Kravetsky [the family's lawyer], and I told him that I wanted to meet with Mr. Golubchuk's children, and I met with them… I told them that it was my obligation as a physician to honour the wishes of my patients… There are doctors who believe that it is a duty to care for our patients. I was honoured and privileged to care for him [Mr. Golubchuk] in the last few days of his life."

"Percy Golubchuk and Miriam Geller [Golubchuk's children] called me to ask me to be a pallbearer, and I am honoured to be one," Zivot added.

Last November, Golubchuk's children won a temporary injunction to prevent doctors at Grace Hospital from removing their father from life support against their religious beliefs, and the issue was to be decided in court in September.

Three doctors resigned rather than follow the court order, on the grounds that they were unnecessarily inflicting pain on an individual so close to death.

Neil Kravetsky, the lawyer for the family, said that while Golubchuk's fate wasn't sealed by a final court ruling against the hospital, in essence, the World War II veteran won his case.

"Mr. Golubchuk won. No one took him off life support. He died when his time had come, not when a doctor succeeded in pulling him off. He went on to live another seven months after he was supposed to be at death's door… Sam went to his maker when his maker was ready," Kravetsky said.

Golubchuk's daughter, Miriam Geller, said, "The final decision was God's decision, not what the doctors wanted."

Kravetsky, who spoke at the funeral and was also a pallbearer, added: "Sam Golubchuk in his life was a fighter who fought for his country and for democracy… He believed that one of the most important things was the right to freedom and the freedom to choose. I believe that Sam Golubchuk fought for democracy in his life and he fought for democracy in his death."

Kravetsky said that there "are hundreds of thousands of people who will remember the name Sam Golubchuk."

Lawyer Martin Glazer read out a letter from Dr. Leon Zacharowicz, a neurologist who had intended to be an expert witness at the trial, which was set for September.

In it, Zacharowicz said that Golubchuk "was said to be a stubborn man, and he remained stubborn to the very end. He would not simply roll over and die. He fought on, until his last breath, until the sepsis from bedsores acquired at Grace Hospital overcame him, apparently, in an anti-climax to a heroic struggle. But in his life and in his death, [he] was and remains a hero."

Pallbearers carry the casket of Sam Golubchuk.

Zacharowicz added: "In Europe, Sam Golubchuk didn't flinch in battle, and he didn't flinch in his battle [with the hospital]…He worshipped only one God."

Kravetsky said of Golubchuk's children, "They were very dedicated to their father. They would spend hours with him [in the hospital]. They loved him right to the end. We should all have children like that."

Rabbi Avrohom Altein, who also eulogized Golubchuk, said, "It is one of the oddities of life that Mr. Golubchuk, who was by nature a quiet, reserved, and humble person, who didn't seek the limelight spent so much of the last part of his life in the limelight.

Rabbi Altein added that Golubchuk was always committed to his principles.

"When Sam went into the army at age 16, despite wartime conditions he refused to eat non-kosher meat. He would give non-Jewish soldiers his meat so he could trade for something kosher," he said.

Kravetsky said he hopes Golubchuk's experience will have a lasting impact.

"Maybe, as a result of this case, the government here will legislate a bill as to how end-of-life decisions are made. Israel has legislation on this subject, and I'd like to see it," he said.

Continued on page 17

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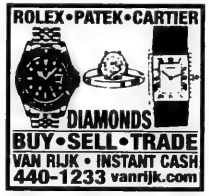

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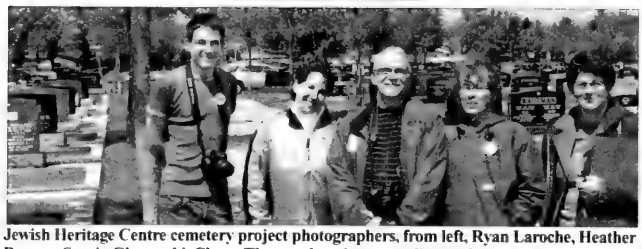

Jewish Heritage Centre cemetery project photographers, from left, Ryan Laroche, Heather Banera, Sergio Glogowski, Chana Thau and project co-ordinator Lynn Roseman are seen at Shaarey Zedek Cemetery after spending a morning photographing headstones.

Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada updates cemetery project

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Genealogical Institute of the Jewish Historical Society, which has since been renamed the Jewish Heritage Centre of Western Canada (JHC), began photographing gravestones in all the Jewish cemeteries in Manitoba 12 years ago.

In late May, JHC volunteers were back at work updating that pictorial record.

"The first time, it took us a year to take the photos and organize them into albums," said Lynn Roseman, co-ordinator of the first cemeteries project who has volunteered to lead this latest round.

That first effort required 656 rolls of film, and totalled more than 30,000 photos including two prints for each photo. (Second copies of the photos were made for the trustees of the cemeteries.)

Thirty-five volunteers put in about 1,200 hours of their time on the project, and it took more than a year to take the photos and organize them in easily accessible albums.

With digital cameras this time, Roseman noted, the photography is much quicker with fewer volunteers.

"We completed photographing all the headstones at the Shaarey Zedek Cemetery [the largest Jewish cemetery in Winnipeg] in two days," she said.

"We started the project originally for genealogical purposes," said Louis Kessler, past president of the JHC, one of the original organizers of the project.

"Headstones can provide valuable genealogical information. This is especially so for Jewish people whose parents' and grandparents' names are written in Hebrew on the stones."

Another aspect of the project, Kessler noted, concerns preserving the stones. He points out that a couple of years after the project was completed, more than 100 headstones were vandalized at the Hebrew Sick Cemetery.

"Because we had the photographic records, it was much easier to replicate the damaged headstones," Kessler said. He said the JHC receives about 1,000 requests a year from all over the world directed to the headstone photographs.

He added that in the winter, the photographic record allows people to view family headstones that are otherwise inaccessible because they are buried under the snow.

Roseman said her team photographed Jewish cemeteries in Morden and Brandon last fall. Brandon, she said, has had four Jewish burials in the last decade, because the Jewish community numbers just a few individuals.

The photographers also took pictures of the Jewish headstones at Temple Shalom's cemetery inside Chapel Lawn Memorial Gardens.

Many of the Reform congregation's members are in mixed marriages, and the congregation made arrangements outside of the Jewish community so that couples in mixed marriages could be buried together.

Still to come for the JHC photographers are the Bnay Abraham, Hebrew Sick and Rosh Pina cemeteries, which, Roseman estimated, will take one day each to photograph.

"We believe that this was the first project of its kind done by a genealogical society anywhere," Kessler said. "We know many individual cemeteries have been photographed, usually by the cemetery administrators, but we know of no society that has previously attempted such a large scale, comprehensive gravestone photography project."

Readers seeking information about family headstones in Winnipeg can contact Vanesa Harari at the Jewish Heritage Centre, C116-123 Doncaster St., Winnipeg, Man., R3N 2B2; phone: 204-477-7460; fax: 204-477-7465). The Genealogical Society's website is http://www.mbgenealogy.com/index.php?page=society.

Since November, minimal brain function

Continued from page 16

Golubchuk fell in June 2003 and suffered a brain injury, but he could still understand speech and communicate. Since then, he had been cared for in a nursing home, but he went to Grace Hospital's emergency ward last October suffering from pulmonary hypertension and pneumonia.

In November, the hospital took the position that Golubchuk had minimal brain function and that the decision to remove him from life support ought to be made solely by treating physicians, not the courts. But a court ruling in February that extended the November injunction until a trial said that since doctors are not infallible and can make mistakes, a patient's family has the right to seek redress through the courts.

The February ruling said that until the trial, the hospital must provide Golubchuk with antibiotics, blood transfusions and CPR if necessary.

The case sparked a nationwide debate on whether doctors or family members have the right to make the final decision to remove life support in end-of-life cases.

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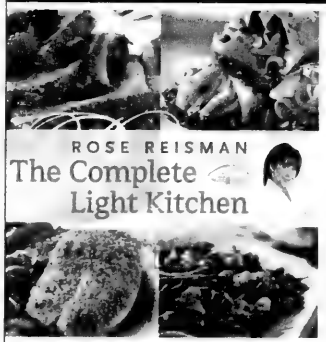

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Coast to Coast

Montreal mikvah reopens to converts

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Immersion ceremonies for Jewish converts have resumed at the Mikveh Israel in Cote St. Luc after months of negotiations between Montreal synagogue rabbis and Rabbi Itche Gurary, the mikvah's manager since its inception 27 years ago and the man who put the ban into place.

Rabbi Michael Whitman, of the Orthodox Adath Israel Poale Zedek Anshei Ozeroff synagogue, and Rabbi Lionel Moses, of the Conservative Shaare Zion Congregation, were among those praising Rabbi Gurary last week.

"He's devoted himself to it, and its largely because of him that this agreement has come to be," Rabbi Whitman said. "The whole community owes a debt of gratitude to [him] for his selfless service."

Such comments were few and far between back in February 2007, when Rabbi Gurary officially banned immersions for all Jewish converts, a policy that was actually put in place in September of the previous year.

While Orthodox converts had alternative mikvahs to choose from locally, non-Orthodox converts were obliged to seek ritual immersions outside the city, usually in Ottawa.

At the time, critics said Rabbi Gurary's real aim was to keep out non-Orthodox converts. But Rabbi Gurary insisted that the policy was related to maintaining the mikvah's cleanliness.

According to Rabbi Whitman, the deal struck with Rabbi Gurary entails two "guidelines."

The first is that conversion immersions will always be considered a secondary priority at the mikvah, compared to its first priority, which is to serve women for ritual immersion at night, and that conversion immersions must not interfere with the facility's maintenance.

The second guideline is that the mikvah, while allowing converts from all Jewish streams to use its facilities "as a courtesy to the community," is not thereby giving such conversions any form of religious sanction or imprimatur.

The mikvah "will not take responsibility for any of the conversions done there," Rabbi Whitman said. "They are only under the auspices of whoever does that conversion. The mikvah itself is not in the conversion business."

Rabbi Whitman said while Mikveh Israel, in any case, never gave official sanction to conversions before the ban, the agreement with Rabbi Gurary was a "clarification" of the issue.

Rabbi Whitman estimated that Montreal has about 100 conversions a year among all streams of Judaism.

He praised Rabbi Gurary for being "very, very helpful" in finding a resolution to the matter.

Asked what he thought made Rabbi Gurary reconsider the ban, Rabbi Whitman said, "I think it was the process of speaking together and seeing what was best for the community and the mikvah, the process of discussing it over a long period of time."

Rabbi Whitman, who also heads the Rabbinical Council of Montreal, also praised one of his own congregants, Louis Drazin, whom he said played a pivotal role in negotiations. Another key figure was Rabbi Mordecai Zeitz of the Orthodox Congregation Beth Tikvah in Dollard des Ormeaux, he said.

Rabbi Moses said he was "ecstatic" about the ban coming to an end.

"All of the parties involved have all been exceedingly helpful in getting this all back together," he said.

"And it's working. We just had a meeting of the Montreal Board of Rabbis, and the update is that everyone is satisfied.

"So kudos to Rabbi Gurary and Rabbi Whitman and Rabbi Zeitz, and all the others who have helped make this happen."

He said everyone is "delighted" with the "new operating principles."

"I think it's wonderful."

Reached by phone, Rabbi Gurary said he was not prepared to comment, other than to say "Baruch Hashem" about the dispute being over.

"Whatever Rabbi Whitman said, that's good enough," he added.

Schulich gives $2 mil to Dalhousie

By JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — A Halifax family that built a reputation for integrity, educational pursuit and cohesiveness has had its name memorialized on a Dalhousie University building.

The Goldberg Computer Science Building was officially named late last month for a family whose matriarch and patriarch came to North America in the early 1900s and moved to Halifax in 1912.

Seven children of Joseph and Sarah Goldberg succeeded in the medical, dental, legal and business communities, spawning grandchildren and great-grandchildren who have carried on the tradition of hard work and success.

A $2-million gift to the university – endowing four $39,000 renewable scholarships, two based on academic excellence and two on community service, plus 18 one-time $5,000 scholarships – were funded by benefactors Seymour Schulich of Toronto and his wife, Tanna Goldberg Schulich. Tanna is a granddaughter of Joseph and Sarah Goldberg, whose oldest son Meyer, Tanna's father, left school after Grade 7 to assist his mother in the family business after the passing of Joseph a few years earlier.

"The motivation for this gift to Dalhousie, from which eight Goldbergs have graduated, and other Goldbergs attended, was the admiration the family has in this community and the close-knit relationship of the Goldbergs," Seymour Schulich said at a press conference prior to the announcement of the naming.

"It's inspiring to me to see that family relationship… I grew up in Montreal, and my family was not anywhere near as close as the family into which I married."

"With the cost of providing a university education much higher than what students pay in fees, this is a debt that should be paid to assist the university to provide those educations," he said.

Goldbergs travelled from Florida, Boston, Toronto and Washington to celebrate the naming, as well as the 65th wedding anniversary of Leonard and Miriam Goldberg. Leonard, 90, a retired dentist and Dal graduate, is the only surviving offspring of Joseph and Sarah.

He said education meant so much to his mother. "I know how proud she would be to see her name connected to Dalhousie in this way."

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Michael Korman, B Comm, FMA, FCSI is a Financial Advisor with Raymond James Ltd. This article is provided for informational purposes only and should not be considered personal investment or tax advice. Insurance products and services are offered through Raymond James Financial Planning Ltd., which is not a member CIPF. Securities-related products and services are offered through Raymond James Ltd., member CIPF.

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The Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School is a pluralistic and egalitarian SK-Grade 8 school in downtown Toronto. Our Middle School promotes mastery of curriculum content, character development through leadership opportunities, and respect for diversity of Jewish expression and culture.

On Campus

Ten students from the GTA traveled to Uganda last month to help build a school.

Students travel to Uganda to build a school

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Hillel of Greater Toronto continued to promote the importance of tikkun olam with a recent trip to Uganda to build a school in a town there.

Ten students from across the Greater Toronto Area travelled to the Ramogi Village near the town of Tororo in eastern Uganda.

This is the second time in as many years that Hillel, the American Jewish World Service (AJWS), a group that grants funds to non-governmental organizations with the aim of alleviating poverty and disease in developing countries, and the Uganda Orphans Rural Development Program (UORDP) have organized a trip for Canadian students to come to the town to build a school.

Meyer Mechanic, a third-year economics student at York University took part in the trip last month from May 12 to 29.

The 21-year-old, who is on the Hillel board as the city-wide student chair, spoke to *The CJN* about his experience.

"We were there to work with the developing community there. The town has about 600 people, and we went down to build a school, kitchen and latrine, as well as interact with the community, learn a little about the problems facing it and experience something totally different," Mechanic said.

"When we first got there we wound up playing with the children, we wound up interacting freely with the community right away. We had work to do in the morning, and [we learned] about the community in the afternoon. Sometimes we had off time and we would play with the kids, talk with the adults and just really tried to experience the community and figure out what was going on."

In addition to bonding with the members of the community in Ramogi, Mechanic said he also bonded with the participants on the trip.

"The students came from all over the GTA, and it was an amazing show of diversity. We had students of all walks of life and from all different campuses."

The group worked toward a common goal – to improve the quality of life for the village children by giving them access to a new school.

"School is free in Uganda – it is just a matter of where the schools are, so the fact that there is a school there now, allows more kids to go," Mechanic said. "There are now two schools there [in Ramogi Village] because Hillel built a school there last year."

And the trip participants, along with local builders, worked hard to reach that goal.

"There was physical labour involved. We were moving bricks, we were wheelbarrowing, we were plastering, painting, digging," he said, adding that when the two-week trip was over, the school was built, painted and decorated, but the construction of the kitchen and latrine were still underway.

For Mechanic, the most meaningful aspect of the trip was the practice of Jewish values.

"One of the greatest mitzvot there is to provide others with an education. We were able to experience that by giving them a school, and they were able to give that to us based on what we learned on the trip," said Mechanic, who took a year off from his studies at York last year to study at a yeshiva in Jerusalem called Or David.

"Just being there was rewarding. You see smiles on kids' faces, you see the smiles on people around you... You really know that you're helping out there, you see what you're doing and they appreciate it. When you walk into the school and you know it is going to be used in the future, that is a fantastic feeling."

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish News

Happy 100th birthday Jack Silverman. With love and best wishes from William & Carol Silverman, Arnold & Greta Silverman, and their families.

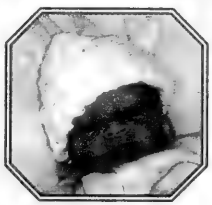
Penney & Brian Singer announce the birth of Chaim Elyakim. Proud siblings: Raphi, Yitzi, Meira, Ezra, Adira. Also shown is Bubbie Elaine .

Congratulations Ari, son of Claire & Gerald Pizer, who received the Outstanding Achievement Award in Music Therapy, Boyer College of Music and Dance, Temple University.

Happy first birthday Lilah Pearl Dankevy. We love you up to the sky!

Mazel tov on the marriage of Ryan Rakowski to Jessica Guttman. Parents Dr. & Mrs. David Rakowski, Mr. & Mrs. Alex Guttman and families.

Joshua Bayer was called to the Torah on June 14th. You are a mature young man with the heart of an old soul.



Elizabeth, Darren and sister Gabrielle Abrams welcomed Evan Matthew March 12. Grandparents Marilyn & Ivan Abrams, Breena Weller, and Auntie Stacey & Uncle Allan are thrilled.

Tita & Sam Srour, Arda & Harvey Hutter proudly announce the upcoming wedding of Charlie to Jenya, Aug. 31 in Florida.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments,
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North York, ON. M3B 3K4.
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New Deadlines: NOTE SUMMER DEADLINES. Monday, July 7 is the deadline for the July 17 issue. We are not publishing a July 24 issue. The July 17 issue will cover events from July 17 to 30. Monday, July 14, is the deadline for the July 31 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, July 5

SHIR LIBEYNU'S SERVICE

Congregation Shir Libeynu holds monthly egalitarian and participatory Shabbat service, including reading the weekly Torah portion, Chukat, followed by kiddush. 10:30 a.m., Miles Nadal JCC. Free childcare. 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

Sunday, July 6

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Walk and Talk Etc., for Jewish Singles 50+, explores Tommy Thompson Park on the Leslie Street Spit, a natural habitat for rare plants and animal species. Meet at 9:30 a.m. in the parking lot at the foot of Leslie St. For info and RSVP, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

Tuesday, July 8

SUMMER CLOSET SALE

National Council of Jewish Woman of Canada, Toronto section, hold a "Summer Closet Sale," 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Every Tuesday through Aug. 26. 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100

Wednesday, July 9

POWER OF PERSUASION

Shaarei Shomayim entertainment and cultural committee presents **Rabbi Michael Skobac** on "The Power of Persuasion: Positive and Negative Aspects." Includes a presentation to **Rabbi Asher Vale**. 8 p.m. Guests $2. 416-789-3213

Other news

TRACING JEWISH ROOTS

"Tracing Our Jewish Roots: Selections from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Canada Library Collection" is on display at the North York Central Library, sixth floor, through July 5. The exhibit includes historical texts of Jewish culture from the shtetl in Europe to communities across Canada, Holocaust material and directories of Canadian veterans of World War II.

ORILLIA COUNTRY SHUL

The Orillia County Shul resumes Shabbat morning services July 5 and continues through July and August at 10:30 a.m. This year's leaders are: **Cantor Tom Schwartz**, July 5; **Rabbi Michael Dolgin**, July 12; **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein**, July 19; **Rabbi Cory Weiss**, July 26; **Rabbi Dan Gottlieb**, Aug. 2; **Elliott Melamet**, Aug. 9; **Rabbi Tina Grimberg**, Aug. 16; **Lionel Sharp**, Aug. 23; and **Rabbi Arthur Bielfeld**, Aug. 30. 151 Creighton St. S. Follow signs to Casino Rama, pass the bridge on Hwy. 12, go south one mile. 705-327-7069

CHABAD HEBREW SCHOOL

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham Hebrew School is accepting applications for 2008-09. For information and registration, contact **Carole**, 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

KOLEL SUMER ULPAN

Study at Kolel's summer ulpan and learn basic conversational Hebrew in eight classes. Tuesday and Thursday nights, Aug. 5-28, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the Bathurst JCC. Pre-registration required, call 416-636-1880, ext. 235.

HIGH HOLY DAY TICKETS

Kolel High Holy Days early-bird tickets are on sale. Join **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** for a traditional egalitarian service with interactive family programming and services at the Bathurst JCC. Discount prices available till July 31. Ticket and information, call 416-636-1880, ext. 255.

Continued on page 21

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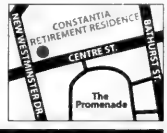


ORCA
www.chartwellreit.ca
CHARTWELL

Continued from page 20

MELTON MINI SCHOOL

Florence Melton Adult Mini School is taking registration for the fall term. Classes meet once a week for 30 weeks, evening or morning available. Classes available also for Melton graduates. For information or to register, call **Loretta Tanenbaum**, 416-789-7400.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts "Jewish Toronto: Sunshine on Spadina," a presentation by **Bill Gladstone**, columnist, genealogist and author of *One Hundred Years in Canada: The Rubinoff and Naftolin Family Tree*, talking about the period between the two world wars. Thursday, July 3, 1:30 p.m. Summer rooftop dairy luncheon. Thursday, July 10, 1 p.m. Pre-pay by July 7. $5. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Garnet A. Williams Bridge Club, 501 Clark Ave. Duplicate bridge games, Mondays and Tuesdays, 12:30-3:30 p.m. $1.50. Novice game and lessons, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 7 p.m. $2. Bridge lessons ongoing. For information, contact **Linda** or **Mike** at 905-731-3432.

PAL Seniors Group, Seneca Casino in Niagara Falls, New York, Thursday, July 10, leaving Earl Bales Park at 9 a.m. For information and reservations, 416-398-2424.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Naturopath speaks on "The Importance of Cardiovascular Health," July 16, 1 p.m.; Casino Rama, Wednesday, July 9; Fallsview Casino, Niagara Falls, Wednesday, July 30; Seniors walking group, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.; mah-jong, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

Chai Shalom Social Club will be going to see *Jersey Boys*, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. $118, includes orchestra seats and bus. Reservations, 416-633-3838

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112

Memory Boosters, Thursday, July 3, 11 a.m.-12 noon. Free. Call **Amanda**, ext. 126.

Lecture, "Sunset on the Volga" with **Corey Keeble**, a curator at the Royal Ontario Museum. Tuesday, July 8. 10 a.m. Members $3, non-members $6.

African Lion Safari, Wednesday, July 9. Members $60, non-members $70. Ticket and information, ext. 113.

Betel barbecue, Wednesday, July 9, 12-3 p.m. Members $5, non-members $8.

Hearing Clinic, Friday, July 11, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Contact **Amanda**, ext. 126.

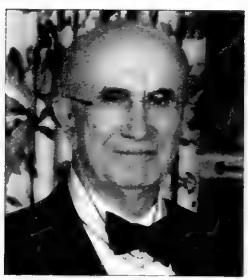
Israeli Festival, Wednesday, July 16, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Tickets and information, ext. 113.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

The Wagman Centre has opened a drop-in Internet lounge. Beginning on Thursday, July 3, and every Thursday 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. in the computer lab. The volunteers can assist in creating e-mail accounts, sending and receiving e-mails, as well as surfing the Internet. Members free, non-members $5. This is not an instructor-lead class. Info, **Melissa**, ext. 2297.

Book and Munch Club meets Wednesdays, 12-1:15 p.m. with **Marilyn Fine** in the Gathering Place.



LAWYER HONOURED: Earl Cherniak recently received the Law Society Medal at a ceremony at the Law Society of Upper Canada's Convocation Hall in Toronto. Cherniak has been an active member of the Jewish communities in London and Toronto for many years.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Third Annual IsReal Dance Festival, Friday, July 4 to Sunday, July 6. At the Al Green Theatre and MNJCC gym. Information, www.israelifolkdancingtoronto.com or strauch2@rogers.com or 905-761-0004.

Between Stages Playwright's Reading Series presents the 2007 Canadian Jewish playwriting competition winner *The Bleeding Season* by Ottawa's **Brandon Marlon**. The play explores the physical and psychological effects of the suicide terrorists on both Israelis and Palestinians. An exploration of the Israeli soul directed by **Ralph Small** with **Lauren Brotman, Jack Grinhaus, Sam Moses** and **Sam Owen**. Sunday, July 6, 2 p.m. Admission, suggested donation $8 at the door. Info, esthera@mnjcc.org or ext. 606.

Fringe @ the J presents three Fringe plays, through July 13: *Lost Daughter* by **Tara Goldstein** at Al Green Theatre; *The Barbeque King* by **Mark Brownell** in Room 318; and *Taking Liberties* by **Dave Carley** in Room 318. For tickets and information, www.fringetoronto.com or 416-966-1062

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Getting Started on Your Computer and "Using the Internet and E-mail" begin the week of July 14. Each course is four weeks long, two classes per week for a total of 16 hours. Register, ext. 0.

jVIAnetwork connects active vision-impaired Jewish adults through recreational and phys-ed programs, outings and activities that allow for socialization and networking. Information, call **Bess**, 905-508-2892.

The BJCC has a block of tickets for the first night of the play *Jersey Boys*, Thursday, Aug. 21 at the Toronto Centre of the Arts. Supporting this event helps give disadvantaged children the opportunity to enjoy a great summer at the BJCC's Centre Camp. Tickets, ext. 240.

STUDENTS SUPPORT PEDIATRIC ONCOLOGY GROUP: Students at United Synagogue Day School, Bathurst campus, raised more than $6,000 for the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario (POGO). The Elementary Student Council and staff advisers sponsored an assembly at which they presented a cheque to Vanessa Yakobson, director of fundraising for POGO. From left, back row, are Yakobson, school secretary Miriam Bar Yoseph; parent Thea Weisdorf; and teachers Deborah Goldberg and Carole Traistern. USDS students are in the first and second rows.

JNF HONOURS BIALIK TEACHER: Ziona Hagler, a teacher at Bialik Hebrew Day School for 42 years, was honoured with the Esther and Eric Exton Education Award at the annual general meeting of the Jewish National Fund [JNF]. The award is given to the Jewish educator who has most advanced the cause of the JNF and Zionist education in Canada. From left are Hagler; Aviv Reifler, national education shlichah of JNF Canada; and Jerry Werger, president of JNF Toronto. [Ronald Jacobson photo]

SINGLES EVENTS WILL RETURN

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Sova, David	June 12/08	7460 Bathurst St
Gertler, Larry	June 12/08	Private
Ostrowiecki, Erika	June 13/08	11 Townsgate Dr
Berman, Esther	June 13/08	
Weisman, Chava (Eva)	June 13/08	718 Sheppard Ave. W
Frankel, Edward	June 14/08	Private
Bendavid, Isaac Jacques	June 14/08	Private
Mintz, (Mitzmacher), Paula	June 14/08	1101 Steeles Ave W
Cohen, Ronlyn	June 15/08	21 Benjamin Hood Cr
Katz, Rose	June 15/08	100 Antibes Dr
Stern, Stephen	June 15/08	Private
Cohen, Ichoa	June 16/08	1121 Steeles Ave. W.
Greenberg, Adela (Adele)	June 16/08	170 Red Maple Rd
Benquesus, Simy	June 16/08	
Saban, Liora	June 16/08	1101 Steeles Ave W
Murciano, Mercedes	June 17/08	238 Rosedale Heights
Resnick, Sandra Rochelle	June 17/08	7460 Bathurst St
Zaionz, Charles	June 18/08	7 Maimonides Crt

HEDREW DASIC

Albert Brym	Jun 20/08	3560 Bathurst St
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Carmela Harnoy	Jun 14/08	122 Alfred Ave
Minnie Swartz	Jun 14/08	300 Antibes Dr
Gloria Goodis	Jun 15/08	1 Emerald Ln
Dr. Saul Cohen	Jun 15/08	1829 Queen St E
Edith Goldman	Jun 15/08	1499 Stoneridge Dr
Sidney Roebuck	Jun 15/08	9 West Gate Cr
Ekaterina Belokopytova	Jun 16/08	28 Benjamin Hood Cr
Moshe Rojek	Jun 16/08	146 Cactus Ave
Shirley York	Jun 16/08	6200 Bathurst St
Graham Sattin	Jun 17/08	156 Hillhurst Blvd
Lily Borins	Jun 17/08	42 Stormont Ave
Sam Prince	Jun 17/08	18 Lower Village Gate
Leonard Berger	Jun 18/08	42 Wigan Cr
Jack Young	Jun 18/08	126 Laurelcrest Ave
Linda Sharon Weingarten	Jun 18/08	39 Colonnade Rd
Sylvia Emsig	Jun 19/08	35 Ameer Ave
Harry Rich	Jun 20/08	2121 Bathurst St
Gerry Tolkin	Jun 21/08	188 Doris Ave
Dora Track	Jun 21/08	6 Killarney Rd
Cary Gold	Jun 22/08	54 Lisa Cres

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YIDDISH CORNER
Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל
רעדאגירט פון: אלעק סילווער

לכבוד דעם 100סטן יובילעום פון דער יידיש־קאָנפערענץ אין טשערנאָוויץ

פון אלעק סילווער

פון דער רעדאקציע. דער חודש אויגוסט פון 2008 וועט שטיין אונטערן צייכן פון פייערונגען לכבוד דעם 100סטן יובילעום פון דער ערשטער קאָנפערענץ פאר דער יידישער שפראך אין טשערנאָוויץ. עס ווילן איכער אָפּגעהאלטן ווערן פארשידענע פייערונגען, זעמינארן און ווייסנשאפטלעכע צוזאמענקומפס. דאָס יידישע פאלק וועט איכער מיט כבוד אפּצייכענען די דאָזיקע דאטע ווי א מייל־שטיין אין איר גלות־נעשיכטע. אויך אונדזער „וינקל" וויל אפּצייכענען ווי נעזעריק די דאָזיקע דאטע. א דאנק דער בריוו־טהרצייקייט פון פראָפ. לאזער בירנבוים און יין ברודער דוד האָבן מיר דערהאלטן פאטא־קאפּיעס פון מאטעריאלן, וועלכע גע־פינען זיך אין די ארכיוון, וואו ווערן אפּגעהיטן פון די צוויי ברידער, בידע איינקלעך פון ד"ר נתן בירנבוים, וועלכע ווינען בי אונדז אין טאראנטא. פון זיי האָבן מיר אויך דערהאלטן א פאטא־קאפּיע פון דער וויזדרלכער דערע־פענונגס־רעדע פון ד"ר נתן בירנבוים, וואס איז היינט באָ רימט איבער דער וועלט. מיט דער דאָזיקער רעדע וועלן מיר טאקע אנהייבן אונדזערע באריכטן. מיר האָבן נעגע־דערט דעם יידישן אויסלייג, כדי ער זאל זיין מער צוגענע־לעך צו דעם היינטיקן יידיש־לייענער. מיר האָבן נישט נעענדערט די ארטאגראפיע און גראמאטיק פון אריגינאל.

כדי אויפצוקלערן דעם לייענער ווילן מיר אנווייזן אויף א זאך, וואס מיר טוען צום ערשטן מאל אין אונדזער „וינקל" און מיר האָבן, אז דער לייענער וועט מיט אונדז מסכים זיין. וי איר וויסט האָבן מיר א באגרענעצטן פלאץ אין דער צייטונג. אין אינטערן פאל איז דאָ א סך מא־טעריאל, ווייער נוטער מאטעריאל, אין מיר ווילן נישט אריינטוארפן אפילו קיין איין וואָרט. האָבן מיר באשלאָסן איינצוטיילן די מאנוסקריפטן אין פיר טיילן און דרוקן עס אין פיר „וינקלעך". דער לייענער וועט איכער הנאה האָבן און דער פערטער טייל וועט אויספאלן אין די לעצטע וואָכן פון אויגוסט, 2008. דאָס איז די דאטע ווען ד"ר נתן בירנבוים האָט נענעבן זיין פייערלעכע דערעפענונגס־רעדע וואס ווערט איצט הונדערט יאָר אלט.

די דערעפענונגס־רעדע פון ד"ר נתן בירנבוים דעם 30סטן אויגוסט, 1908

געערטע נעסט און מיטגלידער פון דער קאָנפערענץ!

דער עולם האָט ליב אָפּצולאָכן פון מענטשן, וואָס עס גלוסט זיך זיי צו ביין אויף די נייע וועגן. אָבער דאָס שאדט די מענטשן גארנישט, דאָס לעכערלעכקייט ברענגט זיי נישט אום. אדרבא, זיי האָבן אין זיך א אָזונדערן כוח די לאָכער פון זיך אפּצוטרייסלען און פאָמעלעך נאריישע מיילער צו פארשטאָפּען און פאר־שטאָפּטע מחזות צו עפענען. זיי ווערן נישט מיד צו רעדן און זייער מוסר צו זאָגן, ביז דער עולם וועט איבערצייגט ווערן אז עס ווערט קלאָר פאר דער גאָנצער וועלט, אז נישט זיי האָבן זיך באָארישט, נאר דווקא יענע, וואס האָבן פון זיי אָפּגעלאכט.

באָראכטט, למשל, די באָוועגונג פון דער יידישער שפראך! אָנגעהויבן האָט זי זיך שוין מיט צענדליקער יארן צוריק. נאָך דעמאָלט האָט זיך אין א פאר קעפּ דערוועקט די שאלה: פארוואָס, אז אנדערע פעלקער מישן אויס פארשיידענע שפראָכן און אָבעטן אויס פון דעם נעמישעכן אין אייגן באשטפּעניש מיט אין אייגע־נער נשמה, — פארוואס רופט מען דאס אין א שפראך און [מען] גיט איר אפ כבוד? און פארוואס, אז יידן האָבן נעטאָן דאס אייגענע מיט דייטש, העברעיש און סלאָווויש, רופט מען עס א זשארגאן און [מען] מאכט פון אים חוקה דעמאָלט איז די אסימילאציע נאָך שטארק נעווען, און די נאציאָנאלע באָוועגונג האָט זיך קוים נעהאט אנגעהויבן.

(צוויי־טער טייל אין קומענדיקן „וינקל")

Obituary

Zaionz was a 'stalwart of the community'

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Longtime community leader and activist Charles (Chuck) Zaionz died on June 18 of a stroke. He was 71.

Zaionz was born in Toronto and attended Harbord Collegiate. He became a chartered accountant, going into business with his younger brother, Bernie.

His son, Rafi, and community activist Moshe Ronen, who considers himself Zaionz's protegee, described him as "an armadillo – hard on the outside, soft on the inside."

Charles Zaionz

Zaionz's wife, Ruth, said her husband first became involved in community work when some cousins, who had fled to Argentina to escape the Holocaust, disappeared during the dark days of the Argentine junta. A military dictatorship was in power in Argentina from 1976 to 1983.

Former national Canadian Jewish Congress president and Liberal MP Irwin Cotler, in a note to the family, said that Zaionz was "one of the first to take up the struggle against the Argentine authorities on behalf of the disappeared and indeed was the reason that Congress and myself became involved in this struggle."

He praised Zaionz as "a stalwart of the community – a committed, involved person and a person of honour and integrity."

Cotler added that "he was somebody you could always count on. He was always there to do that which had to be done, without ever seeking any recognition – only the satisfaction of the mitzvah itself."

That was only the beginning of years of Zaionz's community involvement.

He was fiscal chairman of the Board of Jewish Education (now the Mercaz). Rabbi Irwin Witty, the late director of the Board of Jewish Education, recognized his financial genius, Ruth said.

Zaionz was a board member of Associated Hebrew Schools; chairman of CJC, Ontario region; chair of the CJC national executive; an officer of Toronto Jewish Congress (predecessor of today's UJA Federation of Greater Toronto); and a founder of Shaarei Zion Congregation, a small, now defunct Orthodox synagogue in the Leslie Street and Finch Avenue area.

Zaionz was also an avid supporter of the creation of Or Haemet Sephardic School.

Zaionz introduced Ronen to the organized community. As head of the controversial Jewish Students Network, Ronen said he was seen as somewhat of a gadfly. "We were anti-establishment, and we weren't prepared to submit to what the community wanted to do, like supporting Soviet Jewry or Ethiopia."

As soon as Zaionz became regional chair, he appointed Ronen as chair of the Israel Affairs Committee. "He really cared about us [young people]. He respected us, and saw us as the future," Ronen said.

This appointment launched his career with the Jewish community, said Ronen, who went on to become CJC regional chairman, chair of the national executive and eventually national chair of CJC.

Zaionz was "in community politics for the right reasons – not for the glory," Ronen mused.

People didn't see the soft part of him. "He always had integrity and honesty – and it cost him," Ronen pointed out.

At the shivah, Zaionz's co-workers talked about how tough he was, always asking pointed questions and expecting prompt and accurate responses.

Manuel Prutschi, who was executive director of the CJC, Ontario region, when Zaionz was chairman, described him as very intelligent and a quick study. "You didn't have to take a long time explaining an issue to him and having him work out strategies to deal with it," Prutschi said.

To say that Ronen was devoted to his family is an understatement. His brother, Bernie, said that they were always part of each other's lives, sharing the good times and the bad.

But it was as a grandfather that Ronen shone, "glowing when the family was in his house, at his table," Ruth said. Son Rafi noted that "the grandchildren's wishes were his command" and called him "a zaide second to none." Daughter Ilana Winkler agreed with the description – "he was the be-all and end-all of zaides," she said.

Zaionz is survived by Ruth, his wife of 41 years; brother Bernie and his wife Hedda; son Rafi and his wife Ellen; daughter Ilana and her husband Richard Winkler; and grandchildren Yoni, Benny, Sammy, Zach and Maya.

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1948...They Were There

Habonim member served in Israeli army, air force, navy

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Ben Ocopnick, a Canadian who risked life and limb for Israel in the 1948 Arab-Israeli war, could well be one of its most unique volunteers.

Now 83, he may have been the only North American *machalnik* to have served in all three branches of Israel's armed forces – the army, navy and air force – during the momentous struggle for Jewish statehood.

Yet remarkably, he was not just a soldier. Prior to taking up arms for Israel, Ocopnick played a role in the Aliyah Bet campaign, which moved "illegal" Jewish immigrants from refugee camps in Europe to Palestine, past the British blockade. And once the war ended, he became a professional fundraiser for Israel in Canada.

All in all, he spent some four decades working tirelessly on behalf of Israel. "I would do it again," he said the other day as he recalled his multi-faceted experiences. "The adventures I had you couldn't buy."

Born in Montreal and raised in Toronto, he was a member of the Habonim Zionist youth movement when duty suddenly called.

In 1946, he was introduced to Habonim's official emissary, a kibbutznik from Maayan Tzvi, who was in Toronto recruiting young, able-bodied individuals like himself to work on the ships carrying Holocaust survivors to Palestine in contravention of British policy. "He said, 'We're looking for reliable guys to sail the boats.'"

A Canadian air force and army veteran, he was certainly not a seaman. But Ocopnick was a dedicated Zionist, and that was good enough for the Habonim representative.

Before leaving Toronto, Ocopnick, an only child, told his parents, Daniel (a World War I vet of trench warfare) and Lilly, that he was going to New York City to work for the Zionist movement. In actual fact, he boarded a Haganah vessel, the Ulua, bound for Marseilles, France.

"It was a terrible crossing," he said. "The Atlantic was stormy. It took us 14 days to reach Europe."

Once in Marseilles, Ocopnick and his fellow crew members outfitted the ship with bunk beds. They had been assigned to pick up a group of 700 young Jewish women in Treleburg, Sweden, who had been saved by Count Folke Bernadotte, a Swedish diplomat, during the Holocaust.

He will never forget the emotional moment when he greeted these women and led them to the ship that was supposedly heading to Panama but was really on its way to Palestine.

En route, the Ulua picked up an additional 700 passengers. As it approached Haifa, the British authorities ordered it to turn back. The Ulua, disregarding the command, was rammed by several British naval vessels and was swarmed by British sailors.

During an altercation, Ocopnick was struck on the head. Carrying no identity papers, he was deported to a British detention camp in Cyprus, along with the refugees. "Conditions weren't bad," he remembered. "The Jewish Agency made sure we were properly fed."

He remained in Cyprus for about two months, until he was shipped to Palestine under the terms of a British immigrant quota system. In Haifa, he linked up with the Haganah. After a while, he was ordered back to Canada to recruit fighters for the nascent state of Israel.

Shortly afterward, in early 1948, he joined the first wave of Canadians who had volunteered to fight in Palestine, which was plunged into an Arab-Jewish civil war following the passage of the 1947 United Nations partition plan.

"I was gung-ho to go," he said. "I was a Zionist. It was time Jews had a place of their own."

He arrived in Palestine shortly before the Arab invasion in mid-May, carrying a false British passport in the name of Chaim Navitsky. "We were taken from Haifa to Tel Aviv by armoured buses, then given a bit of training and a Mauser rifle."

Having been trained as a wireless air gunner in the Canadian air force and a foot soldier in the Canadian army before his demobilization in 1945, he was not exactly a neophyte when it came to war.

Dispatched to a base in Rehovot, Ocopnick was placed in the Givati Brigade. In his baptism of fire, he participated in battles that culminated with the capture of two Arab villages, Basheet and Abashuha.

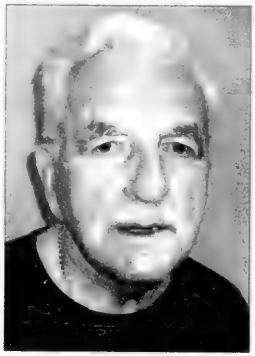
His regiment, which contained 36 Canadians, eventually captured the town of Latrun. Left unconquered, however, was Latrun's strategic police station, which sat astride the road to Jerusalem and was manned by Jordan's Arab Legion.

During the third and final battle of Latrun, when Ocopnick and his fellow Canadians were held back in reserve, the Israeli attack force largely consisted of virtually untrained Hungarian and Romanian Jewish Holocaust survivors from camps in Cyprus who had not even taken the safety catches off their rifles when they went into battle.

The Arab Legion mowed them down mercilessly as hundreds were killed in a catastrophic defeat.

In retrospect, Ocopnick thinks that the newcomers should not have been deployed. "It was a big mistake sending them in," he mused. "Israel was not prepared for this battle."

Shortly after the Latrun debacle, during which a young Israeli officer named Ariel Sharon was badly wounded, Ocopnick was transferred to the navy.



Ben Ocopnick today

In one historic incident, he was a gunner on a vessel that fired on the Altalena, an Irgun militia ship that was illegally transporting weapons and ammunition in defiance of the Israeli army. In another instance, he shot down an Egyptian Dakota aircraft coming in to bomb Tel Aviv. It crashed into the Mediterranean Sea in a plume of black smoke, to the applause of Israeli civilians clapping and shouting on the shore.

With the help of a friend, Ocopnick joined the air force as an assistant flight controller. Based in Be'er Sheva, he held that position until the War of Independence wound down in early 1949.

After being discharged, he considered settling in Israel and living on a kibbutz. But having had a change of heart, he returned to Toronto, where he received $100 for services rendered to Israel.

He worked in his uncle's shoe factory for a time, but then he found a job as a United Jewish Appeal fundraiser. Subsequently, he got married. He and his wife, Sheila, have three children.

Later, he was hired by the United Israel Appeal. When he stepped down in 1986, he had risen to executive director of UIA's Ontario region. In this capacity, he visited Israel on numerous occasions. He returned to UIA as a part-timer, but in the wake of quintuple bypass heart surgery, he retired permanently.

He has great memories of his days as a fighter in Israel. "It was a wonderful adventure for a young, single man. I had the opportunity to do something for the Jewish people, and that was it."

Ocopnick seized the day, and the rest is history.

Ben Ocopnick as a gunner in the Israeli navy

He joined the first wave of Canadians who had volunteered to fight.

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Israel to 'change paradigm' with Diaspora communities

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

For decades, Diaspora Jews have channelled funds to Israel to support its survival. Now it seems that Israel is prepared to reciprocate.

Last week, in a speech to the Jewish Agency's board of governors meeting in Jerusalem, Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert announced that it was time for Israel to "change the paradigm of relations between the State of Israel and the Diaspora."

Olmert said the time has come for Israel to take a more prominent role in the Diaspora-Israel partnership, stressing that world Jewry faces "a serious crisis... Precisely at a time when the State of Israel is flourishing, the Jewish People outside Israel meets unprecedented challenges."

Among other things, those challenges include increased assimilation and intermarriage rates, as well as a decrease in Jews' self-identification as Zionists, he noted.

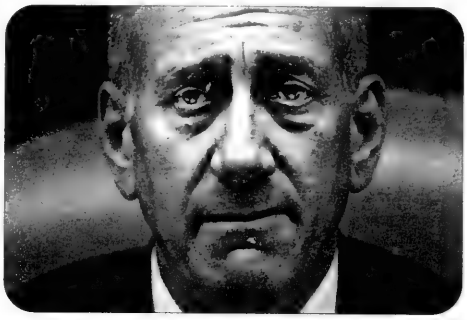
"The old paradigm of the Diaspora as benefactor and Israel as beneficiary may no longer continue. For the past 60 years, Israel has been the project of the Jewish People. For the next 60 years, the Jewish People will need to be the joint project of Israel and Jewish communities around the world," he said.

Israel's main goals, Olmert said, should now be "to strengthen Jewish education in Jewish communities, including the study of Hebrew; increase awareness regarding Jewish culture and heritage; instil Jewish values; and deepen the links between world Jewish communities and the State of Israel," and for Israel to assume greater responsibility for the Jewish future worldwide, since Israel is now the home to the world's largest Jewish population.

Olmert also suggested that it may be time for the Jewish Agency for Israel to change its name and mission to the Agency for Israel and the Jewish People.

Linda Kislowicz, executive vice-president of UIA Federations Canada – the Canadian arm of the Jewish Agency – attended the speech in Jerusalem and told *The CJN* that Olmert's remarks signaled a change in Israeli government policy.

"It's a very broadening position for the government in its work with the Jewish Agency," she said. "Canadian and U.S. [Jewish] communities will benefit accordingly. But it's hard to know what this will mean without further details."



Ehud Olmert *[Israel Sun photo]*

The assumption among agency board members was that Israel's new help would include increased funding for a revamped organization.

The Jewish Agency is running a deficit this year of roughly $25 million (US), and expects a budget shortfall of $45 million in 2009.

Hit by the sinking U.S. dollar, rising Israeli inflation and the global economic downturn, the Jewish Agency is trying to reinvent itself as a leaner, more efficient organization and trying to adapt its mission for 21st-century realities: tight budgets, dwindling aliyah and increasing disaffection with Israel among Diaspora Jews.

Last week, the agency's board of governors took a first key step in its new direction by establishing a steering committee to draw up a master plan for boosting Jewish identity abroad and connections between the Diaspora and Israel. The committee will consist of government and agency officials.

In his speech, Olmert specifically mentioned promoting programs focused on bringing Diaspora youth to Israel, including Birthright Israel and Masa.

Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee, said that while Olmert's remarks were certainly welcome, he was unsure whether they signified anything new.

"It's not clear how this represents a departure from the past," he said. "There have been different waves of promotion going both ways over the years. Programs like Masa or Birthright are just the other side of the coin. There's always been a healthy dynamism [between Israel and the Diaspora]."

Fogel added: "I think his remarks were just an affirmation of this relationship. Perhaps, in part, his comments are a signal that the Diaspora communities are valued for what they contribute to Israel."

Amir Gissin, Israeli consul general for Toronto and Western Canada, agreed that the time was right for Olmert's remarks.

"It's time for Israel to review the way it views its partnerships with the world Jewish community," he said.

Gissin added that in his view, when compared to other Diaspora communities, Canada's Jewish community is in good shape, saying that it has its "priorities right." He singled out both the Montreal and Toronto communities for diligence in "maintaining Jewish heritage and identity" in the Diaspora.

"All in all, in Canada you will find a strong support and commitment to Jewish education as a means to ensure heritage and [support] for Israel. This is the way it should be, and this is the interest of Israel also," he said.

Richard Pearlstone, chair of the Jewish Agency's board of governors, said Olmert's remarks reflect a new reality in which identification with Israel is seen as the glue that binds Jews worldwide and in which a wealthier Israel can afford to contribute to the Diaspora-Israel relationship.

With files from JTA

Cotler briefs UK parliament on Jewish refugees

LONDON — Former Canadian justice minister Irwin Cotler last week told a joint session of the United Kingdom's House of Commons and House of Lords that the plight of Jews from Arab countries must be addressed for there to be lasting peace in the Middle East.

"The pain and plight of 850,000 Jews uprooted and displaced from Arab countries – not only a forgotten, but a forced exodus – has been expunged and eclipsed from both the Middle East peace and justice narratives these past 60 years," he stated. "This is a story that has not been heard. It is a story that has not yet even been told. It is a truth that must now be acknowledged."

Irwin Cotler

Cotler's address was convened by Labour MP John Mann and Lord Anderson of Swansea, in co-operation with Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC) and the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

Speaking to an overflow crowd, Cotler said Arab countries and the League of Arab States must acknowledge their role in launching an aggressive war against Israel in 1948 and the perpetration of human rights violations against their respective Jewish nationals.

Cotler cited evidence from a report titled *Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries: The Case for Rights And Redress* which documented for the first time a pattern of state-sanctioned repression and persecution in Arab countries – including Nuremberg-like laws – that targeted Jewish populations. The results were denationalization, forced expulsions, illegal sequestration of property, arbitrary arrest and detention, torture and murder.

Cotler called on the U.K. government to use its influence to ensure that any reference to Palestinian refugees is accompanied by a similarly explicit reference to Jewish refugees from Arab countries.

"Simply put," Cotler concluded "the exclusion and denial of rights and redress to Jewish refugees from Arab countries will prejudice authentic negotiations between the parties and undermine the justice and legitimacy of any agreement. Let there be no mistake about it. Where there is no remembrance, there is no truth; where there is no truth, there will be no justice; where there is no justice, there will be no reconciliation; and where there is no reconciliation, there will be no peace, which we all seek."

Israel Briefs

Palestinians violate truce

Palestinian terrorists continued to violate the cease-fire in the Gaza Strip, firing two mortar shells last Friday morning. No casualties or damage were reported. The previous day, a rocket struck the southern kibbutz of Gevim. No one was hurt. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni called for a military response to the violation of the week-old cease-fire. Al-Aksa Brigades, an armed wing of Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction, claimed responsibility for the attack. Israeli defence officials, who suspended imports into Gaza after two separate shelling attacks Tuesday, had said they would reopen the Gaza-Israel border crossings Friday if there were no more shellings.

Tuesday's attack, claimed by Islamic Jihad terrorists, wounded two people in Sderot.

Israel lobbies IAEA

A top Israeli official secretly met with ambassadors involved in efforts to halt Iran's nuclear program in Vienna. Aaro Abramovich, the director general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, went to the headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Vienna to lobby for stronger action to thwart Iran's nuclear program. Meeting with ambassadors to the IAEA, Abramovich presented them with Israel's concerns about the Iranian program. The visit was the first senior Israeli briefing of IAEA member ambassadors in several years.

Rare Iraqi books saved

Some 300 rare and valuable Jewish books from Iraq have ended up in Israel. The books, from a collection confiscated by Saddam Hussein's secret police, include a 1487 commentary on Job and a volume of biblical prophets printed in Venice in 1617. The Iraqi secret police confiscated and stored a large number of Jewish books. Many were damaged in the beginning of the 2003 U.S.-led war in Iraq during the bombing of Iraqi government buildings. After the war, many of the books were sent to Washington's Library of Congress, and some made their way to private dealers, who bought them from thieves. One private dealer, Mordechai Ben-Porat, who was born in Iraq, sent an emissary to Baghdad, who shipped the books to Israel directly. Eventually, U.S. authorities discovered his activities and barred further shipments. Ben-Porat then smuggled in the remaining books.

These books are the remnants of a once large and vibrant Iraqi Jewish community, numbering 130,000 Jews in 1948. Soon after Israel's creation, Iraqi Jews began to suffer discrimination and fled the country en masse. At present, Iraq is believed to be home to less than 30 Iraqi Jews.

– *JTA*

Iran sentences 'Israeli spy' to death

© Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

TEHRAN — A court has sentenced an Iranian man to death on charges of spying for Israel, Iranian media said on Monday.

Monday's report identified the convicted as Ali Ashtari, a 45-year-old tradesman in electronic merchandise who supplied military, security and defence centres across the country with electronic devices.

Iran state television quoted an unnamed official as saying Ashtari relayed sensitive information on military, defense and research centers to Israel's Mossad intelligence officers.

The material reportedly included information on Iran's Atomic Energy Organization. The official also said Ashtari, who was arrested in 2007, tried to create a link between Iranian experts and Israeli agents. Ashtari has 20 days to appeal.

"I apologize to the Iranian people and to any organization which has been damaged because of my acts and I request Islamic clemency," the semi-official Fars News Agency quoted Ashtari as telling the court in Tehran.

Ashtari said he had accepted a loan of 50,000 Euros from Israeli agents as he had been in financial straits, Fars reported.

The sentence comes at a time of increased tension between Israel and Iran and speculation of a possible Israeli attack on the Islamic Republic's nuclear installations.

Israeli government spokesperson Mark Regev said Israel has no knowledge whatsoever of this case.

"Ali Ashtari, who had been accused of spying for the Zionist state and charged with engaging in espionage for [Israel's] Mossad intelligence service, has been given the death sentence," the ISNA news agency said.

Ali Ashtari

Iranian media said Ashtari was put on trial Saturday.

The ruling against Ashtari was the first time since 2000 that an Iranian court sentenced an Iranian citizen on the charge of espionage for Israel.

A closed-door trial in 2000 found 10 Iranian Jews guilty of spying for Israel and sentenced them to prison terms ranging from four to 13 years. The convicts were later released, before serving out their full sentences.

Ashtari's conviction comes amid renewed demands for the international community to step up diplomatic pressure on Iran over its nuclear activities.

Israel, along with the United States and many western countries, claims Iran's nuclear program is intended to produce weapons. Iran denies this, saying its program is for peaceful purposes, including electricity production.

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With prisoner swap approved, soldiers' families hope for closure

Continued from page 1

But while Olmert for the first time publicly endorsed the spymasters' assessment that the soldiers should be considered "killed in action," he disagreed with the view that Israel must hand over only the bodies of slain Lebanese in the trade.

"From our earliest days, we are taught that we do not leave men behind [who were] wounded in the battlefield, and that we do not leave soldiers in captivity without attempting to rescue them with all our abilities and powers," Olmert said, according to a transcript of the cabinet session.

"A nation which concedes in order to ensure life, save its wounded, bring home its dead, is a nation which creates unbreakable bonds of mutual obligation."

Arad remains a mystery, Olmert said. Hezbollah has said repeatedly it knows nothing of his whereabouts and, as part of the swap, is required to present a report on its efforts to find out what happened to the airman.

"On the other hand, we know what happened to Udi and Eldad," Olmert said.

Hezbollah, which called the 2006 war its "divine victory" despite its expulsion from southern Lebanon and the devastation wreaked on Beirut, claimed the vote in Jerusalem as another coup.

"All Arabs and Muslims are experiencing historic moments," exulted an anchor on the Shiite's Iranian-backed Al-Manar television station. Kuntar's brother, Bassam, described the deal as a "vindication for the resistance."

Hezbollah had originally demanded the release not only of Lebanese prisoners but of hundreds of other Arabs held in Israeli jails.

The deal is to be implemented within two weeks to allow for Israeli President Shimon Peres to formally pardon Kuntar and for the public to lodge any High Court petitions against the release.

Protests are expected to be muted. Smadar Haran, who lost a husband and four-year-old daughter to Kuntar's rifle, held a news conference to say she would support the swap.

"Samir Kuntar is not my private prisoner," she said. "He's the nation's prisoner."

Arad's relatives, for their part, have been reticent. Though they cancelled a planned meeting with Olmert where he wanted to explain his government's decision-making, few expected them to mount a campaign against bringing Goldwasser and Regev home.

The missing reservists' families welcomed the cabinet vote, though they declined to accept that their loved ones were dead.

Goldwasser's wife, Karnit, voiced hope for closure.

"I'm so very tired. I'm drained from within," she told reporters. "I need a couple of days just to digest this all, to figure out how it's going to end."

The swap finds Olmert at a low point in his administration, beset by a corruption scandal and trying to prod peacemaking with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas while preserving a Gaza Strip truce so that another soldier, Gilad Schalit, can be recovered from Hamas.

The exchange for Goldwasser and Regev, the prime minister hinted, will be a dress rehearsal for the prisoner releases Israel will have to approve allowing Schalit – who is thought to be alive – to come home after more than two years in captivity.

"I hope that the Israeli public will know to draw the necessary conclusion from this so that it will be more prepared and mature for the next time, which already lies in wait for us," Olmert told his cabinet.

"Sooner or later, we will be back here in order to be tormented yet again."

From left are Liberal MP Bob Rae; Daniel Ben-Natan, president of the Israel Association of Canadian Studies; Shuli Barzilai, director of the Halbert Centre for Canadian Studies; and Jon Allen, Canadian ambassador to Israel. [Douglas Guthrie photo]

A breath of Canada in Jerusalem

By MARK ELLIOTT SHAPIRO
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — A great place to get a cool breath of Canada in Israel is at the biannual Jerusalem Conference on Canadian Studies.

The theme of this year's 12th annual gathering, which took place from June 16 to 19, was "Responding to the Challenge of Diversity: Canada, Israel and Beyond." Organized by the Israel Association for Canadian Studies (IACS) and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Halbert Centre for Canadian Studies, it offered sessions on a variety of subjects in many fields, including education, health care, law, literature and sociology.

Canada's ambassador to Israel, Jon Allen, represented the Canadian government at the conference, and guest speakers included Liberal members of Parliament Bob Rae and Irwin Cotler, as well as filmmaker Simcha Jacobovici.

Jacobovici's *Northern Justice*, a documentary about the administration of justice in the Northwest Territories, was screened at the event. The film, produced and directed by Jacobovici, is a sensitive study of the interfacing between the Canadian justice system and the country's aboriginal citizens.

Jacobovici recalled how his lighting the candle in the *Havdalah* service marking the end of the Shabbat set off the smoke detector in the Pond Inlet motel room where he, his wife and infant daughter were staying. That brought Pond Inlet's fire brigade to their room, and the brigade's members thus participated in the the family's *Havdalah* ceremony that Saturday night.

After the screening of *Northern Justice*, Cotler recalled a visit to Ottawa by a group of Inuit law students shortly after his appointment. He told them that, as a Jew, he was also the member of an aboriginal people who still lived in its aboriginal homeland. To explain his view of the relationship that should exist between Canada's justice system and its aboriginal citizens, he related the following parable to the students: A group of yeshiva students came to their rabbi and said to him that they loved him. Whereupon he asked them whether they knew what hurt him. They couldn't understand his question; after all, they had just declared their love for him. No, he told them, if they did not know what hurt him, then they did not really love him.

Rae, the keynote speaker at the conference's opening session, commented on decision-making at the government level. When you are in a position of power, he told his audience, you rarely are faced with a choice between a very good option and a very bad one. Instead, in the vast majority of cases, you must choose between a terrible alternative and one that is even worse.

One of the most moving events of the conference was an evening at the Israel Museum dedicated to the memory of Arie Shahar, who, together with Ben Natan and Ralph Halbert (a major donor to Canadian studies in Israel), founded the IACS and was one of its leading figures.

The IACS is one of the oldest of the 27 national and multinational associations for Canadian studies around the globe. Canada has 6,000 to 7,000 ambassadors who are on its payroll with very little cost to the Canadian taxpayer, said Cornelius Remie, president of the International Council of Canadian Studies.

Since their salaries are paid by their universities, a stunning cost-effectiveness ratio is at work, noted Remie: every dollar Canada invests in Canadian studies associations around the world produces 10 to 13.

Two years ago, an IACS grant was awarded to an Israeli master's student for a study concerning the mating patterns of pine beetles in western Canada. The pine beetle is a major threat to Canada's forests and thus to its lumber industry, according to Allen Zysblat, associate chair of the IACS academic committee.

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Rocker's latest release is spiritual and God positive

By SHAYLA GUNTER-GOLDSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Josh Nelson's music is difficult to categorize. It's faith-based, spiritual and God positive, yet it's mostly straight-up rock.

And Nelson, while professing a desire to be a positive role model for Jewish youth, is simply a rocker at heart – a very talented rocker.

The Josh Nelson Project's debut CD release, *Lift*, is unique new Jewish music, unlike any most of us have ever heard before.

"I want to push the envelope of what Jewish music has been and what it will continue to be," says the 30-year-old Nelson, who has been making music for years.

He began playing piano at age six, guitar at eight, drums at 11 and double bass at 13, and was performing in clubs in his native New Bedford, Mass., at 14.

Nelson went on to earn both bachelor and master's degrees in music, and is now close to completing his doctorate.

He got his academic credentials while touring and recording with Jewish musicians, including Craig Taubman, in the United States. He also played with Yom Hadash (New Day), the band he formed with his brother Jon.

Yom Hadash produced several albums and toured heavily. It was a formative experience for Nelson, however, the musical direction was a group effort and left him feeling like he needed something more.

"So much music inside me needed to come out," he says. "I had to branch out on my own and express what was in my heart."

That desire to express himself has manifested itself in *Lift*, a hard-rocking release that will at times have you joining in on air guitar. The CD, however, does have its tender and moving moments with some stunning and poignant ballads.

Emotions run high on the album. The title track *Lift*, with its compelling Middle Eastern sound and rhythm, communicates that faith can provide hope and direction when we are broken.

The heartbreaking *I* is an expression of Nelson's grief over the tragic death of his younger brother Jeremy. Then the listener is snapped out of the melancholy with *Positive Change*, a funky, sexy and danceable track that suggests we "have immense power to effect change on a deep and important level in other people," Nelson says.

'I want to push the envelope of Jewish music'

With the song *Seven*, Nelson conveys his love of Shabbat and reminds us how it can help us start over, slow us down and clear our heads.

The stunning track *L'dor Vador* (*From Generation to Generation*) is a haunting anthem to our history and our future as the Jewish people.

"We are words and we are stories, we are pictures of the past. We are carriers of wisdom, not the first and not the last," the lyrics say.

All the tracks on *Lift* were composed, arranged and written by Nelson, with several drawing on traditional liturgy for inspiration.

Nelson finds it fascinating to compose melodies for existing text.

"Everyone has his or her own unique experience with spirituality," he says. "For example, the opening track *Yih'yu L'ratzon*, taken from Psalm 19:15, translates to 'May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, O God, my Rock and my Redeemer.'

"This text reaches beyond the act of prayer and speaks volumes about the power of the human voice. It expresses that every word we say over the course of a day has the ability to have a positive impact or effect on the people we meet."

Nelson is aware of how his music can do just that for his audiences – in large part the Jewish youth for whom he performs at concerts through organizations such as the North American Federation of Temple Youth (NFTY), United Synagogue Youth (USY) and the B'nai B'rith Youth Organization (BBYO), as well as at synagogues.

His goal is to be a positive role model for youth, and he loves his involvement with them. Nelson will be in Toronto for the Union for Reform Judaism biennial convention in November 2009, performing and serving as musical director for the event.

"For me, music is really a chance to take a risk and do something that is different. I'm not afraid to make music that expresses who I am and what I believe. My music is definitely rock, and definitely spiritual. It's an expression of the way I observe the world," he says.

Lift is available through iTunes, Amazon.com and other online sources. It will be at major music retailers and Judaica stores soon. For more information, visit www.myspace.com/joshnelsonproject or www.joshnelsonproject.com.

Ben Stein makes the case for 'intelligent design'

By SHERRY SMITHER
Special to The CJN

Ben Stein, an actor, game-show host, economist and a former Nixon speechwriter, has made a movie about intelligent design – the theory that certain features of the universe and of living things are best explained by an intelligent cause.

After reading about a 2005 court case in Pennsylvania in which a federal judge barred a Pennsylvania public school district from teaching intelligent design, Stein wanted to know more about the theory.

"I thought this is strange. Why would a court of law be telling people that they can't study a variety of evolutionary explanations? What's a court doing here? What's that all about?" said Stein while sipping camomile tea at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto recently. He was in town promoting a documentary about intelligent design that he co-wrote and narrates, *Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed*.

Stein thought a movie about intelligent design would give him the opportunity to discuss "how Darwinism led to social Darwinism and how that led to Nazism and the Holocaust.

"I always wanted to talk about that," Stein said.

But his executive producer, Walt Ruloff, wanted to look at the belief in an intelligent creator of the universe, so Stein thought: "I'll just investigate this and talk to some mainstream scientists. They'll straighten us out – they'll have all the answers and we'll go on and do the movie about the Holocaust."

When Stein spoke to mainstream scientists, he found their answers less than satisfying. "They didn't know how life started, why the cell was so complex, where gravity, thermodynamics, laws of fluid motion or physical laws that govern the operation of the universe came from," Stein said.

"Well, if they don't know those incredibly basic things, then how can they say Darwinism explains much? Darwinism doesn't seem to explain much at all."

Stein's research on intelligent design proponents – those who question Darwin's theory – brought him surprising results. Scientist Richard von Sternberg had been expelled from the Smithsonian Institute for publishing an article by Stephen Meyer arguing that we're products of a higher intelligence. This was not an isolated case. Many others who were shunned for their beliefs were interviewed for the film.

What did the those who do not support intelligent design say? Richard Dawkins, an evolutionary biologist at Oxford University and a prominent atheist, told Stein, "On the whole they aren't scientists," but admitted that he's "pretty hostile to rival doctrines."

Philip Pettit, a political philosopher at Princeton, said intelligent design is not "a research program," because every theory in hard science must be falsifiable by natural evidence – there must be the potential for the theory to be demonstrated wrong in the natural physical world, and it can't be proved that the world was not created by a higher intelligence. Daniel Dennett, a philosopher of science at Tufts University, dismissed intelligent design as propaganda.

"Darwinists couldn't explain about the creation of the universe and the creation of life – huge subjects. They could just repeat their same old Darwinian orthodoxy – that it all happened by accident," Stein said.

"I didn't find any of them particularly inspiring. I just thought they were cocky and arrogant, and were asking us to take it on their word because they're the boss. 'Meet the new boss, same as the old boss' – as the Who sang in their song [*Won't Get Fooled Again*].

They just seemed to be saying, 'We're in charge, shut up!'"

Stein wondered why it is that a "theory that isn't threatening anyone with anything makes people so fearful? But it does."

Mainstream media in the United States attacked his film on a "scale never seen before outside of [attacks on former president Richard] Nixon or [president] Mr. [George. W.] Bush. Intelligent design seems to drive people the craziest of anything," Stein said.

"We were just trying to understand the limits of freedom of speech and the limits of Darwinism. If people want to disagree with us, they are free to disagree, but the vituperative nature of their disagreement is stunning."

Expelled: No Intelligence Allowed is currently playing in theatres across Canada. For more information, visit www.expelledthemovie.com.

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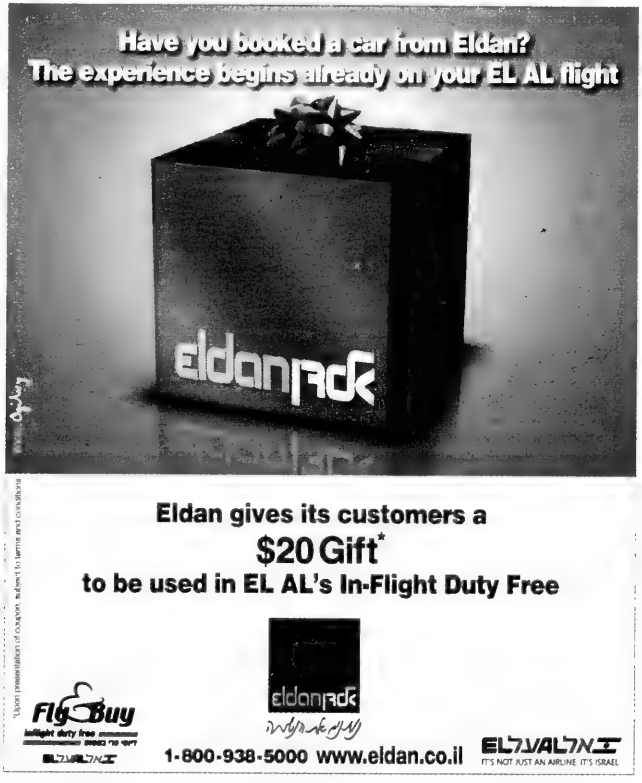
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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

VANCOUVER STORYTELLER DAN BAR-EL WINS SILVER BIRCH AWARD FOR *THINGS ARE LOOKING GRIMM, JILL*

Vancouver-based storyteller and author **Dan Bar-el** has been honoured with a Silver Birch Express Award from the Ontario Libraries Association for his children's book, *Things Are Looking Grimm, Jill* (published by Orca). The book is a sequel to *Things Are Looking Up, Jack*, a children's story that explored the high and suspicious number of accidents in nursery rhymes such as Humpty Dumpty and Jack and Jill.

Some 50,000 copies of Bar-el's 2007 book, *Alphabetter*, have been distributed to children in British Columbia and was recommended by the *Globe and Mail* and former CBC Radio host Shelagh Rogers' children's book panel. Bar-el's latest book, *Such a Prince*, has received reviews in *Quill & Quire* and other journals.

* * *

Names in the News: Israeli octogenarian **Sammy Ofer** recently pledged a donation of about $40 million to Britain's National Maritime Museum. The Romanian-born billionaire is a major shareholder in Mizrahi-Tefahot Bank and other Israeli concerns. He's also a friend of the museum's chairman, **Lord Sterling**, who took him to see an appreciative *Duke of Edinburgh*. According to the London *Jewish Chronicle*, Ofer withdrew a $20-million donation to the Tel Aviv Museum of Art two years ago after other donors complained about a plan to rename the museum in his honour.

* * *

At the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre

• Between Stages presents a reading of the play *The Bleeding Season*, by **Brandon Marlon**, winner of the 2007 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition. The play "explores the physical and psychological effects of suicide terrorists on both Israelis and Palestinians." The reading is directed by **Ralph Small** and features **Lauren Brotman**, **Jack Grinhaus**, **Robert Kennedy**, **Sam Moses** and **Sam Owen**. Suggested donation $8. Sunday, July 6, 2 p.m. esthera@mnjcc.org

• The third annual IsReal Dance Festival offers the joy and fun of Israeli folk dancing in celebration of Israel @ 60. Al Green Theatre and MNJCC gym. July 4, 5 and 6. Yossi Strauch, strauch2@rogers.com, 905-761-0004. www.IsraeliFolkDancing Toronto.com

• Three Fringe plays – *Lost Daughter* by **Tara Goldstein**; *The Barbeque King* by **Mark Brownell**; and *Taking Liberties* by **Dave Carley** – are being performed July 2 to 13. 416-966-1062, www.fringetoronto.com

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Complementing the Royal Ontario Museum exhibition Shanghai Kaleidoscope is the exhibition Shanghai 1860-1940: Historical Photographs, which provides an intimate glimpse of the city's architecture, people and way of life in the late 19th and early 20th century. The images, from the ROM's extensive collections of historical photographs, include some that were recent gifts by Joey and Toby Tanenbaum, Jacob Way and Amelia Gertrud Way-Evans. At the ROM until Oct. 26.

• **Josef Skvorecky** is among 64 authors from 13 countries already confirmed for this October's International Festival of Authors at Harbourfront. A former festival prize winner, Skvorecky first read at Harbourfront 30 years ago, in 1978, two years before the festival was born.

• The Judaica Sound Archives at Florida Atlantic University Libraries has posted on its website a major collection of performances by the **Bursteins**, a family of Yiddish entertainers. The collection features the combined works of **Pesach Burstein**, who produced musicals in the 1920s, his wife **Lillian Lux**, who joined his troupe when she was 17, and their twins, **Susan Burstein-Roth** and **Mike (Burstein) Burstyn**. The website is at www.fau.edu/jsa.

TRAVEL TALK

BY BILL GLADSTONE

ISRAELI TOURISM REACHES NEW HEIGHTS AS 300,000 VISITORS ARRIVE IN MAY

Every visitor to Israel these days comes back with the same report: the Israeli economy is booming and the hotels, restaurants, museums and tourist sites are bustling with tourists.

Israel's Ministry of Tourism confirms that the country has received record numbers of visitors this year. About 300,000 tourists arrived in May, an increase of 60 per cent over May 2007 and five per cent above the figures for 2000, Israel's record year for tourism.

Tourism officials say the country is on target for 2.8 million tourists in 2008, and are planning to welcome 3.3. million in 2009.

The ministry is continuing its wide-ranging marketing efforts in North America and key European countries, and increasing efforts in Central Europe (especially France) and Asia. As it works to expand and develop new aviation routes into Israel, it is also facilitating construction of 3,000 new hotel rooms and bringing back another 4,000 rooms into use. It is also working to improve the standard of services in many areas across the tourism infrastructure.

Recognizing the potential of incoming tourism as a lever for economic growth, the ministry's goal is that the country will receive five million tourists in 2012 – a level of tourism that is projected to support 220,000 employees and generate an income of 43 billion NIS.

"Increases in tourism have a positive effect on economic growth and the numbers of people employed in the workforce," said Tourism Minister Shaul Tzemach. "With the continuing growth pattern, this contribution will be felt in all aspects of the tourism industry throughout Israel, with an emphasis on the periphery where many tourism enterprises are located."

U.S. President George W. Bush and his wife, Laura, were among Israel's visitors in May. The presidential couple celebrated the state's 60th anniversary and toured Masada with Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and his wife, Aliza.

* * *

Montreal Jewish Literary Scene: Classical Pursuits is hosting Jewish Montreal: Its Mid-Century Literary Legacy, a tour focusing on the lives and select works of Mordecai Richler, Leonard Cohen, Irving Layton and A. M. Klein. The tour runs Sunday, Sept. 14, to Friday, Sept. 19. For details, please visit the website http:// classicalpursuits. com

* * *

Israel Travel Notes

• Connections Israel is an independent, educational, not-for-profit organization that offers hands-on missions and educational day trips in Israel. A Connections Israel day trip "combines adventure, chesed and education" through such activities as visiting an army base, picking produce in the fields and connecting to the residents of Sderot. For details, please visit the , website http://connectionsisrael.com

• Travel around Jerusalem is about to be made easier with the introduction of a light rail system set to begin operations by late 2009. When the first train makes its maiden voyage along the 13.8-kilometer Pisgat Ze'ev-to-Mt. Herzl line, access to the Old City, downtown and Yad Vashem will be instantly enhanced.

Ultimately, eight clean, electric-powered light rail transit lines will whisk riders from the northern Pisgat Ze'ev suburb to the Malha mall at the city's southern reaches. Also coming is a high-speed rail link to Tel Aviv.

* * *

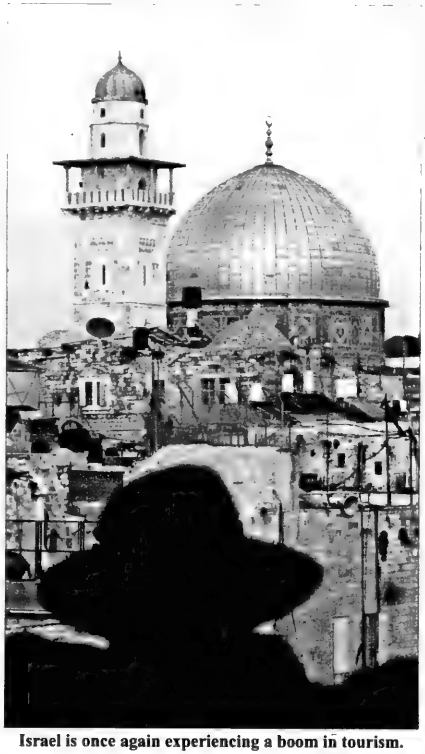
European Travel Notes

• The Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, presents Art of the State, an exhibition of photographs and video works by 16 artists from Israel. June 27 to Nov. 30.

• Travelonly, the International Resource Centre for Performing Artists and Globus Tours are hosting a 10-day tour of Italy's Le Marche region along the Adriatic coastline. The 10 days of history, music, shopping and much more includes two nights in Florence, four nights in Rome, and several concerts by l'Orchestra Internazionale d'Italia, conducted by Canada's Kerry Stratton.

An information night is scheduled for Thursday, July 10, 6 to 8 p.m., at the Italian Cultural Institute, 496 Huron St. (north of Bloor). Frances Logan, Travelonly consultant, 1-866-343-7725, flogan@travelonly.com.

• Scenic Tours, an Australian-based company founded in 1987, entered the European river cruising market in 2005 and invested $78 million in 2008 on a fleet of new luxury ships on the Rhine and Danube. Known for its spacious cabins, the company offers various Jewish-focused 14-day excursions along both rivers. www.scenictours.com



Israel is once again experiencing a boom in tourism. ***[RNS/Reuters photo]***

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Group of plays performed in Toronto's oldest hotel

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

The Gladstone Variations is a site-specific theatrical work that groups together four half-hour plays set in Toronto's oldest hotel.

A critical favourite at last year's Toronto Fringe Festival, *The Gladstone Variations* returns to the Gladstone Hotel this month.

Audiences can see two of the plays at a time and, if they wish, return later for the other two. What is unique is that the audience gets to move around the hotel following the plays' actions.

"The plays were written for the hotel, and the audience follows the actors through rooms, stairwells and various hidden passageways around the hotel," says Julie Tepperman, co-founder with Aaron Willis, of Convergence Theatre, and the writer of one of the plays.

Julie Tepperman with zaida Harry at Baycrest last year. [Aaron Willis photo]

"There was a huge demand for the play at the Fringe last summer and people lined up for hours," she said. (Due to the natural restrictions of the venue, and moving the audience around, capacity is limited to 72 people.) "The hotel really was happy to have us back again. I felt it would be a shame to just let it die," Tepperman said.

As the audience moves around the hotel, guided by "wranglers," sometimes they unwittingly become part of another play as the other audience sees them walking though their "stage" as ghosts in their own play.

This naturally takes a lot of experimentation with stage management and timing as the plays converge with one another. This was honed over the 11 performances at the Fringe last year.

"It's a lot more polished now," Tepperman says. "It's an imperfect piece of theatre that has the potential to be more perfect each time."

The four plays, by different writers, are inspired by the historic building on Queen Street West, and all of them deal in different ways with old ghosts and how the past and present collide.

Tepperman says the hotel gives off an eerie vibe that influenced the plays' themes. "It's creepy. You sit in the Melody Bar and see people there who've never really left. It's the merging of two worlds, past and present," she says.

In Tepperman's play *I Grow Old*, the main character, Harry Kraft, returns to the Gladstone Hotel 60 years after he and his baseball team, the Lizzies, went dancing there one evening in 1925. He requests his old room and struggles to hold on to the last strands of his memory and face the ghosts of his past.

I Grow Old was inspired by an event in the life of her grandfather, Harry Tepperman, who died of Alzheimer's recently at Baycrest just shy of his 94th birthday.

As a teenager, Harry used to play baseball for the Lizzies, a team out of Central Technical (High) School. One Saturday, Harry and his friends snuck out of shul to drive to a game in Peterborough. On the way there, he switched his window seat with his best friend, Ben Wetstein, in return for a stick of gum.

"Not long after, they were in a tragic car accident where Ben was killed," Tepperman says. "Growing up, I found it sad and eerie. Had he not traded seats for a stick of gum, it would have been he who was killed and I wouldn't exist.

"I always sensed this accident had a tremendous impact on his life and wondered if secretly he blamed himself for the accident as a result of driving on Shabbat -- he never rode in a car on Shabbat again."

This isn't the first time Convergence Theatre has been involved in site-specific plays. In 2006, Convergence produced *AutoShow*, in which seven plays were performed simultaneously in seven cars in a parking lot, where the audience moved from car to car.

"There's something very exciting when an audience can chose their own perspective," she says. "The idea of being part of it creates an adrenalin you don't get from sitting in your seat."

The Gladstone Variations *runs at the Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W. July 14 to Aug. 3 at 7 p.m. Monday matinée on July 21 and 28 at 1:30 p.m. No shows on Saturday. Tickets for each of the two variations are available from 416-504-7259 or www.artsboxoffice.ca. Limited tickets are available at the door, one hour before showtime. The venue is non-wheelchair accessible and audience members have to climb stairs and stand.*

Lizzies Baseball team, 1929. Harry Tepperman, then 15, is fifth from left.

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CJN Profile

Romspen co-founder builds communities, preserves past

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Sheldon Esbin's grandfather emigrated from Poland and Esbin's father was a tailor.

From this humble background, Esbin grew up to become a businessman who builds communities and preserves the past. Not just involved in the financial side of building, he puts his hands and heart into his work as well.

He describes the company he helped create, Romspen Investment Corp., as Ontario's leading non-bank commercial mortgage lender.

The company's investors have received a double-digit yield on their investments since the company's inception, a higher return than from most traditional investments, Esbin said.

Romspen partners put their own money into each mortgage. "What distinguishes us from other funds is that my partners collectively are the largest financial investors in the fund." That, he said, ensures the money is invested wisely.

Over the past 40 years, Esbin, 68, and his partners have attracted some 1,500 investors. He said multimillion-dollar investments aren't uncommon.

Recently, the company, of which Esbin is president, decided to pool all the mortgages they have handpicked in the Romspen Mortgage Investment Fund, which currently consists of some 115 mortgages.

For the past 15 years, Romspen's management has been putting together groups to buy or develop real estate. "We make sure what we build stands the test of time and that people are proud to own," Esbin said.

Building, it would seem, is in his soul.

A founding member of Solel Congregation in Mississauga, he played an integral role in helping to build that house of worship. Originally, some 17 shul members met in a municipal facility. Through fundraising – a series of bingo games in the early 1970s that drew up to 500 people for each game – they were able to raise enough money to build a shul.

When he's not putting up new buildings, Esbin spends his time building tables, chairs and cabinets in his home woodworking studio.

Sheldon Esbin

"I'd be out there building and fixing, and it would sometimes catch the eye of my neighbours. People would occasionally ask me for my card because they needed things fixed," he said.

In the works on a more corporate scale are a Chinese mall, which he is building in Markham, Ont., and a condominium on Bloor Street in downtown Toronto. The latter, a 19-storey building called the Museum House, is across the street from the Royal Ontario Museum. Esbin and his wife, Carol, are buying a unit in the building. "It's about pride of ownership. That sandwich looks so good I ate it myself," Esbin said.

Esbin collects antiques and historical artifacts, of which he has several thousand. His personal art collection includes sculptures by Rodin. The preservation of the historical home Spadina House, in Toronto, is another passion.

"When you hold that, you're holding living history," he said of his vast collection of historical pieces, culled from book fairs, flea markets and garage sales. A standout item of memorabilia for him is a rare pre-Confederation governmental promotional pamphlet published to attract Irish immigrants to Canada.

He boasts of owning some 4,000 rare knick-knacks, including restaurant menus dating back to the 1940s. The oldest item he owns dates back to 1790; it is a North American travel guide with the mention of "Torento" – either an early spelling of Ontario's largest city or a perhaps a typo.

"The fun is in the chase. Once you have it, you are a custodian of that," Esbin said. "You are conserving it for future generations. That's a responsibility."

Esbin supports Empower 50, part of York University's Power of 50 Family Campaign. With funding from the campaign, the Azrieli Foundation has edited, published, distributed and archived a series of Canadian Holocaust survivors' memoirs.

'I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to give back to community'

Esbin is also a Baycrest Circle of Honours donor. The Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care has a special place in his heart, as a grandmother and two of his aunts spent their last years there. As well, he is a North York General Hospital Chairman's Circle and Cornerstone Society donor.

"I cannot emphasize enough how important it is to give back to community. I am so blessed that my grandfather decided to stop in Toronto from Poland. I never had to experience war. I lived with all of this opportunity," Esbin said.

"My father was a tailor and happened to be able to give an education to his three sons, and we were able to prosper. Something is wrong with you if you're not grateful for that."

"But the things I am most proud of are not where I'm writing a cheque, but being involved in meaningful things," he added.

This builder and investor in brick and concrete structures says that it was building a family that has brought him the most meaning.

He has a daughter, Candice, and two grandchildren, J.B., 5, and Maya, 7. "It is really a special thing to bring children to this world, to watch them grow, and it's really an amazing thing to be a part of that. There really is nothing like it," he said.

Sonny Goldstein, CFP
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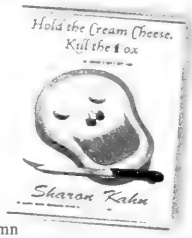
Jewish women solve mysteries in modern crime fiction

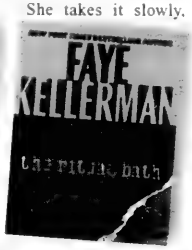
By DOROTHY LIPOVENKO
Special to The CJN

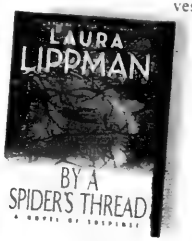
Let's face it: Jewish women have what it takes to be good detectives. Nosey and nudgey? That's curious and persistent turned on its head. Worrywarts? Keeps our radar alert for trouble. Most important: we sure know when something doesn't smell kosher.

So it comes as no surprise that, you'll pardon the expression, one can almost make a minyan from the number of Jewish women solving mysteries and murders in modern crime fiction.

An entire sub-genre of Jewish female sleuths has taken root, and flourished, on whodunit bookshelves. Smart and funny or tough and vulnerable, these women are as different in character and lifestyle as there are recipes for kugel. From religiously observant to circling Judaism's fringes, what they share is a connection to the criminal justice system as private investigators, police detectives or work involving police.







So to juice your summer reading with twists of tension, sides of humour or plots as thick as barley soup, herewith a primer.

The Molly Blume series by Rochelle Krich will keep you turning pages and scarfing mandelbrot on Shabbat afternoons. Molly, a Californian from an Orthodox family, writes a police blotter column that launches her foray into crime-solving – and while she's fasting on the 17th day of Tammuz, no less.

Krich writes smartly, and at least two plots are probably off-beat for crime fiction: a rabbi's daughter runs away with a man she meets online and Molly must find her; in another, the murder of her best friend years ago haunts Molly, who stands her ground against a hard-bitten detective who closes the case when certain pieces of Kabbalah-linked evidence suggest otherwise.

Bonus points for Molly's large and likeable family who appear throughout the series, especially Bubbie G, a tender *neshamah* and Holocaust survivor with whom Molly has a special bond. Try to read the series in sequence because its debut, *Blues in the Night*, sets up a storyline (can you say shidduch?) that unfolds deliciously with each successive book.

Far from the lights of Los Angeles is the Ruby-the-Rabbi's-Wife mysteries by Sharon Kahn. Ruby is a widow who lives with her dog Oy Vay in small-town Texas, where her husband was the temple rabbi before his untimely death. Kahn deftly uses food – matzah balls, lox, chopped liver – as entrees to murder and mayhem at the temple, the local bagel bakery and even on a train ride through Canada's Rockies.

A relentlessly curious Ruby is teamed with a recurring cast of temple characters (a nudnik new rabbi, a busybody with food issues) for a breezy, fun read with surprising plot twists. What works particularly well is e-mail between Ruby and her friend Nan in Seattle; their online conversations are witty and amusing, alerting Ruby to danger or ironing out kinks in Ruby's sleuthing. A word of caution: the books' cover art will make you hungry.

Nina Fischman could be Ruby's younger sister. But she's not. She's the creation of Marissa Piesman, who has taken New York Jewish female angst at being 30-something and single, attached it to a legal mind that represents poor souls in Housing Court and given it a smart mouth that belongs to Nina.

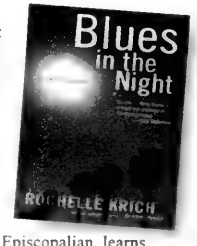
Think Perry Mason's brain in Rhoda Morgenstern's head. With New York as a backdrop and namedrop (Zabar's, Riverside Drive), Nina gets her start as a gumshoe thanks to her sharp, elderly mother with whom she enjoys a good kibbitz and an even better rapport. When old women in neighbourhood apartments start dying unexpectedly, Mrs. Fischman gets suspicious and Nina is sufficiently intrigued to start snooping around.

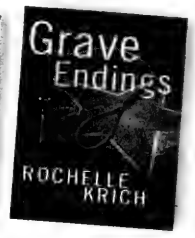
Nina would be the first to admit she's a lox, bagel and cream cheese Jew, but Piesman messes with Nina's head (and heart) by throwing an observant Jewish district attorney into the tumult of *Unorthodox Practices*, the kickoff novel in the series.

From Los Angeles to New York and back: Krich delivers another crime series with one heck of a twist. Homicide detective Jessica Drake, tough, empathetic and raised Episcopalian, learns that her mother is secretly a Holocaust survivor. Jessica shadow boxes with Yiddishkeit but ultimately goes for it, finding in rituals some relief from the tension of her work.

She takes it slowly, lighting Shabbos candles, eating by their flame, ignoring a ringing phone to keep reading in the stillness at the table. When she looks for kosher challah in the supermarket, you can't help but cheer her on to the finish line.

While Jessica grapples with her new identity, Tess Monaghan has no such difficulty. Yes, Tess is Jewish (her mother was a Weinstein) and she'd be the first to tell you so, but that's about the long and short of it. A self-employed private investigator in Baltimore, Tess has won her creator, Laura Lippman, a slew of literary awards. Tess is sharp, quick-thinking and quite fearless. The plots move along briskly, and Tess' love of her hometown shines through so often you'll feel like you know Baltimore like the back of your hand. While Tess' Jewishness is not germane to the series, it does have a starring role in *By a Spider's Thread*, when an Orthodox Jewish businessman hires Tess to find his missing wife and children.





No primer would be complete without mention of the Rina Lazarus/Peter Decker mysteries by Faye Kellerman. This popular and prolific series had me hooked from the get-go with the mikvah murder mystery. The first few novels kept up a tantalizing storyline involving Rina, a young widow with two sons in yeshiva, and Decker of the Los Angeles Police Department. But as time went on, I found Rina increasingly annoying, and some of the plotlines seemed way off the charts. But there's at least one good made-for-TV movie in the bunch.

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55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
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67 HOUSE SITTERS
70 UNIVERSITY ACCOMMODATION
75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
81 APARTMENT TO SUBLET
82 ROOM AVAILABLE FOR RENT
84 ROOM WANTED FOR RENT
85 APARTMENT WANTED
87 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT
105 COTTAGE FOR SALE
110 COTTAGE FOR RENT
115 COTTAGE FOR RENT SALE
120 COTTAGE WANTED
122 TIME SHARE FOR SALE
123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
124 ARIZONA PROPERTIES
125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE
130 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR RENT
135 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE RENT
140 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION WANTED
143 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM AVAIL
145 FLORIDA SHARED ACCOMM WANTED
147 FLORIDA ACCOMMODATION
150 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION
155 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE
160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT
165 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR SALE RENT
170 ISRAEL PROPERTIES WANTED
175 ISRAEL ACCOMMODATION WANTED
178 ISRAEL TRANSPORTATION
180 OUT-OF-TOWN PROPERTIES
185 OUT OF COUNTRY PROPERTIES
190 VACATION PROPERTY AVAILABLE
195 VACATION PROPERTIES WANTED
196 VACATION PROPERTIES-EXCH SHARE
198 SPACE FOR LEASE
199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
246 VOLUNTEERS
247 DAY CARE AVAILABLE
248 DAY CARE WANTED
250 DOMESTIC HELP AVAILABLE
255 DOMESTIC HELP WANTED
257 HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE
258 HEALTHCARE WANTED
259 SENIORS
260 BUSINESS PERSONALS
265 PEOPLE SEARCH
270 PERSONALS
273 INTRODUCTION SERVICES
275 PERSONAL COMPANIONS WANTED
279 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY
280 ANNOUNCEMENTS
290 LOST & FOUND
295 PETS
300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY

345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
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368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
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392 DRY CLEANING/LAUNDRY
394 EDUCATION
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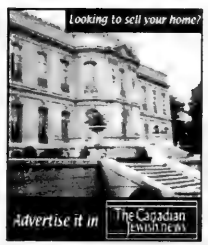

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HISTORIC KLEINBURG $4,780,000
Superbly built, custom design ~ 7,000 sq. ft. bungalow w/ loft, 4 + 1 br's, 7 bth's, 12' & 16' ceilings. Finished Lower level entertainment rm, w/o to salt-water pool. 3 acres natural setting.

THE HAZELTON $7,500,000
Ultra luxury penthouse in the heart of Yorkville. Designed with Old World European flair balanced with small scale exclusivity. Amenities include pool, fitness centre & spa & 24/7 concierege.

FOREST HILL $3,880,000
Richard Wengle masterpiece, built by Valentino Homes. 4,550 sq. ft. luxurious details: limestone floors, 4" white oak hardwood. 4 + 1 br's, 6 bth's. Fin. l.l. w/ exercise rm, w/i wine cellar.

FOREST HILL - $5,595,000
Metron Construction w/Carol MacFarlane interior. Orig. staircase & paneling. 2nd level sound proofed music room w/programmed sound system. Htd stone flrs thru-out 3rd level exercise rm & spa, office. Wine cellar, work shop.

N. OF BRIAR HILL– $1,449,000
Beautifully landscaped w/large front veranda & private back garden. Main floor family room w/fireplace, built-in cabinets, wet bar, sliding glass doors open to terrace. Solarium w/tinted skylights. 5 br's, 6 bth's. Lower games rm & sauna.

ST THOMAS MEETS CHARLES
Powell & Bonell design, Downsview Cabinetry, Viking Professional appliances, Kohler fixtures. Shimmering 10' floor-ceiling expanse of glass on exterior walls. 3 br's, 4 bth's. Breathtaking southwest panoramic views of the U.of T. Campus
$5,679,000

MID-TOWN TORONTO $2,198,000
Custom designed by Poku. 4 + 1 br's, 4 bth's. Dramatic 2-storey foyer showcased by spectacular skylight. Fr. doors open to terrace & patio. Privacy of ravine setting yet close to amenities of Avenue Rd/ Bloor.

SUMMER HILL – $1,650,000
Charming home w/ impeccable details. Open concept & high ceilings. Wall-wall & floor-ceiling windows w/ skylights & Fr.dr. w/o to terrace. 4 + 1 br's. Landscaped gdns by Janet Rosenberg 2 car gar.

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LAKE SIMCOE Magft. 10 AC family compound - Newly Blt. Big Bay Point - (45 mins. to Tor.)
$5,995,000 - Nothing spared! So outstanding! Sec'd 5000 s.f. on each level w/multi walkouts to pool, beach-sand/sunsets/ (4 fp. 2 granite krt., screened Florida rm., 3 abutting lakefront lots, add your 2 guest homes. Includes full designer contents (Elte) Unique home not to be missed.

LAKE SIMCOE STONE MANSION - off Lake Dr., Keswick $4,850,000
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LAKE SIMCOE MAJOR ESTATE (gorg. Sand Beach - 45 mins. to Tor.)
$3,790,000 Gated 2.75 acre, 175' rare sand beach. Outstanding quality & design. 7300 s.f. + gorg. 805 s.f. coach House. 5 fp., 7 bath pool, dbl. boat house.

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LAKE SIMCOE 6.5 AC Wooded SECLUSION- $1,975,000 (45 mins. to Tor.)
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LAKE SIMCOE - Kempenfelt Bay - ESTATE LOT
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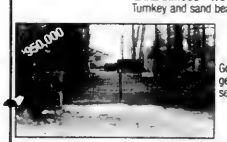
LAKE SIMCOE - Big Bay Pt.
Gorgeous year round cottage with perfect sand beach. $1.250.000

LAKE SIMCOE - WOW - everything!
Turnkey and sand beach. $1,359,000



LAKE SIMCOE Big Bay Point $950,000
Gorgeous 150' south facing lot, gated/hedged/treed. Great Cott. Boat house possible severance.

LAKE SIMCOE- $699,000
Lot value, very nice 100' level lot, older cottage, 45 minutes to Toronto.

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Bathurst/Clark on "Court across park
Prime location-Rarely available 4000 sq ft home with 5 bdrms plus 2 in the spacious loft, kosher well equipped kitchen with granite counters and built in appliances, great finished basement with pesach kitchen, 2 bdrms and a bathroom (separate entry-pot rental) loads of upgrades from 9 foot ceilings, cornice mouldings, library with built in wall cabinets and furniture, just too much to list.

York Mills & Leslie on quiet court - Great lot - $1,149,000
Banbury area spacious and charming home with large entertaining rooms, hardwood throughout, contemporary modern kitchen, lovely treed 70 feet wide backyard w/inground pool, half panel walls, cornice moulds, great fin bsmt. prime neighborhood truly a lovely home. Just listed this week.

Bathurst/Centre on Ravine - Steps to Shuls and Schools
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York Mills/Leslie $949,000
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Bathurst/Clark $529,000
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Contact: 416 565-2001
fredmohr.jet@gmail.com

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Belle Ewart lakefront. August only! 4 bed., A/C, gazebo, shul, eruv, kosher, gorgeous lot, bch., cove, dock. 416-780-8000.

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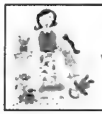

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Israel & the Jewish World

Canada to become member of Holocaust Task Force

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Canada is one year away from full membership in an international group dedicated to commemorating the Holocaust.

Canada was granted "liaison" status recently by the Task Force for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research, said Jason Kenney, secretary of state for multiculturalism and Canadian identity. Canada had enjoyed "observer" status and Kenney expects that within a year, Canada will be granted full membership. The task force consists of 25 member countries, including France, the United States, the United Kingdom, Israel, Austria and Germany. The United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe are permanent observers.

"We're delighted to be at that table," Kenney said in a telephone interview, adding membership underscores the government's belief that it ought to take steps against Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism.

Members are required to implement "national policies and programs in support of Holocaust education, remembrance, and research," states the task force website. In addition, "the task force also encourages appropriate forms of Holocaust remembrance."

Kenney said Canada already has an educational program on tap – "the commemoration of the St. Louis incident."

Announced only a few weeks ago, the commemoration is slated for Halifax's Pier 21 where the passenger liner carrying more than 900 Jewish refugees docked in the summer of 1939, shortly before World War II broke out. The Canadian government refused to permit the ship's Jewish passengers to disembark, as did the United States and Cuba, its original destination. The ship sailed back to Europe, where an estimated one-third of the passengers were killed in the Holocaust.

Kenney said the federal government would also work with the provinces, which possess jurisdiction over education, to develop curricula that address Holocaust education.

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Trestman trods sidelines in mentor Bud Grant's old stomping grounds

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Following the Winnipeg Blue Bombers' 19-16 pre-season victory over the Montreal Alouettes on June 19, a pair of Montreal scribes and I sauntered into the over-crowded visitors' dressing room just as new head coach Marc Trestman bellowed to the throng who were in various states of undress: "Curfew tonight is 1:30 a.m."

One player, who no doubt wanted to go to the library to do some early-morning research, retorted "Why not 2:30?"

Trestman managed a fixed glare and pronounced: "There's something terribly wrong with that idea!" and headed back to the coach's quarters.

It's a new role for the Jewish mentor, who grew up in suburban Minneapolis and distinguished himself as a student, high-school athlete and later as three-year quarterback of the Golden Gophers at the University of Minnesota. In his senior year, he played at Moorhead State and returned to U of M to obtain a degree in political science.

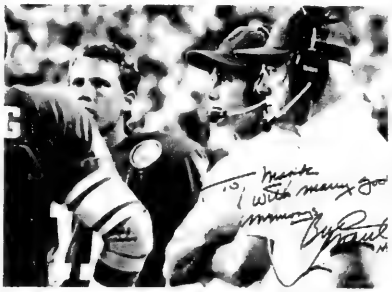
Eager to play in the NFL, Trestman determined in 1978 and 1979 that his best shot would be to make it as a defensive back with the hometown Vikings. Twice he had to face the stark reality that he would not become the next American football idol.

At that juncture, he headed to Florida to pursue a law degree at the University of Miami. Not ever seriously considering trying to stay in football as a coach, he nonetheless responded positively when he was asked by the athletic department in 1981 to volunteer as the quarterback coach of the Hurricanes.

It didn't hurt his resume when in 1983 he was called to the Florida bar and Miami's football team captured the national college championship Orange Bowl.

It wasn't Perry Mason's office that took notice and asked him to join the law firm. Rather, Hall of Fame coach Bud Grant wanted to hire the then 28-year-old.

I reminded Trestman that as he paced the sidelines opposite where Grant himself had trod so many years ago for the Blue Bombers, not to mention the gridiron, where he made highlight-reel catches. I wanted to know how important that initial call from the football legend was.



Marc Trestman, second from right, was 28 years old when his mentor Bud Grant, right, hired him as offensive back coach with the Minnesota Vikings.

The trim, 6-3, freshly-minted head coach answered: "He meant everything to me, because he was the guy who saw in me something I didn't see in myself, and he hired me to coach in the National Football League.

"It's something I never saw coming. He saw it in me growing up playing basketball against his son and I was in training camp a couple times. He's the guy who got me started at the professional level, and I still talk to him on a regular basis. There's always something wise he has to say to me."

Between 1985 and 2005, Trestman served as quarterbacks coach or offensive co-ordinator with the Vikings, Buccaneers, Browns, 49ers, Lions, Cardinals, Dolphins and Raiders. But the intense and cerebral coach knows full well he has much to learn about the Canadian game.

"Every day is an adjustment," he said. "We've had so many different situations come up in the last two weeks with challenges, taking a point, whether or not to take a safety. There has been a lot of things come up, but we're doing good. I think we've been on top of just about everything."

I asked starting Alouettes' QB Anthony Calvillo, who played until early in the second quarter, how much of an advantage it might be for him now having the opportunity to play under a coach with so much seasoning as a quarterbacks' tutor.

The 35-year-old responded: "I just like the fact he's brought some new ideas to this league. Whenever you get a fresh face with new ideas, I think it's definitely going to benefit us, because we're going to be running things that haven't been run up here. I think that's an advantage for us.

"He's a very intelligent man. He makes sure that we're prepared for every single game. He's going to have a lot of plays for us. It's going to challenge the quarterbacks on this team, and our whole offence, because our whole playbook is pretty wide open."

Trestman, 52, left the NFL in 2004 and moved with his family to Raleigh, his current home, to be the offensive co-ordinator and quarterback coach for the North Carolina State Wolfpack.

His family consists of wife Cindy and two daughters, Sarah Anne, 15, and Chloe, 13. As for his ethnicity, he is proud of who he is, but feels that it has never been an issue growing up, or made mention of by management, owners or playing personnel.

He finds the most satisfaction in working with young athletes from various backgrounds and all walks of life. He stresses more than anything that football is a very cerebral game and that the players have to have more than athleticism. What counts most is intelligence and the character of the individual. Without it, you'll never make it, he believes.

What also counts is making it to the Grey Cup, especially in 2008, since Montreal just happens to be hosting the national event.

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The five people you meet in Maui

ALMOST FAMOUS
By Jacob Medjuck

You have to assume that Heaven is paradise, and you have to assume that paradise is Maui.

I was there last month for the Maui Film Festival, and it is paradise.

If the apples of Eden were forbidden fruit that brought knowledge, then the free-flowing pineapples of Maui will make you foolish. Without exercising appropriate judgment, I experienced what nearly became my first pineapple-induced diabetic coma.

Mitch Albom wrote a lovely book, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. His character meets five people who lead him to reflect on his life.

Well, I spent six days in heaven last month, and I'll tell you who showed up: John Lasseter.

This digital pioneer is the new Walt Disney (sans any interest in Nazis). John is the CEO and brains behind Pixar Animation Studios, the dreamers who brought us *Toy Story*, *Monsters Inc.* and *The Incredibles*. I spotted him wandering down the road and stopped him for what became my first of five reflective conversations. It turns out he wasn't even in Maui for the festival. He was just there with his family, vacationing.

"We love to snorkel," he offered, whispering. "You know, *Finding Nemo*."

A mogul, hero and family man – and also very funny. A wonderful start. I invited him to the screening of my film that night. Putting things delicately, I mentioned that *Summerhood* is a film for the whole family, but perhaps not to watch *with* your whole family – i.e., there's kissing aplenty.

He was thrilled that I'd done animation work for Disney and DreamWorks, and we had colleagues in common. But in declining politely, he presented "vacation" in a way I hadn't thought of before.

"It's a lot like your Sabbath," he explained. (I was being lectured on Shabbat by Walt Disney. Amazing. Simply amazing. In Hollywood, even the gentiles are Jews.)

"No phones, no computers, no interruptions," he said, lifting up his trademark Hawaiian shirt – a splashy style he maintains even at the office – to reveal no cellphone.

"Just nature and family this weekend."

He made a valid point. When it comes to cellphones and other wireless technology, just because we "can" all the time, doesn't mean we "should" all the time.

I propose that chivalry is not dead, it just needs redefining: the new "open a door for a lady" is "leave your phone at home" when going on a date.

Despite my insatiable need to be available and connected, being "disconnected" is blissful, too. That night, I unplugged from the grid – and I met real human beings. I left my *Star Trek* gear at the hotel, and it was liberating. And this we knew already thousands of years ago. Remarkable. Nice job, Ten Commandments. Honour every form of the Sabbath I shall.

My film went on to win the audience award for best feature comedy, and I'm certain the feature will filter up to Mr. Lasseter through the cult following I hope to develop within his ranks. But the lesson I learned from him was more rewarding than any compliment he could offer.

When the people you pattern yourself after reveal the behavioral blueprints of their success, it's a gift that informs the rest of your life. And that's something you generally learn only from hindsight, in eternal Paradise. If you'd prefer an earlier taste, head to Maui. There's more gold in the people than buried in the sand.

I think I also met Dennis Quaid, James Bond, some lady who survived an avalanche after being buried alive for 18 minutes, and a good masseuse.

But I can't be sure, on account of all that pineapple.

So, as your own vacations approach, make the most by taking the least with you. Unplug. And make that clear to your friends, relatives and workmates before you go, so no one is anxious or hurt.

You'll be more refreshed for everything and everyone that you'll come back to.

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- 6 tblsp olive oil, divided
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- 1/3 c chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 c packed coarsely grated smoked Gouda
- 1 lb. onions, peeled, halved, thinly sliced
- 1/3 c bottled BBQ sauce
- 8 lg. flour tortillas

Preheat oven to 300°F. Heat 3 tblsp oil in large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add onions; sauté 5 min. Add BBQ sauce & 2 tblsp water. Stir until onions are coated, about 2 min.

Place 4 tortillas on work surface. On each, sprinkle 1/4 of cheese, then 1/4 of cilantro, 1/4 of onions. Top each with second tortilla and press to adhere.

Brush skillet with 1 tsp oil; heat over medium-high heat. Add 1 quesadilla; cook until cheese is melted, about 2 min. per side. Place on baking sheet in oven. Repeat with remaining quesadillas and keep warm until needed. Cut each quesadilla into quarters.

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FITNESS CORNER
By Felyce Zomparelli

We have waited all winter for the opportunity to be outdoors. During the summer months, we love to take our exercise outside. However, whether you are walking, biking, playing tennis or doing any other outdoor activity, it is more important to hydrate yourself during this time.

This year, the weather forecasters are predicting a hotter than usual summer, and I wanted to take this time to remind you of the importance of keeping your body hydrated, especially during and after exercise.

Your body can absorb about 500 millilitres of water an hour, and you require about two litres a day, but if you drink too quickly, most of that water is not absorbed. Therefore, you should not drink huge amounts all at once, but rather drink a little less more frequently.

In addition, you really need to be drinking before you are thirsty, which is easy to say but not easy to do.

And during the summer, you lose more water just sitting, because of the heat. Sweating, which is one of the ways your body loses water, is also one of the ways your body cools itself.

When you exercise, you lose about 500 millilitres to a litre of water, depending on how hard you work, or really, how hard your body has to work to keep you from overheating. Keeping yourself hydrated is important during exercise, not only for the obvious reasons, but also to help keep you limber. When you allow yourself to get dehydrated, even to the smallest degree, you run the risk of having muscle cramps during and after exercise.

Muscles, like all other parts of your body, need water, and when they get dehydrated you get stiff, and your body does not recover well from the exercise.

So remember, it's important to drink water before, during, and after you exercise or engage in any physical activity.

You can contact me with your questions at felycesfitness@rogers.com

'Truce' shows Hamas' true colours

According to Reports
By
PAUL MICHAELS

Canadian media paid substantial attention to last week's news that Israel and Hamas had reached a truce. The reporting reflected a mix of optimistic and pessimistic, but ultimately skeptical, attitudes among Israelis and Palestinians that the truce would hold.

The *National Post*'s Matthew Fisher captured this in his June 23 article, "Gaza truce is welcome respite," in observing that "Almost nobody on either side of the Israeli-Palestinian divide believes that the current truce in the Gaza Strip between Israel and Hamas is anything but a brief pause in a long war."

Yet, as Fisher noted, both sides are weary of a conflict that seems to have no resolution. So what does Israel gain? According to Fisher, the feeling "that life is safer and therefore better for [those] living in communities bordering Gaza who have been terrorized for years by rocket and mortar fire by Hamas and other armed factions in the small Palestinian territory."

However, soon after the truce was brokered, a small number of Qassams were launched from Gaza into Israeli southern communities, including Sderot. Accordingly, the terror had not been stemmed, only significantly lessened. And these violations of the truce threatened to unravel it.

In her June 21 *Globe and Mail* article, "Gazans hope truce lasts enough to resupply," Carolynne Wheeler wrote: "Few in impoverished Gaza think the truce will last for more than a few weeks; they are steeling themselves against the recklessness of renegade militant factions likely to break it with rocket fire."

She added that Israeli officials warned "there will be no second chances" if the ceasefire is broken this way.

Yet when Islamic Jihad launched Qassams into Israel on June 24, Israeli officials decided to only restrict the flow of goods into Gaza by keeping its border crossing closed.

The CBC's Peter Armstrong reported on *The National* that evening that members of Islamic Jihad told him earlier in the day that the group would not interfere with the ceasefire. However, shortly after Armstrong's discussion, rockets struck southern Israel, wounding two civilians. Islamic Jihad took credit.

While Armstrong reported that Hamas called "for all militant groups to exercise self control," the next day Hamas defiantly declared that it would not assert authority over Islamic Jihad or any other radical faction offering "resistance" to Israel's "occupation." This prompted some Israeli analysts to observe the irony that, while Hamas claims to be in control of Gaza and wants to be taken seriously as a governing authority capable of assuring economic well-being for its restive population, it refuses to act responsibly when the first violation of a ceasefire it agreed to occurs on its territory. In short, Hamas has signaled why it should not be trusted – despite assertions by some western journalists that the radical organization is amenable to reform.

* * *

In "France sends mixed messages to Israel" (*Winnipeg Free Press*, June 24), Samuel Segev discussed not only French President Nicolas Sarkozy's warmth toward Israel, as revealed in his recent visit and speech to the Knesset, but also the fact he is also warming up relations with Syria. Syrian President Bashar Assad is scheduled to arrive in Paris on July 13 to take part in Sarkozy's "Mediterranean Union." In response to Sarkozy's decision to invite Assad to attend a military parade on the Champ Elysses on July 14 for Bastille Day, Segev noted that former French president Jacques Chirac "decided to boycott the parade to protest against Assad's invitation." Segev continued: "Chirac believes that Syria is very much implicated in the assassination of his friend, former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, and that Sarkozy should not have invited Assad to Paris before the assassination mystery is solved."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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This Week

National

Durham Region shul marks its own bar mitzvah. *Page 3*

Heebonics

Broken Beat Box: A new twist on an old tune. *Page 19*

Arts & Travel

Nava Waxman's drawings are her passion. *Page 34*

On cjnews.com

Adventures from the African bush.

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions....10
The Kirshner File 11
Jewish Life 14
According to Reports 17
On Campus 21
Family Moments 21
What's New 22
Just Between Us 24
Obituaries and Notices....24
Health & Lifestyles 25
Food, Scrumptious Food....26
Israel & the Jewish World 27
Books & Authors 31
Arts & Travel....32

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BRIDGE OF STRINGS AND LIGHT: Israelis watch a fireworks display during the inauguration ceremony last month of the Bridge of Strings at the western entrance to Jerusalem. Designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, the $70-million (US) landmark anchors one end of a light railway line that will carry travellers into downtown. The intra-urban line will connect with the bus station to form an integrated transit hub that will relieve traffic congestion in the city. Calatrava has designed more than 40 bridges around the world, including an almost-completed pedestrian bridge across Venice's Grand Canal.

[RNS/Reuters photo]

Wax Hitler beheaded

JTA

BERLIN — A man was arrested for beheading a wax figure of Hitler in Berlin.

The 41-year-old man was one of the first visitors to the new Madame Tussauds in Berlin, which opened to the public for the first time last Saturday.

Police arrested him while he was still in the exhibit area, according to the German Press Agency. He was released after being charged with damaging property and inflicting bodily harm against an employee.

Reportedly, a scuffle ensued Saturday morning when two museum employees tried to grab the man as he lunged for the wax model. Shouting "no more war," he managed to tear off the head, eyewitnesses said. The damaged figure, which cost about $300,000, was removed from public view.

German-Jewish journalist Henryk Broder, known for his biting commentary, told the Deutsche Presse Agentur news agency he was glad that "an attack on Hitler had finally worked."

But unlike the real Hitler, this one could be restored – if the damage is not too great, museum spokesperson Natalie Ruoss told DPA. Repairs could take up to two months, according to a museum employee.

Iran has resumed bomb work: report

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TEHRAN — Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said on Monday his country would not stop enriching uranium and rejected as "illegitimate" a demand by major powers that it do so, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

Ahmadinejad's comment came as a British newspaper, quoting intelligence reports received by western diplomats, reported Monday that Iran has resumed work aimed at producing a nuclear bomb.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

The remark was Ahmadinejad's first comment on the dispute since Iran delivered its response last Friday to a package of incentives offered by world powers seeking to curb its nuclear activities. "They offer to hold talks, but at the same time they threaten us and say we should accept their illegitimate demand to halt [enrichment work]," Ahmadinejad told reporters in Malaysia, where he was attending a summit of eight developing countries.

"They want us to abandon our right [to nuclear technology]," he said.

The United States, China, Russia, Britain, France and Germany demand that Iran suspend its enrichment work before formal talks can start on their revised package, which includes help to develop a civilian nuclear program. Iran, the world's fourth-biggest oil exporter, says its nuclear activities are peaceful. The United States and its western allies suspect they are a cover to build nuclear weapons.

Tehran has repeatedly refused to stop producing enriched uranium, which can be used as fuel for power plants or, if refined much more, can provide material for nuclear weapons.

Continued on page 27

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Jews of Zimbabwe are holding steady— please see page 29

The News in Brief

CANADA

Allocations Record

HAMILTON — Hamilton's Jewish federation will allocate a record amount in the coming year. UJA Federation of Hamilton said it will distribute $1.15 million after its best-ever fundraising campaign. Exact amounts will be announced at the end of the summer, but recommended grants include a 15 per cent boost to Jewish day schools. The federation said that allocation requests from affiliated agencies totalled $1.3 million, and that even at that level, many would run operating deficits.

Director Takes Leave

WINNIPEG — The midwest regional director of B'nai Brith Canada has taken a leave of absence after he was charged with assaulting a bailiff who was trying to seize a van at his home. Alan Yusim asked for "a temporary leave of absence to deal with this matter" and it was granted, a B'nai Brith spokesperson told the *Winnipeg Free Press*. Police said a man, 54, was charged with assault and dangerous operation of a vehicle after a bailiff, 56, was dragged several feet by a van when her arm got caught in its window. Yusim claims he was assaulted and was the victim in the incident, the *Winnipeg Sun* reported.

Jews Named To Order

OTTAWA — Six Jews were named in the Order of Canada announcements last week. Winnipeg's Gail Asper was promoted to an officer of the order for arts advocacy, fundraising and business endeavours. New members of the order include Judith Chernin Budovitch of Fredericton for volunteerism; former Nova Scotia lieutenant-governor Myra Freeman; Norman Levine of Toronto for his work in pediatric dentistry; University of Toronto historian Michael Marrus; and abortion rights advocate Henry Morgentaler.

Sderot Kids At Camp

MONTREAL — Ten boys age 12 and 13 arrived in Montreal last Thursday to attend a one-month Chabad Lubavitch-run day camp that's being held at United Talmud Torahs' St. Laurent branch. They were among some 70 children, aged 11 to 14, from the besieged southern Israeli town who arrived the previous day at John F. Kennedy Airport in New York on their way to 10 Chabad day camps in the eastern United States and Montreal. Another 50 children were scheduled to fly into Los Angeles to attend Chabad camps on the U.S. West Coast.

WORLD

Police Patrols Added

PARIS — France's interior minister announced more police patrols for an ethnically diverse area of Paris after the gang beating of a Jewish teen there. A week after the violent beating of Rudy Haddad, 17, in the northeast district, Michele Alliot-Marie visited on June 28 to make the announcement. The French justice minister also announced a plan to fight gang activity.

Hate Charge Dropped

GRAND FORKS, N.D. — A judge dismissed charges against a University of North Dakota student accused of drawing anti-Semitic graffiti after the state attorney said there wasn't enough evidence to try him. Spencer Garness allegedly used ice cream to write an anti-Semitic slur on a dorm elevator, one of a series of anti-Semitic acts that freshman Scott Lebovitz said led him to leave his dormitory in April. In February, a swastika was found on a wall near his room. He said he was the target of anti-Semitic taunts for months. Garness and other students said Lebovitz misjudged the actions, which they said was teasing among friends.

Hitler Statue Unveiled

BERLIN — An exhibit of Adolf Hitler in a bunker was unveiled at a Berlin wax museum amid criticism. Berlin's new Madame Tussaud's waxworks on the famed Unter den Linten Avenue in the former East Berlin, which opened to the public officially on July 9, unveiled the Hitler figure July 3 despite protests from politicians and historians. As promised, the model of Hitler is depicted not as an intimidating figure, but in his last days, holed up in his bunker as Allied forces approached. The museum also depicts people who resisted the Third Reich.

New Rabbis Ordained

WARSAW — A Warsaw yeshiva ordained the first rabbis in Poland since World War II. Nine rabbinical students received *smichah* June 29 from the Chabad Lubavitch Yeshiva of Warsaw. It opened in 2005 as the first post-Holocaust yeshiva in Poland.

U.S. Jewish Groups Praise Presbyterians

WARSAW — U.S. Jewish groups are praising the Presbyterian Church for deciding not to "over-identify" with either side in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Spearheaded by the umbrella organization the Jewish Council for Public Affairs, the Jewish groups issued a statement June 27 in support of some of the stands taken last month by delegates to the 218th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

In addition to a motion barring the church from adopting positions that identify too much with one side, the delegates also approved a motion endorsing the Amman Call, a document adopted at a 2007 church gathering in Jordan that calls for the right of return of all refugees. It also struck down language that would have permitted the church to move ahead with divestment from Israel without further approval from the General Assembly.

The Jewish groups, including the American Jewish Committee, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Reform, Conservative and Reconstructionist movements, expressed concern about the church's support for the right of return.

The Canadian Jewish news

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Durham synagogue celebrates coming of age

B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah marks bar mitzvah

By SHAYLA GUNTER-GOLDSTEIN
Special to The CJN

It was not your ordinary bar mitzvah celebration.

Perhaps it was the entertainment – traditional Hindu dancers from the Devi Mandir Temple and a choral ensemble from Dunbarton Fairport United Church in Pickering. Maybe it was the hundreds of guests from many different faith groups and the multicultural buffet dinner afterward. Or it could have been the honoured guests who did the candle-lighting – members of the community and congregants from St. Paul's United Church in Ajax, where the simchah was held.

This was the coming-of-age celebration for B'nai Shalom V'Tikvah – the little synagogue that could – in Durham region.

The shul's recent bar/bat mitzvah celebrated the fact that the congregation has brought Judaism to the forefront in Durham Region, and served to thank those involved in helping them get to this milestone.

It was about outreach, too. "We've moved from infancy through adolescence," says B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah president Ron King. "Our identity as a Jewish group is like a young person entering adulthood. We are finally more established and more aware of our strengths. Now we need to spread our wings and have a stronger voice in Ajax/Pickering."

The shul's Rabbi Jerry Steinberg led the Sunday afternoon service, sharing the pulpit with Rabbi Danny Gottleib of Thornhill's Temple Kol Ami, and Rabbi Sharon Sobel, executive director of the Canadian Council of Reform Judaism (CCRJ), both of whom were instrumental in helping the congregation find its way for 13 years.

Continued on page 12

Seen at Durham Region's B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah's recent bar/bat mitzvah celebration are, from left, shul president Ron King, past president Michael Chasler and Harley Saltzman, a founder and first president of the congregation.

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Cinema as portal to peoplehood

From the editor's desk

The gravity of Jerusalem's profound pull upon the hearts of most visitors is its massive historical, religious, esthetic and spiritual weight.

Often overlooked, however, by the emotional brio that the city evokes is that it is a perpetually driving turbine for much of the country's cultural expression too.

And at the heart of that cultural expression is a quite remarkable institution: the Jerusalem Cinematheque.

Situated near Sultan's Pool in the Hinnom Valley, a mere stone's throw to the south and east from Moses Montefiore's Windmill in Yemin Moshe, is the Cinematheque. It is by far the city's most famous and most beautiful film screening centre. The *Canadian Jewish News* visited the Cinematheque last month as the guest of the Jerusalem Foundation. It is one of the many transformative, city-building projects co-founded by the legendary Lia van Leer and funded by the foundation.

But "city-building" in this case defines itself to a wide horizon. The Jerusalem Cinematheque is a modern-day portal to peoplehood. For it has many aspects to its mission in addition to being a breathtaking centrepoint for the viewing of movies. It houses the film archives of Israel; it is an educational and research centre; it is a meeting point for individuals from diverse Israeli ethnicities; it is a library; and not to be overlooked, it is a restaurant whose view is toward the inspiring walls of the Old City.

It is a very busy place, even in the morning hours of a midweek day when we visited. Technicians and various other professionals were preparing for the 25th annual summertime Jerusalem Film Festival. This year's festival begins today, July 10, and runs until July 19. The opening, in the scenic theatre erected in the Sultan's Pool, will be attended by nearly 7,000 guests. The festival should attract several thousands.

The younger, "winter" festival, the annual Jewish Film Festival usually held around Chanukah, will be marking its 10th year this coming December.

But preparations for the midsummer film festival comprised only one part of the many hive-like activities that morning in the impressive, sleek building built into the side of the valley.

Ilan De Vries, the thoughtful, soft-spoken general director of the Cinematheque, of the Jerusalem Film Festival and of the Israel Film Archive, which is housed in the Cinematheque, explained the import of some of the activities.

"At the beginning of the 1980s, Cinematheque became the home of the national film archives of Israel," he said. "Today, some 35,000 films are located here – 65 per cent of the material is Israeli and Jewish-themed, 35 per cent are classics."

The entrance to the Jerusalem Cinametheque

The archives are a repository of rare historic films, among which is the first film ever shot in Jerusalem and the precious Nathan Axelrod film archives, which document the very early days of the creation of the Jewish state.

But the nature and the scope of the archives is quickly growing. Film archivists from other parts of the world, especially of late, from Europe, are calling upon the Cinematheque regarding the increasing numbers of films being found that chronicle Jewish life in eastern Europe at the turn of the 20th century. Among the rare films found in Russia is footage from the Mendel Beilis trial, the infamous blood libel that was immortalized in the novel *The Fixer* by Bernard Malamud.

A large number of films about World War II and films made during the war is now surfacing in various archival caches throughout Europe. German film archivists recently gave a copy of a Nazi propaganda film that documented Jewish life in the Warsaw Ghetto prior to the uprising to the Cinematheque's archive.

The many films being discovered in the dark, forgotten storerooms of Europe need to be retrieved and, if necessary, restored. The Cinematheque is the only place in Israel that can reliably restore and protect the material.

These precious archives then become an instrument for the Cinematheque's educational mission. In conjunction with the Ministry of Education, the Cinematheque schedules educational programs more than 300 days a year. One of the more compelling recent programs is an initiative called *I AM YOU ARE*, which brings Arab and Jewish youth together to make films about their respective identities.

"The Cinematheque attaches great importance to these joint productions," De Vries told us. "The place is about culture, not about politics. Unfortunately, however, the Palestinian participants have to be somewhat circumspect about their participation. Not all of their peers are accepting of it."

The electricity that flows through the Cinematheque is not only that which powers the film projectors and popcorn machines. It is the excitement and sense of purpose that sizzles in the corridors of the place. The people who work there are guides to the countless numbers of individuals who seek to explore – through the now timeless and possibly eternal medium of film – who they are and who they might yet become.

Visitors should be aware of Cinematheque. It is now part of the profound gravity of Jerusalem. —*MBD*

SeeJN CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

ARAFAT REJECTS PEACE AT CAMP DAVID: Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak, left, listens intently as U.S. President Bill Clinton appears to read from a text. Neither Barak nor Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, right, seems pleased with what Clinton is reading. The three leaders met at Camp David in July 2000 in an attempt to hammer out a final peace settlement. The negotiations ended in failure. It was at these negotiations that Arafat doubted the existence of a Jewish temple in Jerusalem. [RNS/Reuters photo]

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Israel seeking Canadian business investment

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Ten miles wide at its narrowest, barely a speck on the map when compared to its much vaster neighbours, endowed with few natural resources, home to only 7.3 million people, Israel manages to punch far above its weight when it comes to matters of the economy and trade.

In fact, says lawyer and investment expert Uriel Lynn, Israelis' "buying power has increased tremendously in the last 10 years, especially the last five years."

Israelis are hungry for the type of services provided by North American companies, particularly in the financial services sector, and they've got the money to pay for it.

Lynn, who serves as president of the Federation of Israeli Chambers of Commerce, was in Toronto recently to make his pitch for more Canadian business interest in Israel.

A former Knesset member and governor of state revenue, Lynn said "in terms of population, we are about equal to Austria and we are growing. We are larger than Denmark and Norway."

Israel's buying power has moved up as its economy has blossomed in the last few years, corresponding to economic reforms advanced by former Finance Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. "Many of the restrictions that were artificially burdening the economy were lifted and the real economic and business energy of the people was more free to move on," Lynn said.

"Israel is a very interesting market. It's a big market. It has substantial buying power. It is a country with a lot of innovation, entrepreneurial spirit and it's really a country on the move."

Lynn had a personal role in the reforms as well. As governor of state revenue, he was responsible for a number of changes to Israel's tax system, including the cancelling of inheritance tax, property tax and capital gains tax on the sale of residential apartments.

The success of the reforms are apparent in the statistics: Israel's economy has grown an average of five per cent per year for the last five years and the country's GDP has swollen to more than $28,000 (US), "a little below the average European Union country," he said.

That has left Israelis with formidable purchasing power and "we would like for North America to take a greater share of Israeli buying."

In particular he would like to increase imports from North America and import a little less from Europe.

As he sees it, "North American products cost less and will encourage more business co-operation between North American and Israeli companies.

"We'd like to see capital markets increase," especially the presence in Israel of banks, investment bank and, large auditing firms. The Israeli economy today is dominated by five big banks and "we'd like to see more competition," Lynn said.

The country's consumer market would benefit from the presence of foreign banks, he added.

Lynn dismissed concerns that foreign businesses might be deterred by the country's security concerns. "Security is a consideration but it's not a deterrent. We are proving that our economy is growing very nicely without having peace with our neighbours. We are not dependent on our neighbours' economies because we are integrated into the world economy."

While in Canada, Lynn addressed a group of lawyers involved in trade and another group brought together by the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce. He believes Canada's financial sector, and businesses in the transportation and infrastructure sectors, as well as high tech industries could find good opportunities in Israel.

"I'm just trying to lay down a framework for the opportunities that exist," he said of his Toronto visit.

Some Israeli economic factoids, courtesy of Lynn:

• In 2001 and 2002, GDP declined by .6 per cent and .9 per cent respectively. In 2006 and 2007, gross domestic product grew by 5.2 and 5.3 per cent respectively;

• Unemployment in 2002 stood at 10.5 per cent; in the first quarter of 2008, it was 6.3 per cent;

• Israel's population jumped from 3.9 million in 1980 to 7.2 million in 2007; GDP grew from $50 billion to $165 billion; GDP per capita in the period soared from $8,050 to $28,800;

• In 2003, taxes, including payroll deductions and other mandatory charges, stood at 723 shekels for a worker with two children and a salary of 5,000 shekels. The 2008 estimate will be 321 shekels on a 5,000 shekel salary. As a percentage, the tax take will drop from 14.5 per cent of income to 6.4 per cent;

• Israel is ranked first of 55 countries in expenditure on research and development, second in funding for tech development and venture capital investment, third in entrepreneurship and fourth in skilled labour;

• Direct foreign investment in Israel was $10.2 billion in 2007, up from $5.1 billion in 2000;

• In 2007 Israel recorded a trade deficit, with $75 billion in imports versus $74 billion in exports. In 1980 it operated a larger deficit, with $11.2 billion in imports versus $8.6 billion in exports;

• Israel enjoys a trade surplus with Canada. In 2007, exports were $715 million and imports $434 million. Israel's main exports were jewellery, machines and chemicals while its main imports were machines and mineral products;

• From 1999-2005, Israeli companies invested $7 billion Cdn in Canada. In 2005 alone, $1 billion Cdn was put into real estate, including residential, commercial and industrial properties.

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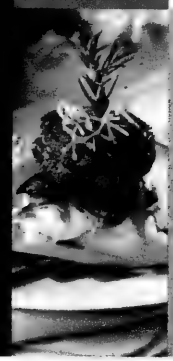

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Where futility meets hypocrisy

The G-8 members of industrialized nations who met in Rusutsu, Japan, this week were expected to severely condemn Robert Mugabe and his newly installed government in Zimbabwe. Indeed, they were expected to somehow forcefully demonstrate their displeasure at the 84-year-old's recent brutal usurpation of power.

As of this writing, however, the G-8 summiteers had not yet convened.

But the 53-state membership of the African Union (AU) did meet last week in Sharm al-Sheikh, Egypt. They dealt with Mugabe less earnestly than a parent might deal with a five-year-old child for confabulating a fib. They refused to formally rebuke or chastise him. They refused any reference to Mugabe in their official closing statement. Only Kenya dared to criticize the president of Zimbabwe.

On June 29, Zimbabwe's electoral commission confirmed an overwhelming victory for Mugabe in the runoff election that was held two days earlier. Mugabe won 85.5 per cent of the votes, according to the government commission, thus extending his 28 years of absolute power in that beleaguered, impoverished country. Of course, he was the only candidate in the race. Opposition leader Morgan Tsvangirai, who won more votes than Mugabe in the original balloting three months earlier in March, had withdrawn from the race because of the blatant, brutal and murderous intimidation against his supporters.

African leaders are unwilling to confront Mugabe or the ugly truth of his megalomania. For in confronting Mugabe, they must also confront their own questionable records and the truths about their own respective embraces of democracy and democratic institutions.

The docility of their response to Mugabe is noted with profound sadness, for it legitimizes an illegitimate result. It also lends authority to the notion that the gun and the truncheon complement the ballot box. It also evokes the further observation that the AU response is saturated in the reek of hypocrisy. For swift, indeed, is the condemnation by members of the AU when it is directed at the government of Israel.

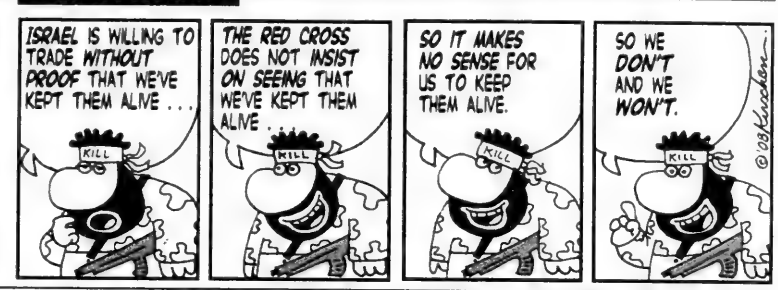
Heading into the G-8 summit Canada's prime minister, Stephen Harper, and U.S. President George W. Bush had called for sanctions to be imposed on Mugabe's government. They are to be commended for their principled positions, even though, as these words were being written, sanctions against Zimbabwe seemed to have fallen off the agenda.

The net effect of the world's inaction in relation to the recent "election" of Robert Mugabe is to brazenly demonstrate the futility of the hope that justice can coincide with an international system of collective security.

It is a sorry meeting point where futility joins hypocrisy.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Rabbi Reuven Bulka, spiritual leader of Congregation Machzikei Hadas in Ottawa (and today co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress), told the fifth world conference on smoking and health that smoking is "a destructive suicidal act, and thus forbidden by Jewish law." It is contrary, he said, to repeated halachic injunctions to guard one's health.


Dry Bones
THE ISRAELI PRISONERS
ISRAEL IS WILLING TO TRADE WITHOUT PROOF THAT WE'VE KEPT THEM ALIVE . . .
THE RED CROSS DOES NOT INSIST ON SEEING THAT WE'VE KEPT THEM ALIVE .
SO IT MAKES NO SENSE FOR US TO KEEP THEM ALIVE.
SO WE DON'T AND WE WON'T.
KILL
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End-of-life decisions

As an intensive care physician, it is with great sadness that I have observed the legal circus surrounding the case of the late Sam Golubchuk unfold in the media ("Winnipeg man in life support controversy dies," *CJN*, July 3).

End-of-life decision-making in the intensive care unit occurs each and every day. The issue of when the suffering and burden of a particular treatment becomes too great for a patient to bear is a difficult one for doctors and patient's families alike. To effectively address these issues requires a collaborative approach that includes the recognition of a patient's values, wishes and beliefs by the medical team, as well as trust in the skill and expertise of the medical team by the patient and their family. It is only in cases when a lack of respect and trust develops that conflicts such as those resulting in the Golubchuk case arise. Unfortunately, conflict in such cases only leads to the further polarization and entrenchment of views.

As an intensive care physician, I have had the privilege of caring for many religious Orthodox Jews and their families, as well as patients of other religions who share similar beliefs pertaining to medical care. When faced with end-of-life decisions in such cases, suggesting that the family seek guidance from their rabbi or even inviting the patient's rabbi to sit in on family meetings – with the family's permission – has encouraged dialogue as well as encouraging people to keep an open mind. I will tell families that a rabbi, just like a physician, cannot provide an expert opinion without first being made aware of all the facts and circumstances.

As a physician and as a Jew, I believe that all life is precious and of infinite value. I also believe that alleviating suffering and providing comfort to a dying patient is a core purpose to any of the healing arts. As the great rabbi and physician Maimonides describes in his oath for doctors, "May I never see in the patient anything but a fellow creature in pain."

These are not opposing beliefs – rather they are one in the same.

Hy Dwosh
Toronto

* * *

Golubchuk's final battle

With regard to the story "Winnipeg man in life support controversy dies" (*CJN*, July 3) about the death of a disabled man, Samuel Golubchuk, please note that I was misquoted more than once.

What I had said in my eulogy was, "Many worship the god of utilitarian philosophy, which espouses 'futile care' theory as a rationale to end the lives of disabled individuals, and other false gods. Chaim Shmuel, Samuel Golubchuk, worshipped only one God."

In addition, I noted that, "In Europe, on the battlefield, he faced evil and did not flinch. And in his final battle, he also did not flinch."

The suggestion that his final battle was with the hospital was not made by me. Indeed, his final battle was with the Angel of Death, a final battle nearly all of us will eventually have to face (a few of us will die suddenly, or in our sleep). In that battle, we hopefully will have physicians who obey their Hippocratic oath and seek to cure, or to care, but never to kill.

Leon Zacharowicz, MD
New York

* * *

CJC lobbied for ITF membership

Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Secretary of State Jason Kenney do indeed deserve warm commendation for the government's principled decision to apply for membership on the Task Force (ITF) for International Co-operation on Holocaust Education, Remembrance and Research ("Canada to become member of Holocaust Task Force," *CJN*, July 3). This move did not occur in a vacuum, however, and *The CJN* was remiss in not acknowledging the longstanding efforts of the Jewish community advocacy organizations, which finally came to fruition under the current government.

Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) has been in the forefront of lobbying for Canada to join the ITF since the task force's inception. We have worked closely with Kenney and officials at Canadian Heritage and contributed to the baseline study on domestic Holocaust initiatives that Canada submitted as part of the application process. CJC representatives have participated in the NGO component of Canadian delegations to recent ITF gatherings, and I have been given the honour of representing CJC on the task force's education working group. In particular, CJC has worked for more than a decade on securing a government commitment to memorialize the S.S. St. Louis with a historical monument in Halifax Harbour.

We look forward to this ongoing partnership with the Canadian government to help Canada gain full membership on the ITF and to the establishment of the St. Louis historical marker.

Frank Bialystok
Chair
CJC Ontario Region

LET THEM GO...
Ron Arad, Zachary Baumel, Zvi Feldman, Ehud Goldwasser, Guy Hever, Yehuda Katz, Eldad Regev, Gilad Schalit

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Perspectives

Muslim denial of Jewish links to Temple Mount is the biggest barrier to peace

By YITZHAK REITER

If there is one thing that critically hampers Israeli-Palestinian peace talks, it's not the claim of a right of return for refugees – a non-starter from the Israeli point of view – nor is it the issue of final borders, since an exchange of territory could be negotiated. Neither is it the question of Jerusalem as an urban, undivided city, since the Palestinians would likely agree to a special arrangement in which they could have their capital headquartered in an Arab neighbourhood.

However, the issue that most negatively affects the peace process is the growing Muslim denial of the Jewish connection to the Western Wall and the Temple Mount, which Muslims view as their sanctuary. They call it Haram al-Sharif, or the Al Aqsa Mosque compound, and it's the third-holiest Muslim shrine after Mecca and Medina.

The following well-known example testifies to the widespread denial phenomenon, and what the public sees and hears is only the tip of the iceberg.

At the July 2000 Camp David summit, when then-U.S. president Bill Clinton proposed that the Temple Haram site be divided, then-Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat replied that the Jewish Temple had been in Nablus (known in the Bible as Shechem), not in Jerusalem.

Yitzhak Reiter

Not only did the Israeli mission to Camp David respond harshly to Arafat's words, Clinton himself was sharply critical of Arafat's denial. When Arafat's comments became known to the Israeli public, it hardened Israeli attitudes toward a possible compromise on the holy sites. According to a poll published shortly afterward, only nine per cent of Israeli Jews would agree to relinquish control of the Temple Haram compound to the Palestinians.

Since 1967, a growing number of Muslim scholars and historians have been attempting to dismiss the Jewish belief in the Jewish Temple, to deny its existence as a Jewish house of worship or even its location in the place identified by the Jews as the Temple Mount site. Moreover, there is a growing tendency among Palestinian Muslims and among many Muslim writers and political actors outside the Holy Land to totally deny any Jewish connection to Jerusalem in general and to the Temple/Haram site specifically.

Not only Palestinians, but many Muslim writers and public figures refer to what they call Haykal Sulayman (Solomon's Temple) as *al-maz'um* (meaning alleged or false). For example, well-known Egyptian writer Abd al-Tawab Mustafa dedicated a book to refuting the idea of a Jewish Temple. He stated in the preface to his book: "The Jews' belief in the temple is no more than a false allegation that does not hold up in the face of scientific criticism, since the Jews' supposed scholarship on the topic is not true scientific research, but rather [a collection of] speculations and hypotheses."

Another Egyptian scholar, archeologist Abd al-Rahim Barakat, wrote in an article that "the legend of the alleged temple is the greatest crime of fabricating history." According to him, David and Solomon had small houses of worship and no connection to a temple, while the Israelites did not in any case adhere to the religion of Solomon, who preached faith in Allah, the one God.

The broad reception that the literature denying the Jewish connection to the Temple Mount enjoys in the Muslim world and its incorporation into Muslim public awareness are evident also in the use that publicists and politicians make of it. Egypt's minister of property, Mahmud Zaqzuq, was quoted in November 1996 as stating that the Jews have no connection to the Western Wall, which, according to him, "was never a holy site for them." He added that no historical evidence exists to support the Jewish claims regarding the existence of Solomon's "alleged" temple anywhere in the city.

Perhaps the plainest words regarding the Jewish attachment to the Western Wall are those of the Israeli head of the Islamic Movement's northern branch, Sheikh Ra'id Salah, from September 2000: "Let us tell the Jewish public frankly: you have no right even to one stone of the blessed Al Aqsa Mosque. You have no right even to one particle of dust of the blessed Al Aqsa Mosque. So let us say frankly: the western wall of Al Aqsa the Blessed is part of Al Aqsa the Blessed... the insistence that Al Aqsa the Blessed be left under Israeli sovereignty is also a declaration of war on the Islamic world." Thus, the denial of any authentic Jewish connection to Jerusalem and its holy sites has been disseminated to, and internalized by, Islamic and Arab communities.

This denial contradicts earlier Islamic writings that underlined the connection of the Muslim Dome of the Rock and the entire compound to Solomon's (Jewish) Temple by individuals such as 11th-century Jerusalem geographer and historian al-Muqddasi and the 14th-century Iranian religious legal sage al-Mustawfi. The writer Abu Bakr al-Wasiti preached at the Al-Aqsa Mosque in the early 11th century and also included various traditions related to the Temple's Jewish past in his work in praise of Jerusalem.

Sheikh Ra'id Salah, in the foreground wearing a keffiyah, leads a protest march in Nazareth last year against Israeli restorative work at the Mograbi Gate near the Western Wall in Jerusalem. [RNS/Reuters photo]

Even in 1929, at the height of the political struggle over the Western Wall, the Supreme Muslim Council's guide to Haram al-Sharif maintained: "Its identity with the site of Solomon's temple is beyond dispute. This, too, is the spot, according to the universal belief, on which David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings (2 Samuel XXIV, 25)." The same appeared in pre-1967 writings of the Palestinian public figure and historian Arif al-Arif, who said that the quarry to the west of the Damascus Gate is called Solomon's Mine because it was from there that David and Solomon brought stones to be used in building the Temple.

Today, the situation is the opposite.

An official book published by the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah in 2002 on the history of the Al Aqsa site makes no mention of the site's sacred status in Judaism. The problem is that even after the Palestinians realized that the denial of the Jews' connection to the holy sites of Jerusalem outraged Israelis, they continued with their denial. It has now taken on a new ethos.

One example from the post-July 2000 period is the statement by the Palestinian mufti Ikrima Sabri in an interview with the Al-Jazeera TV news network that the Western Wall is not a Jewish structure and that the Jews have no connection to it. He added: "Who decided that the Western Wall is a remnant of the temple?" According to Sabri, the Jews began to pray at the Western Wall only during the 19th century, when they began to develop nationalist aspirations.

I believe that there are Muslim academic experts who don't accept this denial, but their opinions are rarely published or publicized. There are also some Israeli scholars and public figures who belittle the role of Jerusalem in Islam. They claim that the city was never politically important or a capital city to Muslim Arabs, and that its sacredness developed relatively late. Israeli writers also tend to ignore the numerous Islamic monuments and artifacts established in Jerusalem by the various Muslim rulers throughout their rule in Palestine. However, they do not deny the holiness of the Al-Aqsa compound and the Islamic affiliation to Old Jerusalem. And unlike the denial in the Arab world, the belittling phenomenon in Israel is not mainstream opinion.

In conclusion, the process of diminishing and denying the Jewish links to the holy places is a problematic phenomenon that hampers the possibility of achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians. In contrast to the Oslo process – which delayed resolving the most difficult issues, including Jerusalem, to the final stages of peace talks – I suggest that negotiations should start with the issue of Jerusalem.

According to Palestinian mufti Ikrima Sabri, the Jews began to pray at the Western Wall only during the 19th century.

Israelis and Palestinians must explore whether the other party is willing to recognize their respective religious and historical connections to Jerusalem and its sacredness in their belief system, regardless of the final settlement formula. This matter is especially important to the Jewish side, which in June 1967 relinquished effective control inside the Temple/Haram compound to the Muslim (and Jordanian controlled) Waqf administration. The Jewish side demands that at least its historical attachment to the site not be denied by Palestinian Muslims. Hence, in order to succeed, any peace process should involve a preliminary phase in which the negotiating parties deliberately express empathy for, and recognition of, the identity interests of the other, as well as its religious and historical role in Jerusalem.

Is there a solution to the Jerusalem problem that all parties can agree upon? I hope to address this question in a later article.

Yitzhak Reiter teaches Middle Eastern studies at Ashkelon Academic College and Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His most recent book is titled Jerusalem and Its Role in Islamic Solidarity.

Opinions

We're our own worst enemies

The Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians (ACJC) presents itself as a coalition that offers an alternative to what it describes as the Jewish establishment's "attitude of blind, unquestioning, loyalty to the policies and actions of Israeli governments."

So, in its presumed benevolence towards a broader community that it believes should know better, and in its efforts to, therefore, educate us on a new paradigm that will bring peace in our time (to the Middle East), the ACJC has begun to blaze a trail toward the nirvana that it brazenly thinks we should all be embracing. Examples of its "achievements" include:

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

- Its condemnation of the creation by our government of a parliamentary "Israel Allies Caucus."
- Its backing of the 2009 "Durban II" United Nations anti-racism conference, which Canada has decided not to attend.
- Its statement of protest to DePaul University for having terminated the contract of Norman Finkelstein, the controversial author of *The Holocaust Industry*.
- Its endorsement of "Israeli Apartheid Week" at Canadian universities.
- Its call for the removal of the Jewish National Fund's charitable status on the grounds that "the JNF has been a major beneficiary of the ethnic cleansing of Palestinians perpetrated by the Israeli state."
- Its support for a May 2006 resolution by the Ontario branch of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) advocating a boycott of Israel.
- Its participation in "Al Nakba" rallies, where its members have marched with an array of groups and organizations that were calling for Israel's demise.
- Its approval of positions that demonize Israel and accuse the Israeli government of "atrocities, war crimes and violations of international law against the Palestinian people."

Given what's known about the ACJC, it comes as no surprise that its following remains small and that it hasn't made any inroads into constructive debate on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "A rump on the edge of Jewish society" is how Canadian Jewish Congress CEO Bernie Farber has described the coalition.

It is, therefore, puzzling that any Jewish institution, particularly one that is assumed to be Zionist, would provide a platform for the likes of the ACJC. And yet that is exactly what almost happened recently in Hamilton, where local ACJC representatives were to be the featured, and only, speakers at a program hosted by one of the city's synagogues that was advertised as "a conversation about Israel and Palestine."

Although the event was subsequently cancelled because of protests from across the local Jewish community, there remains a lingering aftertaste. Why, some are asking, is there a need to validate groups such as the ACJC by providing them with a forum, while knowing full well that they hold opinions that are seen to be so obviously antithetical to the best interests of our community and to the State of Israel?

Schalit case shows value of High Court petitions

I have previously addressed debates raging in Israel regarding limiting our Supreme Court's scope of authority to adjudicate on security-related matters, and about the price to be paid for the release of Gilad Schalit, a soldier captured by Hamas two years ago on the border with Gaza. Recent developments have linked both issues, encouraging renewed discussion.

Yair Loorsteen in Jerusalem

On June 19, a ceasefire began between Israel and the Hamas government in Gaza. As of this writing, the truce could only be described as shaky.

According to the deal, after a period of no rocket attacks, crossing points between Israel and Gaza were to be re-opened to allow a flow of basic supplies into the strip. Additionally, talks on Schalit's release were to be re-started and the re-opening of the Rafah passage between Egypt and Gaza would be contingent on their progress.

Schalit's family was understandably unhappy with the deal. While not abandoning their media campaign, they decided to take their case to the Supreme Court, sitting as the High Court of Justice.

Israel's High Court of Justice is a unique institution. The highest court of the land sits as a court of first instance, primarily in matters regarding the legality of state authorities' decisions. It hears hundreds of petitions yearly, submitted by individuals and groups who continue to see the High Court as a true bastion of justice.

The Schalits asked the court to order the government not to further implement the agreement until their son is released. Their legal arguments were three-pronged. First, they argued that binding executive assurances had been given to them by Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, Defence Minister Ehud Barak and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni that no deal regarding Gaza would be struck if it didn't include Schalit's release. Second, they argued the deal was neither reasonable nor proportional, since it removed the economic leverage that might sway Hamas to release Schalit. Lastly, they said the cabinet's decision-making process had been flawed, because its members thought Schalit's release was part of the deal.

A hearing was set for the morning after the petition was submitted. The court heard attorneys for both sides and was briefed behind closed doors about the current status of negotiations for Schalit's release.

The following day, the court issued a very sensitively written judgment rejecting the petition, mainly on the grounds that the issue at hand, being of a political and diplomatic nature, was not a matter in which the court intervenes. In this vein, it noted that given the rationale for the ceasefire, it was not competent to decide whether the agreement was reasonable or proportional because it didn't require Schalit's release.

The court also found that promises made to the family were a matter of "executive fairness." Referring to precedents, it said that if the government favoured other legitimate public interests for reaching a deal with Hamas over abiding by the personal assurances given to the Schalits, its decision could not be overturned by the court.

Finally, the court reviewed the cabinet's decision-making process. Because of its sensitive nature, its findings on the matter were not made public, with this chapter of its ruling marked "classified." However, based on its findings, the court suggested the cabinet should re-convene to discuss the Schalit matter to ensure that all its aspects were clear and unambiguous.

While this case did not address the price to be paid for Schalit's eventual release, (although it's safe to say that when a deal is finally struck, it, too, will be challenged in the High Court), it's an excellent example of why the court should continue to play a role in such matters.

When overseeing the executive and legislative branches, the court has a pivotal role within the triumviral powers of the state. It understands this role and, as expressed in the Schalit case, acts with restraint, ensuring due process and proportionality in decision-making processes, as well as the protection of human rights.

There has been strong criticism of some of the court's more activist judgments, which struck down particular government actions. While one might not agree with all such decisions, they, too, have had an important role in moulding a special blend of Israeli constitutionalism that we can be proud of.

Most of us hope and pray for Schalit's swift release, notwithstanding the price to be paid. I'm certain our justices feel the same way. His family's case reiterates why no one should curtail their authority.

Obama vs. McCain: an Israeli view

Presidential election campaigns in the United States are always watched closely in Israel, and this is particularly the case after eight years with George W. Bush in the White House.

His record in the Middle East is mixed. His accomplishments include the post 9/11 war against Islamic terror, which led to the belated rejection of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, as well as the removal of Saddam Hussein and the threat of chemical and biological weapons aimed at Tel Aviv. But post-Saddam policy in Iraq was a disaster, and it allowed the Iranian regime to become a dominant force, including acquisition of nuclear weapons technology. And the Bush/Rice ideology naively promoted instant democracy in the Arab world, which legitimized Hamas and weakened the military elite that provides stability in Egypt.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Globally, Bush's stumbling also undermined Washington's credibility and influence, from Venezuela to Pakistan. Power projection resulting from economic success has disintegrated, the dollar and Wall Street have plummeted, and American-led alliances have failed to defeat Al Qaeda or the Taliban. The perception of the United States as a weak and fading world power has also reduced Israel's military credibility and emboldened our enemies.

As a result, as viewed from Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, the U.S. election campaign is different this year. As in the past, Israelis compare the candidates on the basis of experience (advantage Republican John McCain), campaign speeches such as before AIPAC (viewed with some skepticism), as well as personal background (Democrat Barack Obama's friendship with Columbia University's Prof. Rashid Khalidi is one reason for concern). But these are not the most important aspects of the 2008 presidential election.

The key question in assessing the two remaining candidates is which one will restore the United States to the status of a superpower – not only in terms of image, but also in terms of actions and capabilities.

For this, the next president must unify the divided American public and inspire Americans to take the steps necessary to repair their economy, including reducing the huge gap between rich and poor, and improving education. A president who projects confidence, intelligence, and empathy can lead a long-overdue transformation, and here, Obama has the advantage.

History has shown that these steps will also have a major impact in improving America's ability to act effectively around the world. In 1961, John F. Kennedy's stirring speeches projected the image of a confident superpower, sure of its moral mandate and ready to "bear any burden" to defend the cause of freedom. In practice, the inexperience of Kennedy and his advisors led to serious policy blunders, including the 1962 nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union, but America emerged as the undisputed leader and inspiration for citizens in many other countries.

The Vietnam War, the darkness of the Nixon years, and Jimmy Carter's "malaise" undermined this power, but in the 1980s, president Ronald Reagan's clear message and actions restored America's position as the world leader and sped the demise of the Soviet empire. As the close ally of the United States, Israel's deterrence capabilities also benefited.

On this score, Obama's energy and racial background can unite and inspire Americans, and his election will revive the glow of American democracy around the world. This must be weighed against Obama's thin track record, dubious ex-advisers including Zbigniew Bzrezinski and Samantha Powers, and the naiveté in calls for unconditional negotiations with Iranian leaders. Recently, Obama has sought to offset this image by speaking more about the need for security and military power.

In contrast, McCain's strengths and understanding of Middle Eastern and global realities result from his experience, including fighting in Vietnam and his period as a prisoner of war. His weaknesses result from a personality and vision that do not inspire, and he will be seen by many as a continuation of the Bush era.

These dimensions, taken together, make for a difficult choice for Americans, while Israelis watch with more than usual interest. If the result produces a stronger America, this should also benefit other democracies around the world, including Israel.

The Kirshner File

A cornucopia of books...

Publishers always aim to please. That is their raison d'etre, after all. The books under review, ranging from a comprehensive account on Jerusalem to a lavishly illustrated compendium on the Canadian-born modernist American architect Frank Gehry, will probably satisfy a fairly wide range of fickle tastes. So sit back, enjoy the fleeting summer weather and read to your heart's content.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Jerusalem is a storied metropolis of diverse faiths and clashing historical narratives. Simon Goldhill, a professor of Greek at Cambridge University, examines it in *Jerusalem: City of Longing* (Harvard University Press). Ambitious to a fault, Goldhill investigates its most important religious and secular sites, from the biblical era to the present day, through the prism of history, architecture and archeology.

Casting his eyes on, among other places, the Western Wall and the Temple Mount, he gives a reader the kind of tour that only an expert could provide.

More than a century ago, the American novelist Herman Melville wrote, "Jerusalem is besieged by an army of the dead." What he meant is that Jerusalem has been ruled by a multitude of conquerors. Bernard Wasserstein, a British scholar, skilfully delves into that topic in the third edition of *Divided Jerusalem: The Struggle for the Holy City* (Yale University Press). Bringing a balanced approach to the task, he analyzes Jerusalem's importance to Jews, Christians and Muslims and observes it under British, Jordanian and Israeli administration.

Batya Gur's last detective novel before her untimely death in 2005, *Murder in Jerusalem* (HarperCollins), unfolds in sizzling fashion after the corpse of a woman is discovered in a warehouse at Israel Television. Gur has a knack for engaging a reader, and her feel for Jerusalem is unerring.

Bernard Avishai, a sharp and seasoned Canadian scholar, poses tough, unavoidable questions in *The Hebrew Republic* (Harcourt).

"Obviously, Israel cannot maintain an occupation [in the West Bank], denying a great many people political rights and remain democratic in any ordinary sense," he writes. And in a reference to the disaffected Israeli Arab minority, he observes, "But there is an even more disturbing problem... Can a state for world Jewry be a republic of its citizens, many of whom are non-Jews?" In short, Avishai believes that Israel must become a more complete democracy if it is to enjoy a peaceful future.

Despite the promise of the Oslo accords, Israel and the Palestinians have yet to resolve their devilishly difficult dispute. In the third edition of *Israelis and Palestinians. Why Do They Fight? Can They Stop?* (Yale University Press), historian Bernard Wasserstein focuses on three neglected forces – demographic, economic and social – that have both shaped the conflict and made Israelis and Palestinians so interdependent. This book may force you to re-examine your basic assumptions.

Mark Werner, an American lawyer, describes his tours as a volunteer at Israeli military bases in *Army Fatigues: Joining Israel's Army of International Volunteers* (Devora Publishing). Offering an insider's view of the Israeli armed forces and of volunteers like himself, he looks at the everyday lives of soldiers and civilians.

If you're an ancient history buff, *The Forts of Judaea 168 BC-AD 73* (Osprey) is for you. This an illustrated primer on Hasmonaean and Herodian fortifications spanning the period from the Maccabean revolt to the Roman-Jewish war. The author, Samuel Rocca, is an archeologist trained in Israel.

Lawrence Freedman's *A Choice of Enemies: America Confronts the Middle East* (Doubleday) falls under the category of mandatory reading. A professor of war studies at King's College in London, he discusses the United States' political and military role in the region from the presidency of Jimmy Carter onward. Focusing on three hot spots, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan, he shows with admirable erudition how they have influenced each other. He adds that the region's problems cannot all be traced to the Arab-Israeli dispute.

If Islamic radicalism is one of the ills that besets the Middle East today, then Osama bin Laden – the spiritual leader of Al Qaeda – is surely its chief personification.

Two new books deal with that issue in bracing style. *The Bin Ladens: An Arabic Family in the American Century* (Penguin Press), by Steve Coll, turns on the Yemenite clan that produced a monster of epic proportions. *Al Qaeda in Its Own Words* (Harvard University Press), edited by Gilles Kepel and Jean-Pierre Milelli, is a selection of speeches, Internet postings and published writings from Al Qaeda leaders. Read these polemics and sink into despair.

Once upon a time, Christians, Jews and Muslims coexisted in Spain. In *A Vanished World* (Oxford University Press), Chris Lowney re-examines this epoch, tracing the respective contribution of each group to medieval Spain. Cuba's Jewish community, past and present, is the subject of Ruth Behar's soulful meditation, *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba* (Rutgers University Press). Behar, born in Havana and now teaching anthropology at the University of Michigan, concentrates on the Jews who remained after Fidel Castro's accession to power. Her text is complemented by Humberto Mayol's evocative black and white photographs.

Omer Bartov's *Erased: Vanished Traces of Jewish Galicia in Present-Day Ukraine* (Princeton University Press) is a journey into "a black hole." He recreates the history of Jewish communities in that remote corner of Europe, including his own family's background, while juxtaposing it against the backdrop of Ukraine's construction of heroic monuments to glorify leaders who collaborated with the Nazis.

Who's Who in the Jewish Bible (Jewish Publication Society of America), by David Mandel, puts some 3,000 biblical figures, from Aaron to Zuriel, at your fingertips. Doubtlessly a handy reference book.

Sixty-three years after Adolf Hitler blew out his brains in a Berlin bunker, *Life and Death in the Third Reich* (Harvard University Press), by Peter Fritzsche, intelligently explores the appeal of Nazism and the extent to which Germans knew about the murder of Jews. A worthy companion volume by Wolfgang Benz, *A Concise History of the Third Reich* (University of California Press), deals with these and other issues. Stanley Payne's excellent *Franco and Hitler: Spain, Germany and World War II* (Yale University Press) tackles four interrelated themes: Franco's relationship with Hitler; Spain's decision not to enter the war; Spain's ties with Nazi Germany; and Franco's assistance, or lack thereof, to Jews.

The Changing Face of Anti-Semitism (Oxford University Press), by Walter Laqueur, is a tour de force of compression.

Holocaust memoirs continue to proliferate. *The Zookeeper's Wife* (W.W. Norton), by Diane Ackerman, is the amazing story of a Catholic Polish couple who saved more than 300 Jews.

My Hometown Concentration Camp: A Survivor's Account of Life in the Krakow Ghetto and Plaszow Concentration Camp (Vallentine Mitchell) is by Bernard Offen, a survivor whose strength and grit shine through his tale of adversity.

And in *Becoming My Mother's Daughter* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press), Erika Gottlieb summons up a traumatic childhood in Nazi-occupied Hungary and writes about a rededicated life in Canada.

Frank O. Gehry. Selected Works: 1969 to the Present (Firefly Books), by Casey Mathewson, celebrates the achievements of an iconic architect. *Masterpieces of European Painting, 1800-1920, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (Yale University Press) dazzles the senses.

Lonely Planet's guidebooks, distributed in Canada by Raincoast Books, are always useful and fun to read, both before and during your trip. Their newest ones, *Italy*, *Rome*, *Tuscany & Umbria*, *London* and *Hong Kong & Macau*, keep faith with that proud tradition.

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Number of faith groups join in celebration

Continued from pge 3

The Temple Kol Ami choir accompanied the service, which was followed by a buffet dinner and the multicultural entertainment.

Members of seven faith groups, including Catholic, Muslim, Baha'i and Hindu, came to celebrate with the synagogue. B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah works together with them on a tikkun olam project through the Community of Faiths Against AIDS in Africa, which supports agencies in Africa such as the Stephen Lewis Foundation.

Like most teens, B'nai Shalom V'Tikvah has had its growing pains. Beginning in 1994-95 as Jewish Families of Durham, a fledgling group of 15 families, founders and original members Joanie Gertler, Barry Picov, Ely Edelson and Harley Saltzman thought about taking things a step further and began searching for a home.

With the help of Rabbi Gottleib, who was then executive director of CCRJ, the group approached churches and other groups in the Pickering and Ajax area. They finally met with St. Paul's United Church members, who agreed to rent out space to the congregation and offered flexibility and assistance to help transform the sanctuary from church to synagogue on Shabbat and holidays.

This transformation includes importing a Magen David wall-covering and an Aron Kodesh for the bimah, and removing or covering items such as mantlecloths, hanging banners and a large cross.

"St. Paul's congregation has been warm and welcoming to us," King says. "We do our best to respect their house of worship."

Durham Region's B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah board members are seen at the shul's recent bar/bat mitzvah celebration. From left are Joanie Gertler, Esther Jackson, David Cohen, Ken Daniels, Paula Rudner, Ron King, Deborah MacKinnon-Lesk and Roz Chasler.

They have an arrangement for the High Holy Days in 2009 when Rosh Hashanah falls on a Sunday, so that both can worship on the same day. The church will have its service earlier in the day, and the shul members will move theirs a little later.

The two congregations also enjoy joint programming – Bible and Torah study throughout the year – and every other year, the shul hosts a second night Passover seder with members of the church.

"It's really a unique arrangement," King says. "There are not too many other synagogues doing what we're doing in Ontario, let alone in Canada."

B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah prides itself on its progressive programming for its members, for example yoga classes with the rabbi (who was once a consultant to the federal government in yoga, meditation and altered states of consciousness), completely egalitarian services and adult education focused on tikkun olam and modern perspectives.

The congregation has two services a month – one on Erev Shabbat, and one on Saturday with Torah study and a Shabbat service. Services are interactive and often led by members.

Hebrew school for children in kindergarten to Grade 7 is offered at the same time and place as adult education classes, making it convenient for parents to attend without worrying about babysitting.

In addition, there are synagogue activities for festivals and holidays. A Purim carnival was held, and a fun-filled family Chanukah event saw the congregation work together to create and spin what they claim is the world's largest dreidel. As part of the broader Jewish community, the congregation participates in such Toronto events as the Walk with Israel, the Ashkenaz Festival and Israel Day.

There are now 55 families involved in B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah. Congregants come from a number of different backgrounds: Conservative, Reform, Jews by choice, Israelis, mixed marriages, families with non-Canadian adopted children and gay/lesbian couples and singles. Some members are people considering conversion to Judaism. There is also a small group of single adults who have moved east of the GTA to find affordable real estate.

The shul tries to make everyone feel welcome, even offering "buddy arrangements" for newcomers who might not feel comfortable attending a service on their own.

The synagogue has grown via word of mouth and hopes to reach out to some 1,700 Jewish people who now call Durham Region home, including Clarington, Markham and eastern Scarborough.

"We've not yet reached everyone in Durham who is Jewish," says Harley Saltzman, one of the founding members. "We want to see continued growth and for the synagogue to make its presence known in Durham."

The community response to the bar/bat mitzvah celebration suggests that they are on their way. The congregation recently formed a building search committee to lay the groundwork for a new home. Visit B'Nai Shalom V'Tikvah's website at http://www.rjweb-builder.org/congs/cd/cd006/ .

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Conference addresses healing through prayer

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Judaism makes a distinction between curing and healing, said Rabbi Dow Marmur, rabbi emeritus of Holy Blossom Temple, at a conference sponsored by the Toronto Jewish Healing Project, held last month at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

"A lot of people are cured but not healed, and vice versa," he said at a workshop following the keynote address by Beth Tzedec Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl.

The Toronto Jewish Healing Project, co-ordinated by Etta Ginsberg McEwan, is now under the auspices of Jewish Family & Child as part of its chaplaincy. It offers a variety of coping skills and techniques, including singing, psalms, meditating and the studying of sacred texts.

Rabbi Marmur, a member of the healing project's steering committee, said too many people believe solely in the cure. "We need to learn to embrace life despite the pain. We must heal enough so we can face life as is."

The group uses the term "healing" instead of "healed," he said because healing is a continuous process.

By taking the healing project under its umbrella, he said, JF&C has recognized that the agency has a role beyond social work. "They have to help people cope in various situations."

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said that incorporating the healing project into JF&C is a big development because it moves it from the margins into our organizational structure. "The project has not yet caught fire, but it has been good for many people."

Through prayer, he said, we may all be comforted. "We all have times when we need someone to take care of us. We might come home and cocoon, we might go to someone with a hug, or we might go to synagogue to hear some familiar melodies. [These things] allow us to go to a safe place and then go forward."

In praying, he said, we need to get in touch with our deep feelings, and put them into words.

We all need a place to sulk, he said, "and praying is a time in which we can go back and recognize our needy selves and get replenished."

He said Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, founder of Reconstructionist Judaism, said that prayer is a form of self-examination, the raising of the best part of oneself.

"He also saw prayer as [performing] a social function, as helping to build a community. The sense of singing and music brings people together."

He added that Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, a 20th-century philosopher and teacher, says that we are able to pray because of historical precedent. "Prayer allows us to approach God. [Otherwise] we would be silent."

Citing Constantin Stanislavski, a Russian theatre director from the early 20th century, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said that when on stage, actors have to move beyond the external representation of acting. "They have to go deep into their persona and bring that onto stage."

In prayer, as well, he said, we need to get in touch with our deep feelings and put them in words. "We have to take our emotions and conjure them up."

He said Chassidim believe that when praying, we should concentrate on the words being said until we see the light. "We shouldn't just recite the prayers, but we should go right into them. We are supposed to strip our souls of earthly clothing and garb ourselves in the words of prayer."

Whatever a person's interpretation of prayer, he said, "we find our own way. Prayer is a vehicle for transcending oneself and for coming together on an emotional level."

The conference also included an experiential workshop using the techniques of prayer, meditation and spiritual direction to discern God's voice, a workshop on making prayers more effective, and a service of healing led by Temple Kol Ami Rabbi Daniel Komito-Gottlieb and Dawn Bernstein.

Couple launches campaign in memory of son

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

A Toronto couple has raised $90,000 in the past two months to help a school in Israel, in memory of their son. The amount brings them halfway toward their goal of renovating the science labs at Yeshivat Hadarom's junior high and high school in Rehovot. The schools serve about 600 local students.

Jake and Vivian Anhang, along with a 30-person tribute committee including their daughter in Israel and son in Washington, D.C., are working to make the Eli Anhang Memorial Laboratories a reality.

Jake Anhang said he had hoped the campaign would be completed earlier, in order not to conflict with other campaigns, and, also, so that the school would be able to do the renovations over the summer, before classes start again in the fall.

Yeshivat Hadarom, which combines Jewish and general studies, is under the auspices of the Rabbinical Council of America. The complex also includes a hesder yeshiva – the first in Israel to combine Torah studies with army service – and a teachers' college, as well as a nearby youth village and school.

Eli Anhang was killed in an accident two years ago at the age of 35, during a visit to New York. The father of two children who are now 6 and 9 years old, he worked in the high tech security field and was an alumnus of Associated Hebrew Schools and Or Chaim. He also attended Eitz Chaim Day School and Ner Israel Yeshiva.

In a letter that was sent to potential donors as part of a fundraising flyer, the Anhangs, who are already supporters of Yeshivat Hadarom, noted that Eli had a "profound love" for Israel, and that people remember his "constant smile and concern for others."

Eli Anhang

Two rabbis who are affiliated with the institution - Rabbi Hersh Galinsky, dean of Yeshivat Hadarom and Gan Yavneh Youth Village schools, whom the Anhangs had hosted when he visited Toronto; and Rabbi Menachem Gopin, a former director of Mizrachi Canada from 1983 to 1999 and the school's associate director general – had informed the Anhangs of a need to renovate the science wing.

The more the Anhangs heard, the more they thought that creating the "Eli Anhang Memorial Laboratories" at the school would be an appropriate way to memorialize their son, Jake told *The CJN*.

The current science labs, which are almost 50 years old, are still the original labs, "and even then they had done them on a shoestring," said Anhang, who has visited the institution twice in the past two years with his wife.

Anhang said they were "quite impressed with the decorum and behaviour of the kids." The school is also noted for its high academic standards, reflected in the bagrut (matriculation) scores of its graduating students, Rabbi Gopin said.

The project is "a tremendous mitzvah on the part of the Anhang family, and a wonderful memorial to Eli," said Rabbi Galinsky, who remembers Eli as "a wonderful, thoughtful young man." The laboratory wing will incorporate biology, physics and computer facilities.

Rabbi Gopin, who taught at Or Chaim when Eli was a student and whose son was a classmate of his, said he was "a very special young man. He always had a smile on his face... [and] a glint in his eye. There was always something bigger that he wanted to do in the future, something he was looking forward to."

Yeshivat Hadarom is "a terrific place," said Rabbi Moshe Stern of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, a member of the tribute committee. A letter he wrote to potential donors noted Eli's "endearing nature [and] sensitive soul" as well as "the goodness of his heart." The rabbi hopes the project will serve as "a continuing force in memory of Eli."

For further information about the campaign or to contribute to it, call 416-633-7677 or contact Canadian Friends of Yeshivat Hadarom at 2 Neptune Drive, Apt. 510, Toronto, Ontario M6A 3E6.

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Jewish Life

Toronto man spearheads Polish cemetery restoration

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Toronto lawyer Howard Nightingale has been the driving force behind the restoration of an old abandoned Jewish cemetery in Siedleczka, Poland, that will be officially rededicated in a ceremony set for Aug. 17.

Nightingale and representatives of numerous other Toronto Jewish families plan to be in attendance, along with many townsfolk and notable visitors, including the town's mayor and possibly the chief rabbi of Poland.

Nightingale, whose late mother survived the Holocaust as a hidden child in the nearby village of Gac, first stumbled upon the cemetery seven years ago and was shocked at its state of disrepair.

The site was completely overgrown with weeds, the perimeter walls had disappeared, and many of the tombstones were broken or laid in piles.

"We said *Kaddish* at the cemetery," Nightingale recalled. "There was a mass grave at the bottom of the hill – Jews of the town were rounded up and shot in 1942. The records show 892 Jews were shot.

"There was a marker at the bottom of the hill which was completely overgrown. We had difficulty in even finding it, but my cousin knew about it. At that time, we all agreed that something should be done."

Nazis used tombstones to pave roads

The one-acre cemetery was established about 1850 and may have been the last resting place for members of Nightingale's family who died prior to World War II. During the war, the Nazis used some of the tombstones as paving stones on the road.

Convinced that the long Jewish presence in Poland deserves to be honoured and remembered, Nightingale began raising funds for the project. More than $22,000 came from five families with relatives in Siedleczka and its surrounding shtetls of Kanczuga, Zagorze, Gac, Manasterz, Białoboki, Chmielnik, Jawornik Polski and Zabratówka. Eventually, about $54,000 was raised.

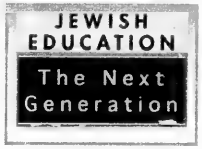
Although Nightingale soon realized the difficulty in co-ordinating the restoration by long distance, vital assistance came from the Poland Jewish Cemetery Restoration Project, now administered by the Foundation for the Preservation of Jewish Heritage in Poland, and from Norman Weinberg, a Buffalo-area man with expertise in similar restoration projects.

Many Toronto-area Jewish families likely have roots in the Siedleczka region. The town is located in southeastern Poland, about 170 miles southeast of Warsaw. For more information on the cemetery and to see some tombstones online, visit www.Siedleczka.org.

Reading to feed the Jewish mind

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

This summer's reading list of books for the inquiring Jewish mind is headed by two new releases by Avi Sagi, a professor in the department of philosophy at Bar-Ilan University. In *The Open Canon*, Sagi displays his vast knowledge of rabbinic literature to offer a compelling argument regarding the nature of halachah. The book is organized around one central inquiry: how can the Torah, with its myriad of interpretations, be closely linked with divinity when "human strands are so closely woven into its fabric." Can the central religious texts of Judaism be authoritative if God's word is filtered through human perception?



And in *Transforming Identity*, Sagi analyzes with care and precision the history of conversion literature in the Jewish canon. Given recent events in Israel, where a religious court ruling has raised the possibility of thousands of conversions becoming retroactively invalid, Sagi's work should be required reading for anyone who wants a nuanced and sophisticated understanding of the regnant issues. It is both illuminating and surprising in the best sense.

Charles Taylor, professor emeritus of Philosophy at McGill University and one of the leading philosophical thinkers alive today, has published a monumental work that encapsulates many of the themes he has been writing about for decades. In *A Secular Age*, Taylor ruminates on the changes that modernity has brought for faith and about the tantalizing search for spirituality in an age where science and the drive for autonomy have led to widespread abandonment of traditional religion, at least in the West. Spanning centuries of religious currents, the book is unafraid to pose big questions and struggle with their ramifications.

There is a voluminous Holocaust literature already extant, including numerous memoirs and personal accounts. A plainly written and quietly gripping testimony comes from Rabbi Naphtali Lau-Lavie, entitled *Balaam's Prophecy*. The Lau family need no introduction in Israel: Naphtali's younger brother Yisrael Meir Lau is a former Ashkenazi chief rabbi and the author's son is Benny Lau, a well-known figure in religious Zionist circles. In this book, published in 1993 in Hebrew and translated into English five years later, Rabbi Lau tells of his efforts, as a boy, to save himself and his younger brother in the wake of the murder of his parents. The narrative also traces his life after the war in the Land of Israel, as well as the United States.

In a recent interview, the playwright Vaclav Havel, who went on to become the president of the Czech Republic, noted that even with the downfall of the Soviet Union and the heady rush of freedom that this brought to millions of people, "unfortunately, we have not succeeded in creating a better world." The best and worse impulses of humanity are movingly recorded by Dr. James Orbinski in *An Imperfect Offering*, his passionate discussion of humanitarian action in the 21st century. One of the founders of the Canadian chapter of Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders), Orbinski served tirelessly in Rwanda at the height of the 1994 genocide. The book chronicles the agonizing medical and moral dilemmas he faced on a regular basis and challenges the reader not only to consider the question of how to alleviate suffering, but what our role in perfecting the world can and must be.

Jewish Life

Julian Barnes meditates on mortality

***There Is Nothing To Be Afraid Of* by Julian Barnes, Random House.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

Many and varied are views and attitudes about death.

Emily Dickinson wrote: "Because I could not stop for death, he kindly stopped for me."

In his play *Julius Caesar*, Shakespeare wrote:"Cowards die many times before their deaths;/ The valiant never taste of death but once./ Of all the wonders that I yet have heard/ It seems to me most strange that men should fear/ Seeing that death, a necessary end,/ Will come when it will come."

William Hazlitt suggested that perhaps the best cure for the fear of death is to reflect that life has a beginning as well as an end. There was a time when we were not, this gives us no concern; why then should it trouble that a time will come when we shall cease to be?

These thoughts on mortality come uneasily to mind after reading *There Is Nothing To Be Afraid Of*. In this, his 15th book, Julian Barnes confesses that sometimes the fear of death assails him in the night when he is pitchforked back into consciousness. Suddenly he is "awake, utterly alone, beating pillow with fist and shouting, "Oh no, oh no, oh no."

Now at 62, Barnes has written a book about many things: history, religion, art, literature and family relations – but mainly about our inescapable mortality.

A liberal portion of the book is given over to his relationship with his parents and older brother. In a recent interview, he said: "I'm a novelist and therefore ideas have to be rooted in people. If I'm going to write about death, I'm not equipped to write in a general, theoretical, argumentative, philosophical book about it – that's not how I write. It has to be connected to me and therefore also my parents, because my experience of people I knew well, dying, is of their dying."

Barnes used to be an atheist but is now an agnostic. He admires Jules Reynard, the 19th-century French author, who said: "I don't know if God exists. But it would be better for his reputation if he didn't."

Barnes admits: "I don't believe in God, but I miss him." And insists that you have to be very foolish to suppose that the generations who believed in God were less intelligent than your own.

The author indicates that of all the professions, medicine is the one most likely to attract people with high anxieties about dying. This is good news in one sense to know that doctors are against death, but less good in that they may unwittingly transfer their own fears onto their patients, over-insist on curability and shun death as failure.

Barnes considers the popular poetic image that compares human life to a bird flying from darkness into a brightly lit banquet hall and then flying out into the dark on the farther side. He writes: "This image doesn't work for me. It's pretty enough, but the pedantic side of me keeps wanting to point out that any right-thinking bird flying into a warm banqueting hall would perch on the rafters as long as it bloody well could, rather than head straight out again. Moreover, the bird, in its pre- and post-existence on either side of the carousing hall, is at least still flying, which is more than can or will be said for us."

Dylan Thomas famously instructed his dying father – and all of us – "Do not go gentle into that good night. Rage, rage against the dying of the light." This advice, maintains Barnes, "speaks more of youthful grief and poetic self-congratulation than wisdom based on clinical knowledge."

He refers to Sherwin Nuland, an American surgeon who wrote the book *How We Die*. Nuland stated plainly: "No matter the degree to which a man thinks he has convinced himself that the process of dying is not to be dreaded, he will yet approach his final illness with dread – gentleness and serenity are unlikely to be his option."

Long-lived Bertrand Russell remained an atheist into his old age. He was asked, what if the Pearly Gates were not a fantasy, and he found himself faced by a deity he had always denied? "Well," Russell used to reply: "I would go up to Him and say, 'You didn't give me enough evidence.'"

Despite its forbidding subject, this book is often witty and provocative, rather than morbid and depressing.

Unhappily, there is no way to elude the harvesting angel with his scythe, but this protean book provides alternative avenues and approaches on how to face the inevitable.

Jewish genetic screening

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Today, we look at Jewish genetic screening and related controversies.

I must emphasize that although you can find a wealth of information about genetic screening online, the Internet must *not* be considered a substitute for trusted medical or rabbinic experts who are familiar with your particular circumstances. Also, pay close attention to the credentials of the authors of anything you read on the web. Not every one is a reliable or accurate source of information.

"Why is this gene different from all other genes?" That's the name of a conference that examined scientific, ethical and religious genetic issues facing Jews. Dr. Robert Pollack, a professor of biological sciences, says that advances in decoding the human genome have allowed us to develop new screening tests for genetic diseases found among Ashkenazi Jews.

But those advances also open a Pandora's box of ethical dilemmas. Should a couple considering marriage opt for genetic testing? What should they do if they receive heartbreaking results? Can insurance companies require genetic testing results?

The conference was organized by the Association of Orthodox Jewish Scientists, whose website has many thought-provoking articles geared to both scientific and general audiences. **[aojs.org]** The association recorded the conference and has made it available online. It is accessible to the layperson. Part 1: **[tinyurl.com/5lu9gb]**; Part 2: **[tinyurl.com/5f255s]**; Part 3: **[tinyurl.com/5rt7uq]**.

One of the greatest fears about genetic testing is the stigma that could occur if someone is known to be a carrier of a disease. A fascinating article in *The Jewish Homemaker* magazine looks at the Brooklyn-based organization, Dor Yeshorim. **[tinyurl.com/4cyjrd]** Dor Yeshorim tests young men and women before they begin to date. If both are carriers for a certain disorder, they are told their prospective union is "not advisable." No one is told if he or she is a carrier, only that both people must look for another match. The organization was created by Rabbi Joseph Eckstein, who lost four children to Tay-Sachs disease between 1965 and 1983. **[tinyurl.com/4d59ve]**

The Dor Yeshorim method has gained wide acceptance in Brooklyn's Orthodox community and has been credited in helping to virtually eliminate Tay-Sachs among Jews. **[tinyurl.com/3n4lur]**

But it has also been criticized by Rabbi Moshe Tendler, a rosh yeshiva and professor of Jewish medical ethics at New York's Yeshiva University. **[tinyurl. com/42un4d]** Rabbi Tendler has concerns with mass screening programs since finding a genetic defect "can lead to discrimination by insurance companies, employers and others [who are] looking to be married." Rabbi Tendler is also quoted in a lengthy and critical article that appeared on the *New Atlantis* magazine's website titled Eugenics – Sacred and Profane. **[tinyurl.com/489r3p]**

Aish HaTorah's website also includes an article about Dor Yeshorim and genetic screening. But what caught my eye was the response to the piece from a woman named Lillian. She explains that after she and her fiancé were tested and found to be carriers for Tay-Sachs, they received permission from their rabbi to go ahead and use contraception during their marriage. Over the years, they went on to adopt seven children – as well as give birth to an eighth child after an unexpected pregnancy. Lillian says she has no regrets. "It wasn't an easy path. But nothing good comes easily. Yes, it's easy to say goodbye [to a fiancé] because having a family might be more difficult than usual. But the rewards are far more reaching." **[tinyurl.com/4m9t75]**

However, the decision by Lillian and her husband to marry and use contraception in order to prevent pregnancy wasn't acceptable to the next person to comment at the Aish site. Judith said that by choosing to adopt, a man cannot fulfil his Torah obligation to have children. "There is only one way to fulfil this mitzvah and that is by having your own, biological children, a minimum of a boy and a girl who go on to have children of their own."

For more on this topic, check out the links at the Chicago Center for Jewish Genetic Disorders. **[http://tinyurl.com/53zz79]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Family celebrates 100 years in Canada

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

It has been 100 years since the first of the Borovoy clan arrived in Canada, and about 150 family members came together recently to mark the occasion and meet extended relatives at the 70th annual family reunion.

The 2008 Borovoy Picnic took place June 22 at Ballantrae Community Centre, in Stouffville, Ont.

The Borovoys came from a town called Krugloe (also known as Kroile), which was in the Mogilev province of what is now Belarus. Velvel and Freida Borovoy put down roots in Elora, Ont., in 1908.

Eight families came from that couple, with the names Borovoy, Garshowitz, Avruskin and Taraday. The descendants of the original eight Borovoy siblings now number several hundred people who live in Mexico, the United States and Canada, with about 80 living in Israel.

They include authors, engineers, amateur genealogists and recording artists, among many other professions.

Fred Borovoy, 73, took part in the family's first reunion in 1938, when he was the youngest of some 45 first cousins. His father, Sol, was one of the eight original siblings in the clan. Although Fred has lived in Israel for 34 years, he has attended a reunion or has visited relatives in Canada regularly since 1978.

Pictured at the recent Borovoy family reunion, from left, are Matthew Schmidt, Nancy Schmidt, Anissa Katz, May Lay, Ari Katz, Anita Freedland and Amber Gibson.

"This is very emotional for me. It's good to see all of these relatives and good to see that there are still some second-generation [members of the original Elora Borovoys]," he said. "This is especially good for the younger generation to see where they come from."

Fred graduated from the University of Toronto's engineering program and went on to make aliyah. In Israel, he plied his trade in the Israeli military and for the country's atomic energy program. He has also spent the past 34 years as a volunteer police officer.

"It's good to see everybody and have the kids involved with the family," said Steven Borovoy, 55, who lives in Manotick, Ont., near Ottawa. "It's exciting to find out what's going on and watch the kids grow, with each year."

As chief of maintenance at Transport Canada, he manages the fleet of aircraft owned and operated by the Canadian government, including the fleets of the Canadian Coast Guard, the maritime surveillance program and the arctic surveillance program.

His daughter, Julia, was the youngest participant 20 years ago, at the 50th annual reunion. "I found this year's picnic to be a great way to meet relatives we haven't seen in years," she said. "We have the panoramic photo from 20 years ago, when I was just three weeks old, and my family was looking at it along with our 2008 panoramic photo... When I show these photos to friends, they're amazed. All of the little kids have grown, especially me."

Gord Garshowitz, 63, who teaches part time at Toronto's Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot high schools, recalls attending reunions as far back as 55 years ago. They often took place at a farm near Guelph, Ont., owned by the Avruskin family.

"I can remember as a kid going to those reunions," he said. "There were also local reunions that my family used to go to."

Hartley Garshowitz, 52, has spent the past 20 years compiling an extensive family tree that goes back about 180 years. The tree, displayed at the reunion, now includes 5,400 names and contains 44 pages.

"It's important to know one's roots," he said. "Knowing family background and maintaining contact with one's extended family helps keep us together. It really is a small world."

Hartley's grandmother, Sarah Borovoy Garshowitz, came through Ellis Island in 1908 on her way to join other family members who had come over just before. She was joining her older sister, Dora, who had already settled in Canada with her husband, Samuel Avruskin.

This year's reunion culminated in the opening of a time capsule that was sealed 20 years ago. It included name tags from the 1988 reunion, a sign-in book from the reunion, various letters to relatives, a genealogy chart, a driver's licence from 1982, some old photographs and a family history book.

Advertising feature

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By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

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Greater Toronto Area

Israel earns praise for diplomatic efforts

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The recent flurry of diplomatic activity from Israel has attracted a fair amount of media coverage. Among the initiatives: overtures, by way of Turkey, to Syria about resuming peace talks; an effort to reach out to the Lebanese government; indirect negotiations with Hezbollah about a prisoner exchange, and indirect negotiations with Hamas about a ceasefire.

The *New York Times*, which has never shied away from criticizing Israel, began its June 30 editorial, "Israel's Diplomatic Offensive," by praising the Jewish state for these diplomatic moves.

The paper, however, was not blindly enthusiastic, writing that "[t]here are clear risks." It continued: "Hamas may not respect or enforce the ceasefire; there have been almost daily violations. Syria may be as unbudging as it had been in past negotiations. Hezbollah may block talks or use them to buy time to build up its armaments and political leverage. [Israeli Prime Minister Ehud] Olmert, politically weak and legally besieged, may not have the staying power to see any of these initiatives through."

Nonetheless, the *Times* argued, Israel is "right to try."

Indeed, memory apparently being in short supply, many in the media tend to forget all the efforts Israel has made over the years to strike agreements with its Arab neighbours: Egypt in 1979; Jordan in 1994; the Palestinians through the Oslo years from 1993 to 2000; repeated negotiations with Syria under its former president, Hafez Assad.

Instead, journalists tend to focus on the drama of day-to-day conflict.

Notwithstanding a predictable amount of cynicism about Olmert's motives, given his personal legal difficulties, what he's doing now on the diplomatic front is consistent with longstanding Israeli policy. However, Iran's increasing influence on countries and parties that border Israel – including Syria, Hezbollah in Lebanon, Hamas and Islamic Jihad in Gaza – may limit Israel's negotiating options, according to some experts.

In "Peace Offensive" (July 9), *New Republic* editor-in-chief Martin Peretz called it "a stunner" that Terry Larsen, the former United Nations special envoy to the Middle East and an often severe critic of Israel, "lambasted Israel for its recent negotiations with Syria."

Peretz quoted Larsen as saying: "Israel has given Syria a huge gift, without thus far receiving anything in return."

Peretz wrote that, in exchange for Israel relinquishing the strategic Golan Heights to Damascus, "there are only two concessions worth getting… detaching Syria from Iran and… lifting Syria's hold over Beirut." Yet Syrian President Bashar Assad has indicated that his regime's relationship with Iran won't change.

The fundamental point is that if someone such as Larsen has come to Israel's defence, this is a clear indication that at least some important international attitudes toward the Jewish state are shifting in its favour.

* * *

The Canadian media reported on the controversy and raw emotion that the prisoner exchange deal between Israel and Hezbollah aroused in Israel. The fact that Israel agreed to release a heinous killer, Samir Kuntar, without even knowing for sure the fate of kidnapped Israeli soldiers Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, struck many Israelis as setting a dangerous precedent for more such kidnappings.

On CBC Radio (June 29), Iris Makler quoted Israeli politician and peace activist Yossi Beilin: "I think our worst mistake was to negotiate and agree to terms without knowing if our soldiers are alive or dead."

Israel's commitment to leave no soldier on the battlefield – even if dead – was poignantly explained in *The CJN*'s July 3 editorial, "Wretched choices": "This promise, this belief in the sanctity of life is the elevating quality and timeless, eternal value that give Israeli society its strength and resilience. And it is precisely this quality and this value that distinguishes the Jewish state from the cruel enemies it fights."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

ENJOYING THE OUTDOORS: Hundreds of families came out for a day of fun at the recent Zareinu Moveathon Festival in Downsview Park, which raised money for the Zareinu Educational Centre for children with special needs in the community.

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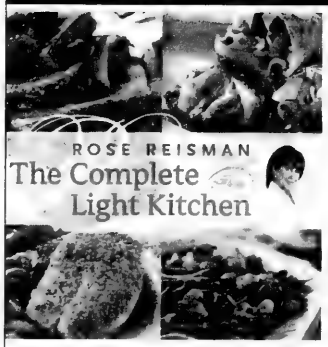

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A.V. Israel promotes services for deaf children

Organization seeks cochlear implants for those who need them

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

When Elaine Tal-El's twin daughters, now 18, were diagnosed with profound hearing loss at age two, she not only did what she could to help them, she helped deaf children across Israel.

An independent filmmaker who immigrated to Israel from Canada in 1980, Tal-El, whose twins are the youngest of four daughters, is the co-founder and chair of A.V. Israel, a nonprofit organization that seeks cochlear implants for everyone who needs them and the mainstreaming of hearing-impaired children.

In Toronto recently to raise awareness and funds for the organization, Tal-El said that after facing the shock of her daughters' diagnosis, she researched services in Israel and found the approach to deaf children to be "backwards."

"We were told the girls would never be like their sisters, and we were advised to have them learn to lip read, which is a very tricky way of learning language. So many words look the same."

She learned about cochlear implants – electronic devices with an internal component surgically implanted in the inner ear and an external piece that attaches by magnet – from a Canadian expert she brought to Israel at her own expense.

The girls ultimately had their first implants in New York in 1993, at a cost of $70,000, and Tal-El said "the results were dramatic. Along with therapy, the girls, who had not spoken until then, began hearing and talking."

With the use of the technology and intensive rehabilitation, "the girls learned language just like the best of us."

About four years ago, the girls had their second implant, and the family's insurance company agreed to subsidize the procedure for $25,000.

Now graduating high school, the girls hear, and they speak Hebrew and English fluently, Tal-El said. They also plan to join the Israel Defence Forces.

Tal-El said her vision, as well as the vision of A.V. Israel, is that every person with hearing loss in Israel should have the opportunity to communicate through spoken language and to maximize his or her potential to become an independent and creative member of the hearing world.

In its two centres, in Ra'anana and Jerusalem, A.V. Israel provides speech and language therapists who are trained to educate children with hearing loss using auditory-verbal strategies.

The organization also provides parents with support, education and counselling to help them meet their children's needs, such as acoustic accommodations in schools and special arrangements for high school students preparing to take matriculation exams.

A.V. Israel's main focus, however, is to help families obtain cochlear implants, Tal-El said. Although the Israeli government pays for the first cochlear implant, that's only the first step in becoming part of the hearing world.

The government doesn't pay for a second implant, which allows for bilateral hearing, and it doesn't pay for batteries, which have to be replaced every two days.

Tal-El said that her organization lobbies health officials to improve insurance coverage for these families.

She said that "we live in a beautifully auditory world, and I want our girls and other kids like them to be part of it."

For more information, write to the Canadian Friends of A.V. Israel, c/o Ruth Garbe, treasurer, at 25 Pearwood Cres., Toronto, M3B 2C1.

Correction

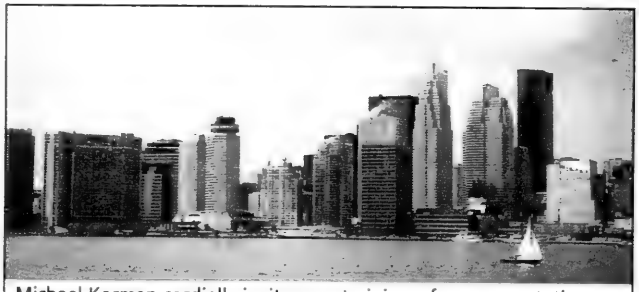
Inexplicably, some editing and other errors found their way into the obituary of the late Charles Zaionz that appeared in last week's issue. The name "Ronen" appeared in the place of "Zaionz" in the second- and third-last paragraphs. Given the overall context of the article, the error would have been apparent to the reader. Nevertheless, the textual result was incorrect and the error inexcusable.

Charles Zaionz

The names of Zaionz's children, Raphi and Elana, were also incorrectly spelled.

In addition, the quote attributed to Moshe Ronen, the chair of the Canada Israel Committee, regarding his days as head of the Jewish Students Network was unfortunately truncated. It should have read: "We student activists were not prepared to submit to communal discipline of not making waves, and instead were forthright and active on behalf of Soviet Jewry and Ethiopian Jewry – often embarrassing the communal leadership into action."

We apologize for the errors and for any hurt or embarrassment that may have arisen from them. ***MBD***



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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Balkan Beat Box's musical mix makes for a potent cocktail

By EZRA GLINTER
Special to The CJN

Gypsy punk, klezmer jazz and Balkan brass may already be entrenched styles in New York City's downtown scene, but for musical nomads Balkan Beat Box (BBB), there's always a new twist on an old tune.

Mixing circus theatrics with electronic beats; Arab melodies with Hebrew lyrics; and African percussion with Balkan brass, BBB's global mix of musical ingredients makes for a potent, high-energy cocktail.

"The influences are pretty vast, but somehow out of all of that we have developed a special BBB esthetic... we always search for freshness, yet we seem to agree how BBB should sound," says Ori Kaplan, the band's bald-headed, fierce-eyed saxophonist.

Kaplan, 39, grew up in Israel, where he studied klezmer clarinet and later jazz saxophone. After moving to New York in 1991 to study at the Mannes College of Music, he quickly got involved with the local jazz scene, playing with groups such as Trio Plusm, as well as his own Ori Kaplan Percussion Ensemble.

He also began moonlighting with various rock bands, including world-pop outfit Firewater and gypsy punk band Gogol Bordello.

While tripping around the rapidly expanding indie-rock universe, Kaplan stumbled upon fellow Israeli Tamir Muskat, a drummer and electronic music master whose world-music leanings kept bringing the two into the same circles.

Eventually, they teamed up with Gogol Bordello vocalist Eugene Hutz and guitarist Oren Kaplan to form the experimental gypsy-Hebrew hybrid J.U.F.

"Tamir's ability to dig in on the electronic side of things and my melodic background with Eugene's explosive energy was like the sign of the times. An urban immigrant movement creating its own soundtrack," says Kaplan in an interview with the *Canadian Jewish News*, who, at the time, was en route to the Med World Music Festival in Loulé, Portugal.

In 2005, Kaplan and Muskat got together on a more permanent basis and created Balkan Beat Box, along with a motley collection of collaborators, including Israeli MC Tomer Yosef.

They soon released their first, self-titled album on the JDub record label, home to other wave-making Jewish acts including SoCalled, and at one point, Matisyahu. Buzz about the new band was nearly instantaneous, and an early Purim party gig at S.O.B's, a stylish SoHo world-music venue, easily sold out.

"Tamir and I wanted to continue to work together with different guests, get what was to us a more down-home kind of feel," says Kaplan. "We swim very similarly in this ocean of sounds. For us, it was the creation of new music that is New York City and also the music of the Mediterranean pond we came from."

After spending a few years solidifying their reputation in the underground New York scene, the band released its second album, *Nu Med*, in 2007. Unlike the rag-tag nature of their first release, *Nu Med* took a more calculated approach, resulting in a tighter, if slightly less spontaneous record.

"The first album was created as a studio project before we even named it. Tamir and I were having and making new tracks for our DJ nights. It's a great collection of thoughts," says Kaplan. "The second album comes more from the experience accumulated on the road, playing with the same people and adding their voices. It's more of a refined album."

Since the band's inception as a side project for Kaplan and Muskat, BBB has featured a continually rotating lineup of supporting musicians. Currently, the band includes blues guitarist, singer and Sway Machinery front man Jeremiah Lockwood; Pink Noise bassist Itamar Ziegler; and co-saxophonist and clarinetist Peter Hess. Tomer Yosef, who is also a popular solo artist in Israel, has become an increasingly integral member of the group, contributing his signature percussion samples. Though members of the band all have their own side projects, the unique alchemy of BBB has kept it an artistic and professional priority.

"Each one of us has a lot going on, but BBB is a special thing. It's the voice that shines the brightest and speaks to all of our minds in perfect sync," says Kaplan, who also maintains his own project, the improvisational-rock band Shot'nez.

Tomer Yosef, airborne, Ori Kaplan, left and Tamir Muskat of Balkan Beat Box.

In addition to BBB, other world-music-tinged bands, such as Beirut and DeVotchka, have been sweeping the indie-rock world in recent years. According to Kaplan, the trend represents a desire to get back to cultural roots. At the same time, hipper genres such as punk, hip hop and electronic music have helped breathe new life into antiquated forms.

"Most of us came from somewhere and are searching for this community, which we can celebrate in a new way. The old techno clubs don't supply this vodka-drenched wedding ceremonial vibe that we take to the clubs. There is something which makes you smile and dance, and break some inhibitions about the old world with these electronic or punk elements," Kaplan says.

Perhaps one of the most ambitious aspects of Balkan Beat Box is the band's effort to rise above political and ethnic divisions, a mission that is consistent with their cross-cultural compositions. Over the years, the band has worked with Moroccan, Bulgarian, Syrian, Palestinian and Iranian guest artists.

"We are musicians first and politics comes next, but our natural will to bring some dialogue to old enemies sometimes pushes us beyond music. It's an added mission," Kaplan says.

Currently, the band is working on their third album, which it is recording in New York, Belgrade and Tel Aviv.

"We are already playing a few of the songs in our shows, but every time we fly to meet each other in a corner of the world to work on it, some extra magic happens," Kaplan says.

With a vast range of styles and traditions at its fingertips, the band has proven itself to be anything but predictable. But whatever Balkan Beat Box does next, it's bound to add spice to an already hot repertoire.

Balkan Beat Box plays at the Fesitval D'été in Quebec City on July 10; at the Ottawa Blues Festival on July 11; and at the Winnipeg Folk Festival on July 13. For more information, see www.balkanbeatbox.com.

Balkan Beat Box wants their music to make "you smile and dance, and break some inhibitions about the old world." [Rian photos]

Coast to Coast

Singles plus volunteering equals JCorps

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Is JCorps mainly a group where singles get a chance to meet and mingle, or an opportunity to volunteer and do good work?

Actually, the answer is both.

Montreal is the second place outside New York City to become officially affiliated with JCorps, which, although it's only a year old, is being touted as the "largest Jewish volunteer network in the world."

Its members are Jewish singles aged 18 to 28 who can come from all streams of Judaism. They do volunteer work every Sunday in groups of about 20.

At the same time, the singles get to know each other and form bonds, while avoiding the singles scene of noisy bars and often empty relationships.

"In a sense, Montreal is opening up a JCorps franchise," said Ari Teman, JCorps's 26-year-old founder, on the phone from New York. "Other cities we're also working on now are Boston, Washington, Miami, Los Angeles and San Francisco."

JCorps ascribes its phenomenal growth – about 10 per cent every two weeks, Teman said – to the fact that it is based in New York, with its teeming numbers of Jewish singles, and to the fact that it is largely using the Facebook social networking site, e-mail and word of mouth to get the word out.

Teman said the diverse range of New York singles involved in JCorps come from hundreds of countries, colleges and universities across America and around the world.

The Montreal JCorps leader is Judith Fuchs, a 23-year-old law student at the University of Montreal, who discovered JCorps when she was researching ways to volunteer in the community.

"It's already taking off," Fuchs told *The CJN*. "We heard from 120 people in four days."

Teman, who works as a stand-up comic in New York and is a graduate of Brandeis University, makes no bones about the fact that his primary motive for creating JCorps was that he was growing weary of the Manhattan Jewish singles scene, where "you keep seeing the same people, the clubs are dark and loud, and you know after five minutes if there's anything there."

Even on its website, in the frequently asked questions section, people ask: "Is this organization the result of an overly elaborate plan to meet singles?" The answer comes back: "Yes. And you're welcome."

JCorps, Teman said, allows the singles to "enjoy a personal sense of fulfilment" through the volunteer work, while at the same time, making new "personal and professional connections."

Fuchs said the primary motive in her JCorps involvement was to reactivate her volunteer spirit – she used to do quite lot of volunteering while going to school at Hebrew Academy – as well as to meet other singles.

Teman flew to Montreal recently to see Fuchs and help get JCorps off the ground locally.

The rules for JCorps are fairly simple, but they are enforced. Members must be Jewish, single and aged 18 to 28. All those doing volunteer work must wear JCorps T-shirts. Because JCorps is non-denominational and is not involved in religious activities, volunteer work is done on Sundays, not Saturdays or Jewish holidays, to enable more observant Jewish singles to participate.

JCorps stresses that its main role is to make connections between its volunteers and communal organizations. It is run exclusively by volunteers, including Teman.

Fuchs, who is also involved in Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region's young adult committee and is a past president of the Canadian Jewish Law Students Association, said she expects the first local volunteer event to take place within a few weeks, probably at the Old Brewery Mission, Montreal Children's Hospital or a seniors residence.

"We want to be able to come back to the same place every month," she said.

Teman is reluctant to specify the exact number of people in JCorps, but he said they number in the thousands and he stands by the JCorps claim that it is the "largest Jewish volunteer network in the world," based on the involvement of New York City singles alone.

Costs are paid through corporate donations and small fundraisers, including comedy club evenings that charge token amounts. The money raised goes toward the cost of T-shirts, transportation to work sites and publicity. Teman said in the United States, JCorps has the status of a non-profit organization that can issue tax receipts, and Fuchs is now working to acquire the same status in Canada.

JCorps has also received attention from the New York Jewish media. The *Jewish Week* named Teman, who is also the founder of a product design firm, as one of its "36 under 36" for 2008, and JCorps was the subject of an article last year in the *New Jersey Jewish Standard*.

Teman said, depending on how things go, consideration might be given to starting up a JCorps for older singles, and even for married couples.

But so far, the unique approach taken by JCorps seems to be working. "No one has done the social volunteering approach for singles before," he said.

The Montreal JCorps website is www.montreal.jcorps.org. Fuchs can be reached at judithcfuchs@gmail.com.

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On Campus

Kulanu marches in Gay Pride Parade

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

This year's Gay Pride Week in Toronto attracted more than one million people, and among those who celebrated the event was a small student group representing Jewish members of the gay community.

Kulanu Toronto members Mark Aaron Polger, left, and Justine Apple show their Jewish pride at the Gay Pride Parade last month.

Pride Week – which takes place every year in the last week of June and includes galas and street festivals, and ends with a parade that begins at Church and Bloor streets, goes west to Yonge Street and south to Carlton Street – is one of the largest such events in the world.

And members of Kulanu Toronto, a Jewish social group for bisexual, gay, lesbian, transgendered, transexual, and intersexed people, wanted its presence to be felt.

"We had a lot of people cheering us on. We had one guy come to our booth and say that it was so wonderful that there is a Jewish group," said Justine Apple, who volunteers as an executive committee member of Kulanu Toronto, which has been funded by Hillel of Greater Toronto since 2003.

Despite some grey and wet weather, Apple said that between the volunteers who manned the Kulanu booth and those who marched in the June 29 parade, about 25 members – students and professionals – came out to represent the Jewish gay community.

"We had a great time. [Our booth] started off at Yonge and Gloucester, which is a really crappy location, but then we moved to Alexander Street, which was much better. We were handing out promotional material, business cards, flyers indicating what our goals are, what kinds of social events we run, organizations we affiliate with," Apple said.

She added that Kulanu also produced T-shirts that had a Magen David and said "Unified By Love" to incorporate the theme of this year's parade – "Unified" – and the values of the group.

"On the banner, it also said 'Unified By Love' and we had hearts on it, and a Magen David, we had a menorah on there. We were also holding up signs with our website and logo," Apple said.

"We even had one of our executive members, who is involved with a guy in Detroit and he brought his two little kids, so it was so amazing, because we were holding our banner and in front of us, were the two guys and the two kids. Everyone was looking at them. They were such a focus."

Leading up to the parade, Kulanu co-sponsored a June 25 screening at the Miles Nadal JCC of a documentary titled *Jerusalem is Proud to Present*, which chronicled the events and controversy leading up to the World Pride Conference in Jerusalem in 2006.

Apple said that she was thrilled with the attendance, as the Al Green Theatre was nearly full.

In addition to Kulanu's involvement with Pride Week, the group organizes events for the 400 people on its e-mail list, including Shabbat dinners, barbecues, karaoke nights, movie nights and pub nights, as well as Chanukah and Purim parties.

Kulanu mainly operates out of the Hillel at the University of Toronto, but she said students from all over the Toronto area are invited and welcome to attend all of its events.

Apple said that when the group was officially founded in 2003, it was primarily student-based.

"But now the demographic has changed, and we have a lot of non-students participating as well," she said.

"We met a lot of people at Pride this year at our booth who were older, past their 40s, and they said they wanted to meet more Jewish gay people in Toronto, but they were worried that Kulanu is generally for students and they were afraid they wouldn't meet anyone or wouldn't be welcome there. I said, 'What are you talking about? It's for everyone.' Kulanu means 'all of us,' so it is important that people know that."

Apple became involved with Kulanu five years before it became an official campus group, but she has only been on the executive for a year. She said that her interactions with other members of the gay community inspire her to stay connected.

She said that at a recent event, she was approached by a man from Montreal who was in his 30s.

"He said, 'I just want to tell you I'm a little shy. I don't often come out to events because I'm just coming out, but I get all your e-mails, I know about all your events and even though I don't come out, I want you to know that you're my anchor, you're my security blanket and without you, I don't know what I would do. I'm just so grateful that your organization exists.'

"That meant a lot to me. Those are the kinds of things that mean a lot."

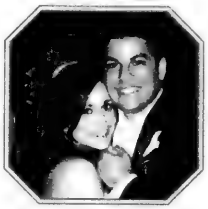
For more information about Kulanu or its upcoming events, visit www.kulanutoronto.ca.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Ruth & Norm Trachter, happy anniversary on June 29 - 60 years together and still loving it. Much love from your children and grandchildren.



Mira & Hanan Shefa and Renee & Sam Oziel wish many mazel tovs to their children, Sheri & Isaac, on their recent marriage.

Mazel tov to Ed Sohmer on your 90th birthday, June 27. Our love and admiration always, from all your family.

Mazel tov to Prof./Saba Ben Schlesinger on your 80th birthday. Wishing you many more happy, healthy years. Love, your kids: Avi, Leo, Esther, Michael and families.

Wishing a wonderfully happy golden anniversary to Lydia & Mauricio Tameshtit. With love, Allan, Robin and Las Tameshtitas.

The Sterns and the Oziels are thrilled to announce the recent engagement of Maytal & Allan. Mazel tov to you both!

Mazel tov to Sara Berdugo on receiving the Ryerson University Gold Medal and the H.H. Kerr Memorial Scholarship. Love, your grandparents, Esther & Reuben Fisher.

Mazel tov to Warren & Deborah Goldberg on the birth of their daughter Sadie Alexis on May 27.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
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What's New deadlines: Monday, July 14, is the deadline for the July 31 issue. We are not publishing a July 24 issue. Monday, July 28, is the deadline for the Aug. 7 issue; and Thursday, July 31, is the deadline for the Aug. 14 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, July 12

ORILLIA COUNTRY SHUL

The Orillia Country Shul continues Shabbat morning services through August at 10:30 a.m. This week's leader is **Rabbi Michael Dolgin**. Upcoming weeks: **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein,** July 19; **Rabbi Cory Weiss**, July 26; **Rabbi Dan Gottlieb**, Aug. 2; **Elliott Melamet**, Aug. 9; **Rabbi Tina Grimberg**, Aug. 16; **Lionel Sharp**, Aug. 23; and **Rabbi Arthur Bielfeld**, Aug. 30. 151 Creighton St. S. Follow signs to Casino Rama, pass the bridge on Hwy. 12, go south one mile. 705-327-7069

Wednesday, July 16

SUMMER GARDEN PARTY

The women of Chabad Lubavitch of Markham hold their annual summer garden party with guest speaker **Rebbetzin Sarah Meisels** of Israel on "How Prayer Helped Me With My Personal Tragedy." The evening includes entertainment by Israeli singer **Shoshana Helfenbaum**. Information and reservations, 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

Other News

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

Eyal Bitton talks about the weekly portion, Pinchas, Saturday, July 19, 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

YARCHEI KALLAH

The 14th annual Nishmat Yarchei Kallah takes place Aug. 5-7, at Yeshivat Or Chaim. **Simi Peters**, an instructor at Nishmat the Jerusalem Centre for Advanced Jewish Study for Women, will teach "Exploring the Midrashic Mind." Topics include "The First Murder: Parables on the Kayin/Hevel Story"; "An Egyptian Prince Becomes Moshe Rabbenu: Midrashic Stories on the Life of Moshe"; and "From One End of the World to the Other: A Midrashic Sermon on the Miracle of Conception, Birth and the Life Cycle." Information and registration, cfnishmat@gmail.com.

AGUDAS HAMISHPOCHA

Members of the extended **Rubinoff, Naftolin, Sloven, Patlik** and related families in the Greater Toronto Area and beyond are invited to celebrate the 80th anniversary of their family organization, the Agudas Hamishpocha, at a luncheon on Aug. 17. For information, contact rubnaft@sympatico.ca.

HIGH HOLY DAY TICKETS

Kolel High Holy Days early bird tickets are now on sale. Join **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** for a traditional egalitarian service with interactive family programming and services at the Bathurst JCC. The deadline for discount prices is July 31. For ticket and information, call 416-636-1880, ext. 255.

PEARL MUSICAL

Each October for the past six years musicians and faith groups have dedicated music in the memory of **Daniel Pearl**, who was not only a *Wall Street Journal* reporter but also a trained violinist. Har Zion Congregation has taken on the task of involving Canadian musicians in dedicating a musical selection during October to peace and human co-operation. Interested groups should contact rsmith@forensica.com or rayhavelock@gmail.com by the end of July.

FALL LECTURE SERIES

Temple Emanu-El offers its fall general interest lecture series on

Continued on page 23

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Learn how to maintain quality of life after a loved one passes. Please RSVP.

Intergenerational Day
Sunday, July 20, 2008 - 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Bring in your grandchildren for sundaes and a magic show. Please RSVP.

Caribbean Party
Thursday, July 31, 2008 - 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Sounds from the Islands starring The Keith Dindal Band. Please RSVP.

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What's New

Continued from page 22

Mondays 2-4 p.m. Begins Nov. 3 with "The American Presidential Election" with **Hugh Innes**, professor of media studies, Ryerson University; Nov. 10, "Art in Nazi Germany" with **Ken Carpenter**, professor of art history, York University; Nov. 17, "Fighting the Great Patriotic War: The Soviet Union and World War II" with **Arne Kislenko**, professor of history, York University; Nov. 24, "Five Great Recordings" with **Rick Phillips**, former host of CBC Radio's *Sound Advice*. $30 for the series. $10 lectures. Registration and information, 416-449-3880.

TRIPS TO ISRAEL

The following organizations are offering missions to Israel in the fall:

Beit Halochem offers two ways to experience Israel: a solidarity mission on Sept. 11-23; a fully supported five-day bike tour of northern Israel, Courage in Motion, Sept. 14-18, with Israel's war veterans. Information, www.cycleisrael.com or 905-695-0611.

Jewish National Fund Mission, Oct. 28-Nov. 10. Tour from the Golan Heights to Eilat with a full day in Petra. Information, sharon.lehrer@jnf.ca.

Join **OneFamily** Nov. 2-6, on a journey through the upper Galilee on its inaugural year of the Sea-to-Sea OneFamily Hike. Walk 61 km. over five days through northern Israel. $750 registration fee covers all costs of the five days and four nights. Each participant is required to raise a minimum of $2,500 in donations for the OneFamily Fund. Information, www.seatoseahike.org.

Hebrew University Mission, Nov. 2-11. Explore Israel through Jewish history, art, music and theatre with Hebrew University faculty. Information, **Merle Goldman**, 416-485-8000.

UJA Federation and **Israel @ 60 Toronto** offers Israel @ 60 General Assembly Mission to Israel, Nov. 9-20. Information, **Iris Glesinger**, iglesinger@ujafed.org or 416-635-2883, ext. 177.

Honest Reporting Mission, Nov. 9-15. The first half of the trip is in Jerusalem, the second half touring the north. Information, www.honestreporting.com/mission/nov2008itinerary.asp

ADULT MINI SCHOOL

Registration is open for the fall term of the Florence Melton Mini School. Also available, graduate classes, which include some space for new students. Evening or morning classes. Call **Loretta** at 416-789-7400, for details.

NEED PLACE TO LIVE?

Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto has information on basement apartments, rooms and shared spaces available for rent. Call 416-635-5600.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325, www.jiastoronto.org. To register, volunteer, or for more information about these programs, call 416-630-6481.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada practise speaking English in a casual friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Interested participants or volunteers should call **Joanna**, ext. 30.

JUMPStart: If you have a networking or job opportunity in the skilled labour market for a newcomer, connect to our JUMPStart program by calling **Elisa**, ext. 24.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts "Heart & Mind: Promoting Health, Preventing Disability," a talk by gerontologist **Dr. David Tal**, Thursday, July 17, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Garnet A. Williams Bridge Club, 501 Clark Ave., summer hours for their duplicate bridge games, Mondays and Tuesdays, 12.30-3:30 p.m. $1.50, Novice game and lessons, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 7 p.m. $2. Bridge lessons ongoing. **Linda** or **Mike** at 905-731-3432.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. A naturopath speaks on "The Importance of Cardiovascular Health," July 16, 1 p.m.; Fallsview Casino, Niagara Falls, Wednesday, July 30; Seniors walking group, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.; Conversational Hebrew, Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m.; mah-jong, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.; bingo, Tuesdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m.; Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

Chai Shalom Social Club will see *Jersey Boys*, Sunday, Nov. 16, 2 p.m. at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. $118, includes orchestra seats and bus. Reservations, 416-633-3838

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Jordan and the Ancient Pink City of Petra," a lecture by **Irwin Patterson**, Tuesday, July 15, 10 a.m. Members $3, non members $6.

Israeli Festival, Wednesday, July 16, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Ticket and information, ext. 113.

Chiropody Clinic, by appointment only, call ext. 131.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.mnjcc.org.

Fringe @ the J presents three Fringe plays, through July 13: *Lost Daughter* by **Tara Goldstein** at Al Green Theatre; *The Barbeque King* by **Mark Brownell** in Room 318; and *Taking Liberties* by **Dave Carley** in Room 318. For tickets, www.fringetoronto.com or 416-966-1062.

Summer Ulpanim, Intensive Hebrew Grammar Course: The Verb System: two sessions, July 21-24, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and Aug. 18-21, 6:15 p.m.-9:15 p.m. Members $132, non-members $160. Hebrew through Songs, Aug. 18-21, 4-6 p.m. Members $90, non-members $110. Modern Hebrew Ulpan for Beginners: Level Bet – listening comprehension and conversational Hebrew, Aug. 18-21, 7-9 p.m. Members: $90, non-members $110. Information and registration, **Randi**, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The exhibit "here within our curving spaces," by **Karlee Fuglem**, is on through July 13 at the Koffler Gallery.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. The following courses begin July 14: Getting Started on Your Computer; Using the Internet and E-mail. Each course is four weeks long, two classes per week for a total of 16 hours. To register call ext. 0.

The BJCC has a block of tickets for the first night of the play *Jersey Boys*, Thursday, Aug. 21 at the Toronto Centre of the Arts. Supporting this event helps give disadvantaged children a great summer at the BJCC's Centre Camp. Tickets, ext. 240.

SENIOR CANADIAN IDOL: A competition similar to *Canadian Idol* was recently held at the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living More than 200 people attended. Rami Kapon was named the first-place winner for the Thornhill/North York region. From left are competition judge Geri Migicovsky; Kapon; deputy mayor of Vaughan and competitor judge Joyce Frustaglio; competitor judge Mary Swark-Hougaard; third-place winner Marvin Singer; and second-place winner Leo Snowbell.

TORONTO CELEBRATES ISRAEL DAY: Thousands of people attended the recent Israel Day Festival held at Mel Lastman Square in Toronto. The event was co-sponsored by Na'amat Toronto and the Canadian Zionist Federation, and included entertainment and a craft sale. Orit Nusbaum-Tobe, left, chaired the daylong event, and Howard Binder was the MC for the stage performances. [Mollie Rothman photo]

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 26

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Solodki, Grigori	June 20/08	Private
Benzaquen, Henry	June 20/08	48 Yorkminster Rd
Meshnik (Mesnik), Tajsa	June 21/08	91 Townsgate Dr
Iosub, Mauriciu	June 22/08	Private
Hirchberg, Marion	June 22/08	343 Clark Ave. W
Semyonov, Miriam	June 22/08	9 Summeridge Dr
Ickowicz, Sala	June 23/08	4266 Bathurst St
Zeltzer, Miriam	June 24/08	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Harry Rich	Jun 20/08	2121 Bathurst St
Cary Gold	Jun 22/08	54 Lisa Cres
Dora Track	Jun 21/08	6 Killarney Rd
Mary (Mania) Baker	Jun 23/08	90 Combe Ave
Susan Timar	Jun 23/08	155 Marlee Ave
Ruth Gertner	Jun 22/08	400 Walmer Rd
Jack Norman	Jun 23/08	411 Duplex Ave
Dr. William E. Goodman	Jun 23/08	10 Burton Rd
Esther Kirshenbaum	Jun 24/08	550 Cummer Ave
Louis Coulter	Jun 25/08	484 Steeles Ave W
Shelley Lerson	Jun 25/08	32 Wigan Cres
Daniel Glick	Jun 27/08	199 Old Forest Hill Rd
Katja De Winter Stuerm	Jun 25/08	36 Hartley Crt
Sophie Basil	Jun 26/08	770 Briar Hill Ave
Norman Raskin	Jun 27/08	65 Skymark Dr
Haya Ziva	Jun 28/08	5935 Bathurst St
Shirley Firestone	Jun 29/08	1 Benvenuto Place
Cecille Nash	Jun 29/08	20 Shallmar Blvd
Sam Zelin	Jun 28/08	40 Windsor St
Helen Laywine	Jun 28/08	11-C Tranby Ave

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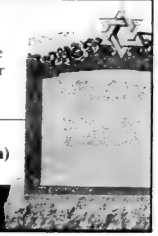

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הטענת נגד אהוד אולמרט בגין קבלת מעטפות כסף מתומכו האמריקני יתברר בחום יולי אוגוסט, אבל גם אז-זו תהיה חקירה מוקדמת שלא תניב שום תוצאות סופיות-התוצאות הסופיות ותקבלנה בבית משפט זה או אחר, או על ידי פרקליט מדינה זה או אחר בעוד מספר שנים, כשאולמרט כבר לא יהיה קרוב לוודאי ראש ממשלה.

הדעיון, שנהוג במספר מדינות, שלפיו אי אפשר לתבוע או לחקור מנהיגים במהלך כהונתם על דברים שעשו בעבר בטרם כהונתם, נראה לי מאוד מתאים לארץ אוכלת יושביה כישראל. אבל שישאר בינינו.

רק יהודי יבין

תודה לאידנה ששלחה לי את הקטעים הבאים:

ישיבה יוניברסיטט הקימה נבחרת חתירת משוטים, שמפסידה בכל המירוצים בוה אחרי זה למרות אימונים מפרכים. מחליטים לשלוח את מוריס פישביין לרגל אחרי הנבחרת של קיימברג'. מוריס מתחבא בין העצים על שפת הנהל ואחרי יממה חוזר ומדווח לחבריו:

"מצאתי את הסוד שלהם!! אנחנו צריכים רק אחד שיצעק-שאר השמונה צריכים לחתור."

מוישה קורא בעיתון על מחקר חדש שאומר שנשים משתמשות ביותר מלים מגברים. הוא מדווח באשתו לאשתו, כי הוא תמיד אומר לה שהיא מדברת יותר מידי. מאשה מקשיבה לו, חושבת ואומרת: "זה בגלל שאנחנו צריכות לחזור על כל דבר שלוש פעמים כדי שתבינו!"

עונה לה מוישה: "על מה?"

האיטלקי אומר: אני עייף וצמא-אני מוכרח לשתות יין!
הצרפתי אומר: אני עייף וצמא, אני מוכרח לשתות קוניאק!
הגרמני אומר: אני עייף וצמא, אני מוכרח לשתות בירה!
הרוסי אומר: אני עייף וצמא, אני מוכרח לשתות וודקה!
היהודי אומר: אני עייף וצמא, בטח יש לי סכרת!

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Preparing for overnight camp

Life Coach Corner

Judy Siblin-Librach

How do we prepare ourselves for camp? How do we let our babies go off for weeks at a time? What words of wisdom can we give them – and ourselves – to make it easier for everyone?

I know there are mothers and fathers who look forward to the break – and then there are mothers who weep and worry and wait for that first phone call, letter or other sign that all is well.

As you help your child cope with possible homesickness, avoid expressing your own anxiety. While it's fine for parents to say, "I'm really going to miss you," it may not be the best idea to say, "I'm going to be miserable without you," while you cry your eyes out. Keep things positive and upbeat, and remember, other parents will be your best help. Call them, and you can all commiserate together.

We have prepared them with everything from T-shirts to shampoo, soap, the latest in bug sprays and state-of-the-art sunscreen. We have ironed labels till our arms hurt. We have packed and re-packed, trying to whittle down the 20 T-shirts to 16, even though they only asked for 10. We have warned them about safety first, sharing, caring and teamwork. We have stamped their letters, addressed their envelopes with perfectly typed labels. We have included comics, reading material, updated iPods and as much love, advice, humour and hugs as we can cram into those last few days.

Still, most of us feel a little niggly in the pits of our tummies. And it's not because they won't do well, because, of course, they will. It's because this is a reminder once again that our babies are not babies anymore, and that this is a blessing for them, an opportunity to learn, grow and be independent, so that one day they can sew labels, worry and wave to their own children at the bus stop.

Missing them is the hard part, and most of you probably feel the same lump in your throat and ache in your heart as I do. But believing they will be fine really does help. So does a good cry – after the bus leaves.

Here are a few tips to make the time go faster: redecorating rooms or changing the kids' bedding is a great way to look forward to their return. Also, do those things you never have time to do, now that the house is a little quieter. Do the project you have been longing to get to, or start that exercise program. Pay attention to the others at home who now have you to themselves. Write lots, pray lots and know that all is going to be well. And don't forget your spouse. This is a wonderful time to re-connect, have some romance and more time together. Finally, as my good friend, another Judy, pointed out, this is a wonderful time to reconnect with yourself.

Keep busy. Write fun letters and cards and find a project to do. A good letter is chatty, upbeat and encouraging – writing about meals or mundane activities is a fantastic way to keep your letters light and breezy. Ask lots of questions and even tell a joke or two. Tell your child how boring it is in the city and how lucky she is to be in the fresh air with her friends at camp.

Don't forget that our kids are often over-programmed all year. Camp is time without pressure. No homework, no pressure to do things on time. Camp is a chance to breathe and just feel good being who they are, without TV or video games or anything to stand in their way.

They can try out new friends, find new aspects of their personality and become independent. For some, this is the first time Mom or Dad is not there to do things for them. This is great for kids.

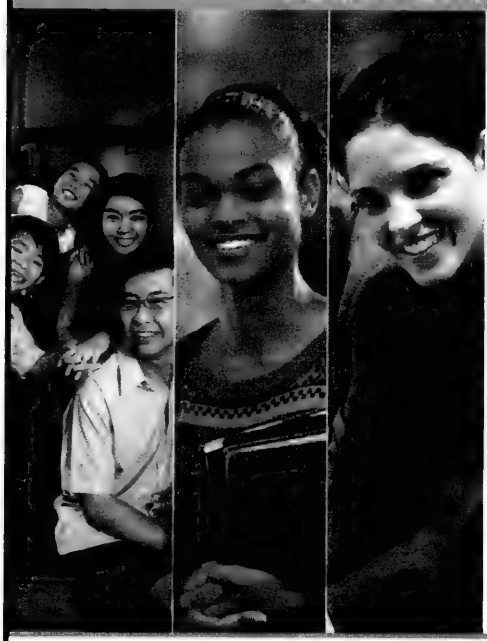
They'll do great and so will you. I promise.

Have a safe, happy and healthy summer!

Judy Siblin-Librach is an Adler-trained coach. Website: www.findingyourbliss.com, e-mail: judyelle@aican.net

FAMILY CUT: As most kids settled into their summer vacations, three Associated Hebrew Schools students, the Hirsch sisters – from left, Ariella, 3½, Michelle, 6, and Rebecca, 8 – spent their first day off cutting their hair for the Angel Hair for Kids Program, which accepts donations of human hair, 10 inches or longer, to make wigs for child cancer patients.

Giving newcomers a head start
Donner aux nouveaux arrivants un bon départ



The Government of Canada believes in immigration. We want more newcomers to join us and be an important part of Canada's future. That's why we are improving our immigration system by:

1. Creating a more flexible, fair and responsive immigration system
The changes to Canada's immigration laws will help to attract the skilled workers Canada needs most and ensure families are reunited faster.

2. Helping internationally trained individuals
The Foreign Credentials Referral Office was created in 2007 to help newcomers get the information they need to have their credentials assessed and recognized in Canada

3. Increasing settlement funding
The Government of Canada has invested $1.4 billion* more in settlement funding, which includes language training and job search and employment services to help newcomers succeed and make a new home in Canada.

4. Reducing the Right of Permanent Residence Fee
The federal government reduced the right of permanent residence fee from $975 to $490.

* Excluding Quebec. In Quebec, the Canada-Quebec Accord gives the province the exclusive responsibility for providing settlement and support services to all immigrants in Quebec in exchange for financial compensation from the Government of Canada (approx. $198.2 million in 2007-08).

Learn more at **www.cic.gc.ca** or call **1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)** TTY: 1-800-926-9105.

Le gouvernement du Canada croit en l'immigration. Nous voulons accueillir plus de nouveaux arrivants et que ces derniers jouent un rôle actif pour assurer l'avenir du Canada. Voilà pourquoi nous améliorons notre système d'immigration en prenant les mesures suivantes :

1. Créer un système d'immigration plus souple, plus équitable et mieux adapté
Les modifications apportées à la législation canadienne en matière d'immigration contribueront à attirer les travailleurs qualifiés dont le Canada a le plus besoin, ainsi qu'à réunir les familles plus rapidement.

2. Aider les personnes formées à l'étranger
Le Bureau d'orientation relatif aux titres de compétences étrangers a été mis sur pied en 2007 pour aider les nouveaux arrivants à obtenir l'information dont ils ont besoin pour faire évaluer et reconnaître leurs titres de compétences au Canada.

3. Accroître le financement en matière d'établissement
Le gouvernement du Canada a investi un montant supplémentaire de 1,4 milliard** de dollars en fonds d'établissement, notamment pour financer les cours de langue et les services d'orientation et d'aide à la recherche d'emploi pour permettre aux nouveaux arrivants de s'intégrer avec succès au Canada.

4. Réduire les frais relatifs au droit de résidence permanente
Le gouvernement fédéral a réduit de 975 $ à 490 $ les frais relatifs au droit de résidence permanente.

** Exclut le Québec. Au Québec, l'Accord Canada-Québec donne à la province la responsabilité exclusive des services d'établissement et d'intégration des immigrants au Québec en échange d'une compensation financière du gouvernement du Canada (environ 198,2 millions en 2007-08).

Pour en apprendre davantage, visitez le **www.cic.gc.ca** ou composez le **1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232),** ATS : 1-800-926-9105.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada | Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Canada

Summer bake-ation

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

Some people like to read cookbooks like a novel, while others prefer to cook and bake, but almost everyone likes to eat home-baked sweets! Now that summer is finally here, life is a bit more relaxed and it's always wonderful to share home-baked sweets with family and friends. Summer vacation is also a good time for your summer "bake-ation!"

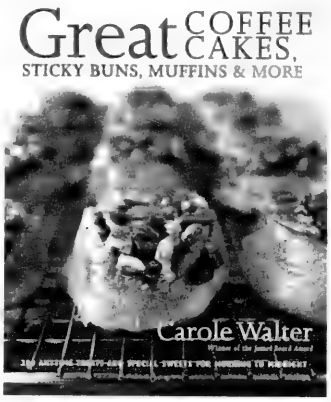
Need some guidance? Award-winning cookbook author Carole Walter has taught baking classes for more than 20 years and has studied with famous pastry chefs in the United States, France, Austria, Italy and Denmark. Walter is the author of *Great Cakes, Great Pies & Tarts*, and *Great Cookies*. Her newest baking book, *Great Coffee Cakes, Sticky Buns, Muffins & More: 200 Anytime Treats and Special Sweets for Morning to Midnight* (Clarkson Potter), makes a welcome addition to the baker's bookshelf.

You'll find a selection of treats that are perfect for breakfast, an afternoon snack, or dessert – the sweets people most like to make at home to enjoy with family and friends. With more than 200 recipes for America's favourite baked goodies, you'll find pound cakes, coffee cakes, muffins and other quick breads, scones, sweet biscuits, Bundt cakes and, of course, her scrumptious Sticky Buns.

Walter guides novices and expert bakers alike through irresistible recipes including Butter Crumb Coffee Cake, Raspberry Buttermilk Muffins with Streusel Topping and A Dilly of a Cheese Scone. Old-world classics such as Almond Croissants, Double Chocolate Walnut Babka and Cinnamon Raisin Rugelach are complemented by what are sure to become new favorites, like Jeff's Chocolate-Glazed Midnight Muffins, and Pumpkin Pecan Loaf.

Walter offers straightforward directions, foolproof recipes, countless tips and suggestions in her new book. To ensure success, her signature "At-a-glance" boxes outline the necessary information to ensure your baked goods turn out perfectly, from baking pan sizes, oven temperatures, baking times, and any special equipment you might need.

In addition, she includes extensive general information on outfitting your own kitchen for baking, common ingredients and techniques. With straightforward directions and enticing recipes, *Great Coffee Cakes, Sticky Buns, Muffins & More* will have you baking up a storm of treats for every occasion. Try this scrumptious, easy sweet and watch those smiles appear!



CAROLE WALTER'S MACADAMIA FUDGE SQUARES

At-a-glance:
Pan: 10½ x 15½ x 1-inch jelly roll pan
Pan Prep: Line with foil and butter
Oven Temp: 375 degrees
Baking Time: 13 to 15 minutes
Difficulty: *

This pretty bar cookie is another play on a brownie. Dark brown sugar and a hint of cinnamon are perfect partners for the robust flavour of the chocolate. The top is generously sprinkled with macadamia nuts and has a chocolate webbed finish that's guaranteed to catch your eye.

1 cup all-purpose flour, spooned in and levelled
¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. salt
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
4 oz. unsweetened chocolate, coarsely chopped
1 cup (lightly packed) very fresh dark brown sugar
1 cup granulated sugar
4 large eggs, well beaten
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
1½ to 1¾ cups coarsely chopped, salted macadamia nuts
1 small recipe Midnight Chocolate Glaze (recipe follows)

Position the rack in the middle of the oven. Heat the oven to 375. Line a 10½ x 15½ x 1-inch jelly roll pan with aluminum foil and butter the foil.

In a medium bowl, thoroughly whisk together the flour, cinnamon, and salt. Set aside.

In a large bowl set over a pot of barely simmering water, slowly melt the butter and the chocolate. Stir occasionally. Remove from the heat and, using a whisk, blend the brown sugar into the mixture, stirring until melted. Gradually mix in the granulated sugar. Stir in the eggs and the vanilla. Add the dry ingredients, stirring just until combined. Do not overmix.

Spread the batter evenly in the prepared pan, smoothing it with the back of a tablespoon. Sprinkle the surface with the macadamia nuts and press them gently into the batter. Bake for 13 to 15 minutes, or until the top is set and the bar begins to pull away from the sides of the pan. Do not overbake. The squares should remain slightly moist on the inside. (Note: If the batter rises in the pan during baking, prick the bubbles gently with a fork to release the air.) Remove from the oven and let stand until almost cool.

While the bar is cooling, make the glaze. To web the bar, dip a small whisk into the glaze and squiggle it across the pan. If the glaze becomes too thick, thin it with a little very hot water. Let stand until the glaze is set.

Carefully lift the bar from the pan by grasping the foil on both sides and place it on a large cutting board. Pull down the sides of the foil and cut into 2-inch squares using a thin-bladed, sharp knife. Makes 4 dozen 2-inch squares

Storage: Store in an airtight container, layered between strips of wax paper, for up to 5 days. These cookies may be frozen.

MIDNIGHT CHOCOLATE GLAZE

Here is a glaze that has a beautiful, glossy shine and wonderful, rich chocolate flavour. While Walter thinks the best results are achieved if the glaze is applied when it is made, it can be made ahead and either refrigerated or frozen. The glaze will keep its sheen for up to eight hours, depending on your room temperature and weather conditions. When she tested the recipe, it was impossible not to lick her fingers when scraping the pot clean.

½ cup water
¼ cup granulated sugar
2 tbsp. light corn syrup
4 oz. fine-quality bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
¼ cup strained powdered sugar
1 tbsp. Dutch-process cocoa powder
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
¼ tsp. lemon juice
pinch of salt
1 tbsp. unsalted butter, soft

Place the water in a 3-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan. Add the granulated sugar and corn syrup, but do not stir. Cover and bring to a slow boil on medium-low heat. After 1 minute, check to see if any sugar crystals remain. If so, gently stir the mixture. Continue to cook the syrup uncovered for 3 to 4 minutes. (Large bubbles will form on the surface.)

Remove the pan from the heat and sprinkle the chopped chocolate over the syrup. Push the chocolate gently into the syrup, but do not stir. Let stand for 2 to 3 minutes, until the chocolate is melted, then stir gently with a small whisk.

When smooth, stir in the powdered sugar and cocoa powder, then blend in the vanilla, lemon juice and salt. Stir gently with the whisk until smooth, then blend in the butter. If the glaze is not pourable, add 3 or 4 teaspoons of very hot water until the desired consistency is reached.

Note: This glaze is best used immediately. Makes enough for one 10-inch Bundt cake or 9 x 13 x 2-inch coffee cake, or 16 to 18 muffins.

Storage: Leftover glaze can be refrigerated for several weeks. This glaze may be frozen. To use, reheat, adding very hot water to thin the glaze as needed.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, teacher and food consultant. For information, call 416-226-2466 or visit her website at http://www.gourmania.com.

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Pro-Israel rallies signal change in U.K. Jewry

By AMIRAM BARKAT
JTA

LONDON — With a pair of massive rallies for Israel held simultaneously in London's Trafalgar Square and Manchester's Heaton Park on June 29, British Jewry may be signaling that its transformation is at hand.

Some 30,000 participants attended the public shows of support for Israel, which were inspired by New York's annual Salute to Israel parade.

Several thousand people waving Israeli and British flags marched from the Ritz Hotel to Trafalgar Square followed by dozens of carnival floats, cyclists, dancers and bands. At Trafalgar Square, an Israeli cabinet minister, Britain's secretary of state for education and Britain's chief rabbi all addressed the crowd. Israeli musicians performed between the speeches.

"I'm sure that my father, who served here as an officer in the British army, couldn't have imagined that some day tens of thousands of Jews would be waving Israeli flags here in Trafalgar Square," said Israel's minister for welfare and Diaspora affairs, Isaac Herzog, who addressed the London rally. Herzog's father, the late Israeli president Chaim Herzog, served as an intelligence officer in the British army during World War II.

Observers and critics alike said the unprecedented show of pride and self confidence at the rallies is a sign that British Jewry is shaking off its reputation for being timid and low key.

Organized by a coalition of community groups under the direction of the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Jewish Leadership Council, the rallies were aimed at expressing solidarity with Israel at its 60th anniversary and the unity of British Jewry.

Jeremy Newmark, the Leadership Council's chief executive, said the idea for the event was born when he and several British Jewish organization executives attended last year's Salute to Israel parade in New York. Discussing the parade with representatives of the American Jewish Committee, Newmark recalled an AJC representative saying a New York-style Israel salute probably wouldn't play in Britain.

But Newmark said the New York experience changed his mind.

"Seeing this tremendous display of communal unity and affirmation of the relations between not just the Jewish community but actually America and Israel, we thought, 'Well, here is one thing that might just play in the U.K.,'" he said.

Herzog told JTA he was pleased that "Anglo Jews decided to follow the American Jews' example with a display of power and unity."

An event like the June 29 Salute to Israel could not have taken place as recently as a decade ago, Newmark said. But a political shift that has made British politics much more tolerant of minorities, lobbies and interest groups changed that, he added.

"If you want to influence political decisions in Britain, you have to operate up front as an interest group, and the community had to adjust to that," Newmark said.

Some Jews long have complained that British Jews are too timid.

Three months ago, a renowned British-born Israeli expert on anti-Semitism, Prof. Robert Wistrich, told the *Jerusalem Post* that Britain's Jewish leadership is taking a "softly, softly approach" in tackling the problem of anti-Semitism.

"There is a long tradition of doing things behind closed doors," Wistrich said. "It is difficult to break with tradition, but it should be broken."

Newmark believes the breakthrough is already under way.

"The caricature of Anglo-Jewry that Wistrich and others have sought to portray is no longer the case. It's history," he said. "Ask any minister in a government portfolio that relates to the Jewish community in any way if the Jewish community is shy about coming forward or making noise, if they feel they're not being treated the way they want to. You'd get a pretty clear response."

Newmark points to several high-profile media campaigns launched by the British Jewish community in the past year, including fighting an academic boycott and campaigning against the Anglican Church's "divestment intentions," as further evidence of the community's willingness to speak up.

"We now have strong support for Israel within all the mainstreams in the nation's political parties as a consequence of the work done by the 'Friends of Israel' organizations within each party," he said.

At the rally, Herzog lent support to this argument, saying he felt "decision makers in British politics as well as in the media are much more attentive today to Israel's case than several years ago."

Researchers of British Jewry say the Jewish community here has never been healthier.

Keith Kahn-Harris, a sociologist based at London's Goldsmiths College, says research suggests that in recent years, even during the height of the second intifadah, an overwhelming majority of British Jews feel settled and comfortable in their homeland.

To be sure, there are concerns about the growing threat of anti-Semitism and the virulent anti-Israel views coming from some in the media and intellectual elites. But, Kahn-Harris said in a phone interview, "The threats are manageable, and the community developed effective mechanisms to counter them."

Yaakov Wise, a researcher at the University of Manchester's Centre for Jewish Studies, said the number of British Jews is growing for the first time since the end of World War II. A large part of this growth is due to an exceptionally high birth rate among haredim, although they were largely absent from the June 29 parades.

Also underrepresented were Israelis living in England. One communal leader admitted he was "disappointed" by the "limited success" of efforts to engage Israelis in Britain.

On the edges of the Trafalgar Square rally, some pro-Palestinian Jews took part in a vigil organized by the Palestine Solidarity Campaign.

Brian Klug, a prominent left-wing activist who has criticized British Jewry's unconditional support for Israel, told JTA he did find something positive about the parades in the fact that "Jews are able to express in public their views about something that affects them, which was not the case about 30 years ago when I was growing up in London."

Nevertheless, he said, "It is not supportive of Israel or of Israelis to 'salute' the country in public while passing over the occupation in silence."

Salute to Israel organizers, however, didn't seem to care much about the voices of dissent.

"We're focused on having a good day and a few fringe voices are not going to upset anybody," Newmark said.

At the London rally, huge screens projected greetings from Israeli President Shimon Peres and London's new mayor, Boris Johnson, followed by a slew of American celebrities such as former president Bill Clinton, Billy Crystal, Michael and Kirk Douglas, Ashton Kutcher and Ben Stiller.

The events cost some $700,000 (US), and nearly 600 volunteers were required to secure the Trafalgar Square rally alone.

"We promise to do this again next time Israel celebrates its 60th anniversary," Henry Grunwald, president of the Board of Deputies, quipped when asked if the Salute to Israel would be repeated.

"I'm sure we will have such events again in the future" he later added, "but probably not on an annual basis like in New York."

Dispute with Iran sends world oil prices to record highs

Continued from page 1

The *Daily Telegraph* reported Monday that Iran had set up a number of civilian companies whose activities, it said, were being deliberately concealed from the United Nations nuclear inspection teams.

"The companies, based on the outskirts of Tehran, are working on constructing components for the advanced P2 gas centrifuge, which can enrich uranium to weapons grade two to three times faster than conventional P1 centrifuges," the report said, adding that the firms were set up by Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which oversees Iran's nuclear program.

Nuclear experts were quoted as saying the centrifuges are highly sophisticated devices, mainly used in the manufacture of atomic weapons.

"The work is aimed at developing the blueprint provided by Dr. A.Q. Khan, the 'father' of Pakistan's nuclear bomb, who sold Iran details of how to build atom bombs in the early 1990s," the newspaper said.

The offer of trade and other incentives proposed by the world powers was presented last month by European Union foreign policy chief Javier Solana to Iran's chief nuclear negotiator Saeed Jalili. Iran has put forward its own bundle of proposals aimed at resolving the dispute and has said it was encouraged by common points between the two separate packages.

Ahmadinejad said Iran was ready to discuss its nuclear ambitions, but that the "language of threat" was futile. "We are ready to discuss common subjects of the two packages. Talks should be held in a fair and just atmosphere," he said.

The nuclear dispute with Iran has raised fears of a military confrontation and helped to send world oil prices to record highs. Ahmadinejad dismissed talk of military action.

"Let alone America and Israel, even if hundreds of countries came together, they would not dare to attack Iran," he declared.

The Staff of
The Canadian Jewish News
extends its heartfelt condolences
to our colleague and friend

Frances Kraft
on the passing of her father,

Dr. Eugene Tozman ז"ל

May his memory be for blessing.

Arab attack in Jerusalem leaves 3 dead, dozens injured

By ROY EITAN
JTA

JERUSALEM – The deadly terrorist attack by an Arab bulldozer driver on a crowded street July 2 raised questions anew about how Israeli authorities can protect against attacks by lone assailants from eastern Jerusalem.

At least three people were killed and dozens injured in the noontime attack on Jaffa Road.

Husam Duwayat, a 30-year-old father of two from eastern Jerusalem, plowed through traffic on one of the busiest streets in the Israeli capital, overturning a commuter bus, crushing cars and sending pedestrians in a mad rush for safety.

"It was terrible, like nothing you could imagine," a bus passenger who gave her name as Bat-El told Israel Radio.

Policemen and an armed civilian ended the rampage by scrambling aboard the 20-ton bulldozer and shooting Duwayat at point-blank range. The brutal scene was captured on film and broadcast around the world.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the rampage, prompting speculation that Duwayat, who had been working at a construction site nearby, turned violent spontaneously. Police said he had a criminal record but no known terrorist ties.

It was the second attack in Jerusalem by a lone Arab assailant from eastern Jerusalem in four months. The previous attack was a shooting spree at a Jerusalem yeshiva in March, which left eight students dead.

This attack renewed debate in Israel over how to handle Palestinians from eastern Jerusalem, who carry Israeli identity cards and may travel freely around the Jewish state.

Israel's West Bank security fence and regular IDF counterterrorist operations and intelligence gathering in Palestinian-populated territories have dramatically reduced terrorist attacks against Israelis from their highs earlier this decade, during the second intifadah.

Such security measures, however, provide little defense against an attack like this, in which an Arab from an area west of the security fence apparently acting alone perpetrated a deadly attack using relatively unsophisticated weaponry.

The March attack at the Mercaz HaRav yeshiva in Jerusalem bore the same hallmarks.

"The terrorists never tire of thinking up original ways to strike," said Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupolianski. "It's no accident they choose Jerusalem. This is the heart of the State of Israel, of the Jewish people."

After the bulldozer attack, Israeli Industry and Trade Minister Eli Yishai called for the terrorist's house in the Sur Bacher neighbourhood of Jerusalem to be demolished – a punitive measure commonly used in the West Bank and Gaza until recently, when it was discontinued amid criticism by civil liberties groups.

Prime Minister Ehud Olmert ordered his ministers and legal advisers to assess the legal implications of taking such action, promising an answer by day's end.

Pending a decision, police raided the house in search of clues as to Duwayat's motives.

As they left, a female relative ululated from a balcony to watching journalists.

"Husam's a martyr!" she shouted. "May God have mercy on his soul."

The attack came as Olmert struggled to preserve a two-week-old ceasefire with Hamas in the Gaza Strip. The ceasefire has been interrupted multiple times by rockets and shelling from Gaza.

Islamic Jihad, which has claimed responsibility for some of that rocket fire from Gaza, praised Duwayat's attack.

"The Jerusalem Brigades bless the heroic operation in Jerusalem as the natural reaction to the crimes of the occupation," the group said, according to reports.

Members of ZAKA search for human remains in a car destroyed by the attacker. [Israel Sun photo]

In Gaza, Hamas spokesman Sami Abu Zuhri said he did not expect the Jerusalem attack to "influence the Gaza calm."

"There is a continued aggression against our people in the West Bank and Jerusalem, and so it is natural that our people there will respond to such aggression," he said.

From Washington, President Bush telephoned Olmert "and expressed his condolences to the Israeli people over today's murderous terrorist attack," the Prime Minister's Office said.

The Fatah-led Palestinian Authority also issued a condemnation of the attack.

"Whoever carried this out wants to hurt the peace process, and we urge the Israeli side not to be dragged down by those who want this to happen," said Tayeb Andel Rahim, an aide to P.A. President Mahmoud Abbas.

* * *

The off-duty Israeli soldier who ended the bulldozer rampage in Jerusalem is avoiding the limelight.

Israeli commentators have dubbed him a hero, but the 20-year-old army conscript who grabbed a security guard's pistol and shot dead Husam Duwayat has refused to take credit.

Television and newspaper reports carried dramatic pictures of the soldier astride Duwayat's bulldozer but with his face obscured, in deference to a court gag order issued at his request. The soldier's name was similarly barred from publication.

In a brief statement, the soldier said he acted "in accordance to the precept of 'don't stand by your brother's blood', even at the risk of getting hurt."

He also said he had been inspired by his brother-in-law, David Shapira, an army officer who stormed into Jerusalem's Mercaz HaRav Yeshiva as a Palestinian gunned down students there in March, shooting the assailant dead.

According to media reports, the soldier recently enlisted in the Egoz commando regiment having spent two years contesting an army decision not to draft him. He had been blacklisted for taking part in protests against Israel's 2005 withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

A resident of Jerusalem, the soldier graduated from a West Bank yeshiva.

Israel Briefs

Barak meets Iraqi president

Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak met the president of Iraq on the sidelines of a conference in Greece last week. Barak and Jalal Talabani shook hands and briefly exchanged pleasantries during the Socialist International outside Athens. They were introduced by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, who also spoke separately with Barak, a former Israeli prime minister. Since U.S.-led forces toppled Saddam Hussein in 2003, Israeli leaders have called on the new Iraqi regime to recognize the Jewish state. But Baghdad has been cool to the overtures pending a resolution to Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts. Several members of the Iraqi parliament called on Talabani on July 4 to apologize for the handshake with Barak.

MK visits banned

Israel broadened a ban on visiting enemy states to include Knesset members, who previously enjoyed exemption. A bill preventing any Israeli who visits hostile Arab countries or Iran from being elected to parliament was ratified Monday in second and third readings. The law would allow for serving Knesset members who violate it to be disqualified as lawmakers. The legislation targeted Israeli-Arab lawmakers who have long raised hackles in the Jewish state by travelling to countries such as Lebanon and Syria, often in shows of solidarity.

Report on MIA Ron Arad

Israel is waiting for a report from Hezbollah regarding the group's efforts to locate missing Israeli Air Force navigator Ron Arad, defence officials said July 4. In the report, Hezbollah is expected to say that it did not manage to locate Arad, who was shot down near Sidon in 1986, but concludes that the navigator died in Lebanon more than a decade ago. The report will be given to Ofer Dekel, the Israeli official charged with negotiating the release of Israeli soldiers held by Hezbollah and Hamas, as part of the United Nations-brokered deal for the release of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev who were abducted in a cross-border raid by Hezbollah on July 12, 2006.

New attack, no swap talks

Hamas is suspending negotiations over the release of abducted soldier Gilad Schalit due to Israel's closure of Gaza Strip crossings, the London-based *Al-Hayyat* quoted a senior group official as saying July 4. Israel closed its commercial crossings to Gaza on July 4, a day after a Qassam rocket fired from the coastal territory struck near the western Negev town of Sderot. It was the sixth incident of rocket fire since a fragile Egyptian-brokered ceasefire went into effect June 19. Since then, the army says 11 rockets and mortars have been fired toward Israel.

WUJS to leave Arad

The WUJS Institute adult study program is moving from its longtime home in Arad to Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. The institute, a study-internship program that since 2006 has been under the auspices of Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization, will open in the new locations on Sept. 1. The 50 students registered for the fall semester have agreed to participate at the new sites. The move was precipitated by a Jewish Agency announcement that it would close the absorption center in Arad, a southern Israeli city 18 miles from Beer Sheva. The centre has provided housing and classroom space for the program for 50 years.

Libel lawsuit denied

An Israeli court rejected a libel suit against a pro-Palestinian documentary about the battle of Jenin. Petach Tikvah District Court turned down the suit filed by five Israeli veterans of the 2002 fighting in the West Bank town against Mohammed Bakri, the director of the film *Jenin, Jenin*. The court found that while the film was defamatory, the plaintiffs could not sue Bakri, because they had not been singled out in the film. Palestinian propagandists alleged that Jenin was the site of deliberate massacres, turning the town into a symbol abroad of Israeli depredation.

Files from JTA and Ha'aretz

Zimbabwe Jews hold out

By MOIRA SCHNEIDER
JTA

CAPE TOWN, South Africa – With Zimbabwe in the throes of an economic and political crisis, the country's tiny Jewish community is holding steady.

The president of a synagogue in the city of Bulawayo says Zimbabwe's approximately 320 Jews have been left largely unharmed by the violence surrounding last week's presidential election that drove opposition candidate Morgan Tsvangirai from the race.

Observers outside the country have called the vote, in which President Robert Mugabe was re-elected, a sham.

Hylton Solomon, the 52-year-old president of the Bulawayo Hebrew Congregation, says the Jews of Zimbabwe have become accustomed to the grim situation in their country.

"Over the years, everybody has been so disappointed," he told *JTA*. "It's just another day. They just accept it. The Jews, certainly in Bulawayo, I don't believe feel threatened, and I don't think they ever have."

Though they have been spared the violence, Zimbabwe's Jews have been hit hard by the economic crisis. The country has been beset by electricity, food, water and fuel shortages.

Jewish aid officials assisting the community say, however, that few Zimbabwe Jews intend to leave.

It's a community that has dwindled to 320 from a high of about 7,500 in the 1970s, when the country was called Rhodesia and ruled by a white minority.

The Jews are split between the capital of Harare and Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second-largest city. Two Jewish day schools, one in each city, have mostly non-Jewish students. The Ashkenazi and Sephardi synagogues in Harare have combined their services, and there is one rabbi in the country, David Alima of Bulawayo.

Mervyn Smith, the president of the African Jewish Congress – an initiative of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies to attend to the needs of far-flung Jewish communities in sub-Saharan Africa – said he sensed a mood of resignation among Zimbabwe's Jews on a recent visit.

"There isn't a fear of physical danger, but there's almost despair that the economy and the whole situation can ever right itself," Smith said.

The country is suffering from skyrocketing inflation estimated at 20 to 30 per cent per week. Last week, it took 40 billion Zimbabwe dollars to equal $1.

Many Jews have seen their savings totally eroded.

"People are depressed, but what is really having an impact on everyone is the collapse of the economy," said one community member who asked to remain anonymous. "Our money is worthless."

Most Zimbabwe Jews are elderly; just six Jewish children live in the country. Of the 110 Jews in Bulawayo, 26 live in Zimbabwe's only Jewish old-age home, the Savyon Lodge.

The economic crisis has hit them particularly hard.

"Many were dependent on their savings and pensions; they thought that they could live with dignity and be independent to the end of their days," said one community member. "That is not possible. Things are either unavailable or unaffordable."

> ***'As a community we carry on'***

The executive director of the African Jewish Congress, Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, says he spends 90 per cent of his time on issues relating to the Zimbabwean Jewish community.

"We provide everything from medication to rent to basic foodstuffs," Silberhaft said. "Nothing is affordable, nothing is available. We send water purification tablets because the water is no longer safe to drink.

"The reality is that there's almost nothing on the ground – there's no toilet paper, cotton, wool, medication," he said.

Silberhaft visited Zimbabwe in late May and said the Jews in the country were prepared to carry on. At his monthly distribution of essentials, the rabbi said he "watched proud Jewish people that used to be in the category of 'haves' queuing for salt, toilet paper and jam."

Silberhaft recently went to London to raise awareness of the crisis and raise money for the African Jewish Congress' Zimbabwe fund.

Though a June 13 report in the *London Jewish Chronicle* said the Jewish Agency for Israel was planning a secret emergency airlift of the country's remaining Jews, Silberhaft insists there are no such plans.

"I met with Zeev Bielski [the agency's chairman], and there's absolutely no evacuation plan whatsoever," Silberhaft said. "What the Jewish Agency and we say is, if you want to leave, as long as there are commercial airlines, why wait for an evacuation? Leave now and we will take care of you."

One community member said that despite constant calls for them to leave by panicked family members abroad, most Jews in Zimbabwe do not feel the need to run.

"As a community we carry on without any interference and celebrate all the festivals," she said. "I don't feel any urgency to leave."

"The situation is dire, not unsafe," said another Zimbabwe Jew who spoke to *JTA* on condition of anonymity. "No one that I know has been harmed in any way."

She added, "I feel safer here than in Johannesburg."

Many of Zimbabwe's non-elderly Jews regularly commute to neighbouring South Africa.

"The younger people like me have homes in South Africa," said Solomon, the synagogue president. "I often question why I'm not more positive in making a plan to move, but I don't know whether South Africa is the place to move to, quite honestly. I'm still making a bit of a living here and I have the best of both worlds."

Solomon says he visits Cape Town every four to six weeks for about 10 days to see family and go to movies and restaurants.

"It's just a bit of a bittersweet sort of life," he said.

Last July, Solomon was jailed for a night for violating Zimbabwe's price controls by overcharging on a box of spaghetti.

With everything that has happened, however, Solomon sounds a note of optimism.

"Something positive is going to come out of all this," he said. "The economic situation just cannot carry on like this anymore."

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1948...They Were There

Mayer survived assault on Latrun in War of Independence

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

Winnipegger Rubin Mayer was one of the lucky ones.

In the early morning hours of May 25, 1948, he was one of 450 men in the crack 32nd Battalion of the new Israeli army's Alexandroni Brigade charged with storming the police station at Latrun, which was heavily defended by Jordanian soldiers.

Latrun was an important objective because it overlooked the road to Jerusalem, which was at that time under siege by Arab forces and virtually cut off from help.

The Israeli force (which also included 1,650 men from the 7th Battalion of the 7th Brigade) was outnumbered and outgunned and had to charge up a hill with no cover in sight. By the end of the day, Mayer recalls, 400 of his comrades were dead and he was badly wounded.

Mayer remembers Latrun as a "huge waste of Israeli manpower.

"Men were taken right off the boats at Haifa, put into trucks and sent right into battle with little or no training," he says. "Many of them died without ever seeing Israel."

Mayer was bending over to pick up a couple of his fallen fellow soldiers when he was hit by eight bullets. He was hit in the left buttock (he says he still has the scar) and leg. He was evacuated to Beilinson Hospital in Petach Tikva, where a young Canadian surgeon volunteering in Israel was able to save his leg. Mayer spent almost a year in hospital recovering.

"I had to fight off a lot of infections," he recalls, "but I had a strong will to survive."

That strong urge to live had also helped Mayer survive the Holocaust.

He was born in northern Romania in the Bessarabia area in 1929. "I had an uncle who operated a resort in Hungary just across the border," he says. "My two sisters and I would take turns spending the summer there. It was my luck that I was spending the summer of 1940 there."

He was caught in a round-up of Jews in the area and shipped off to Auschwitz. Fortunately, he was big for an 11-year-old and was put to work rather than being sentenced to death. While his memory is a little hazy, he thinks he was in Auschwitz for about six months before he saw his opportunity to escape.

"There were garbage cans near the gate," he recalls. "I noticed a hole under the gate near the garbage cans. I crawled under and starting running. A guard saw me and started shooting, but I was quick enough to get away. I ran into the bushes."

Mayer was also fortunate that a farm family with whom he sought refuge near Auschwitz was willing to hide him. "I went into the barn," he says. "A little girl saw me and told her parents. They were nice people. They took me in and hid me in the attic for a few months."

Mayer then joined the Partisans. "I was ready to fight, and die, if necessary, for the Jewish People," he recalls. "I was also really mad."

In addition, he adds, "I was a strong kid. I was able to do hard work."

He had to learn Polish quickly.

He recounts that the Partisans he fought with had old long rifles from the Turks that didn't always work.

After the war, he returned to his family in Romania and he joined the Labour Zionist youth movement Dror Habonim. In 1946, the now young chalutz (pioneer) was taken by truck to the Italian port, Fiume, and smuggled into Israel.

"We were brought to Israel in a fishing boat with shelves down below to sleep on," he says. "We weren't allowed on deck during the day because the Haganah [pre-Israel militia] men didn't want the British to see us. We were landed at Yafo."

He was housed at a kibbutz in the north where he worked with the cows half-days and studied Hebrew the rest of the time. After a time, he joined the Haganah and was sent to the northern border.

"At first, we had one rifle for every three soldiers," he says. "Eventually, we received new supplies of rifles from Germany."

The Israeli force was outnumbered and outgunned and had to charge up a hill with no cover in sight

His wounds at Latrun were not his only war injuries. On another occasion, a bullet grazed the side of his head.

There was yet another occasion, he recalls, when he turned to a friend and fellow soldier next to him and asked for some bullets. When the friend didn't answer, he began to get angry. Then he realized that the other soldier was dead, shot through the head.

After recovering from the wounds he received at Latrun, he moved to the Galilee and later to Haifa. He married Clara, and they started a family. He found a job with Egged as a conductor and bus driver, and worked as a chauffeur and a self-employed trucker.

"I bought an old English army truck and drove the Haifa-Afula route as a private contractor," he says. "I worked long hours. One day, the truck died. I couldn't afford to fix it, so I left it by the side of the road."

The family came to Winnipeg in 1960. "We wanted to raise our children in a more peaceful environment," he says. "Also, my sisters and their husbands and my parents were living here."

His brother-in-law owned a service station in south Winnipeg. Mayer worked for his brother-in-law at first, driving tow trucks in the winter and often putting in 12-hour days. After five years, he applied for and was hired by Winnipeg Transit as a bus driver.

"I was hired right away because they could see by the way I sat in the driver's seat and handled the wheel that I knew what I was doing," he says. "I liked the fact that I would be wearing a uniform and not have to get dirty."

He retired 14 years ago.

In his leisure time, Rubin Mayer is an artist. He works with ceramic and coloured glass pieces, he paints and he is a sculptor. He makes Jewish figures.

He and Clara have three children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Rubin Mayer with one of his sculptures

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Interested applicants should send their resume and salary requirements to execposition@jcca.org no later than July 22, 2008.

Books & Authors

Why I left the Old Country

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

In 1942 the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, which had only recently relocated from Vilna to New York City, sponsored a contest for the best autobiography by a Jewish immigrant on the theme Why I Left the Old Country and What I Have Accomplished in America.

More than 200 autobiographical essays were submitted, written mostly in Yiddish and mostly by men, detailing many of the concerns of Jewish immigrants both in Europe and in America. Max Weinreich, YIVO's director and guiding light, corresponded personally with many of the writers, persuading them of the historical importance of their works and requesting elaboration. YIVO gave out 25 prizes and preserved the essays in its archives.

Now, some 65 years later, a collection of these essays has been published as *My Future Is in America: Autobiographies of Eastern European Jewish Immigrants*, edited and translated by Jocelyn Cohen and Daniel Soyer (New York University Press). I found them a pleasure to read.

Bertha (Brukhe) Fox, who came from Skvira, Ukraine, to New York in 1922, wrote about her life in an essay titled *The Movies Pale in Comparison*. The reason she left the Old Country? "Pogroms, pogroms without end," she explained. "The pogromists always burst into the houses, took whatever there was, and left. Before we could recover, it started all over."

Jews had "drowned in pools of blood" during the Revolution, were swollen with hunger in its aftermath, then had to contend with the rampaging anti-Semitic hordes. They sometimes gathered together with their neighbours, up to 100 or more in a single house. Like many, Fox went out of her mind with fear.

"One time, when the hooligans came to break down the doors of our house, I moved quickly to open up, to avert their fury. One of them aimed his rifle at me and stuck it against my chest. Out of terror, I broke into hysterical laughter. Taken aback, he lowered the rifle. When the other one asked him, 'So, what are you waiting for?' he answered, 'I can't shoot a crazy person.'"

Some of the essays record heartbreaking childhoods of deprivation, poverty and hard times. Families struggled with failing businesses, moved from one impoverished village to the next, and were sometime preyed upon by larcenous scoundrels. Still, many were loathe to travel to America, considering it a "treif" land and a refuge of criminals, especially in the 1880s, 1890s and early 1900s.

Minnie Goldstein, who travelled with her family from Warsaw to Rhode Island in 1894, related that her father, a poor businessman, was clandestinely teaching himself English but kept the reason a secret. When he finally told her mother that he wanted to go to America, she was aghast. "Who goes to America anyway? Those who run away from home because of some sort of crime or those who are banished there by the government. What does someone like you have to do with America?"

When he left despite her wishes, she was ashamed and wouldn't tell people where he had gone. Goldstein then described a gruelling ocean crossing four years later as her mother brought her to New York to be reunited with their father and husband.

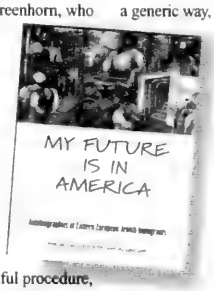
Rose Silverman, who wrote the title essay, received a harsh slap from her father the first time she told him "my future is in America." But eventually he came to realize that she was right, even though parting with her broke his heart. Six weeks before her planned departure, he grew sick. "See to it, my child, that you are a respectable person in America," he told her from his sickbed. The next day he died. Silverman travelled from Berdichev to New York in 1913.

Many of the essayists were involved in the socialist movement, both in Russia and in America; several served in the czar's army, but not could afford the bribes necessary to be assigned to a Jewish unit or avoid a difficult military posting. Others were steeped in Gemara and an observant life, which they intended to continue in the new land. Not all were true to their religious ideals.

Aaron Domnitz, who came from Romanovo, Belarus, to Baltimore in 1906, was amazed at the reception he received at Ellis Island, where a Yiddish-speaking security official asked him how he planned to make a living: he would be a Hebrew teacher, he replied.

"They laughed at me. 'Go, go,' they said, 'you'll be a great rebbe in America,' and pushed me aside. I looked around. Here I am on the other side of the railing, among those who have been let in. But why did they laugh at me? It's nothing. People are good-natured here and they were joking. I liked the reception."

Several essayists discuss the situation of the greenhorn, who upon landing may have already been in debt for a ship's ticket sent to him from his "landsleit" relatives and friends, and paid for on the instalment plan. Typically, his friends would take him to the "right" men's shops and outfit him in a new suit, hat and shoes. "Everything had to be American," Domnitz wrote. "Clothes from home were defective, even if they were of good quality and well sewn. Going to the stores with the greenhorn on Canal Street was a joyful procedure, like a Jew back home picking out an esrog."



Many studied English at night schools such as the Educational Alliance, whose manager helped them apply for citizenship and persuaded some of them to lop off the extraneous "off's" and "ski's" and otherwise Americanize their surnames.

Although many soon realized that the streets of America were not paved with gold, there is at least one satisfying anecdote here of a greenhorn quickly making good.

Chaim Kusnetz's father, a newly arrived iron worker, was given a chance to create a fancy and complicated gate that none of the more experienced workers could do. The result was worthy of exhibition in a gallery, and Kusnetz's father was soon promoted to foreman.

No less satisfying was Rose Schoenfeld's decisive action after waiting five years for her husband either to return from America or send for her and their five children. Leaving the children with a beloved cousin, she travelled across the ocean and showed up "as if I had fallen from the sky. Everyone in the house was so surprised to see me that they could not say a word. My husband started to faint from the surprise." Five months later, the cousin brought over the five children and the family was reunited in America.

At times immensely gripping, these charming and realistic tales describe not only the lives of the writers and their families but, in a generic way, the lives of our own immigrant ancestors as well.

* * *

Every Family Has a Story: Tales from the Pages of Avotaynu. Edited by Gary Mokotoff.

Several dozen genealogical adventure stories are in this collection, straight from the pages of *Avotaynu*, the international journal of Jewish genealogy. At their best, these tales by many authors combine the intrigue of a detective story by Arthur Conan Doyle with the vividness of fiction by Isaac Bashevis Singer.

My favourite is *Max*, by Avotaynu publisher Gary Mokotoff, who comes across as a close cousin to Sherlock Holmes. It begins when a woman named Marilyn calls him after reading an article about him, wanting to know if he is related to a certain Maximilian Mokotowski. Mokotoff soon informs her that she has a living brother she knew nothing about.

Later, when a man named Larry writes to ask him if they might be related, Mokotoff replies: "Are we related? Your name is Lawrence Mokotoff. You were born on June 18, 1934. Your father's name was Max Mokotoff and your mother's name was Mary Sears. I have been looking for you for 15 years. Oh yes, you have a half sister and half brother who live in the New York City area." Larry, needless to say, is dumbfounded.

Snooping around graveyards? Following a paper trail? Digging through musty archives? Who knew that this material could be woven into such a gripping form of Jewish literature? You don't have to be a genealogist to enjoy these tales of family-tree sleuthery – but it helps

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Grooving for the Jewish National Fund

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Stevie Wonder's song *I Wish* funkily blasted out of a warehouse into the parking lot of an industrial building after business hours in North York last month.

Youth blaring a radio while they worked? Not hardly. Instead, band leaders from some of the city's most renowned wedding and special occasion groups were practising, tightening up their chops in advance of Band-Tastic – a charity concert and dance party with proceeds going to the Jewish National Fund (JNF) – on July 15, at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

Not that they needed much practice, mind you. With decades of experience among them, the songs flowed as if they had all just worked together on a simchah the night before.

Larry Rodness, organizer of Band-Tastic, told the *Canadian Jewish News* the time was right for him and his musical colleagues and friends to give back to the community that had supported their careers all these years.

Rodness said the idea sprang from an impromptu conversation he had with another bandleader he met at a local mall recently.

"We thought, we've all subbed for each other over the years and wouldn't it be fun to perform for the community … for charity. It's time to give back," he said. "We all thought it was a great idea. The job was to find an organization interested in it. I've worked with the JNF on their Negev dinners for years, so I approached them and they said, 'OK.'"

Band leaders Larry Rodness on guitar, Saul Helman on drums and Kenny Simon on bass guitar rehearse for the charity concert and dance party Band-Tastic on July 15. [Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf photo]

Rodness added that the more than 14 bandleaders/musicians and guest singers are volunteering for the event with all proceeds going to the JNF.

For the past few weeks, the musicians have gotten together in the evenings to choose the songs they'll be playing for their audience and to rehearse.

Each bandleader came to the table with 10 "most favourite" songs in the hopes of getting people dancing up a storm, Rodness said.

"Everybody's going to get a chance to do their music. We've heard people are longing for a good dance gig," he said. And he's aiming to please.

Just don't expect certain tunes to be played during the five-hour, 50- to 60-song show.

Asked what songs guests can forget about hearing, the other band leaders piped up.

"We have a fee scale for often repeated songs," quipped Robin Langdon, a singer whose powerful vocals have been heard on stages across the city for years.

Other bandleaders quickly nodded their heads, shouting out songs they hope to never play again. But the consensus was that the familiar "whoa whoa whoa" whine of that staple lounge-singer, lovelorn ode *Feelings* will definitely not be heard next week.

In addition to the bands, a cappella group E.Q. will also perform and a charity auction will be held.

For ticket information, contact sheila.krone@jnf.ca or call 416-638-7200, ext. 30.

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LALLY CADEAU WINS DORA AWARD FOR HER PERFORMANCE IN *ROSE*

Actor **Lally Cadeau**, who played the title role in the Harold Green Jewish Theatre Company's production of *Rose*, has won a Dora Award for Outstanding Performance by a Female in a Principal Role. A one-woman show, the play focused on the life of a Holocaust survivor and was performed at the St. Lawrence Centre's Jane Mallet Theatre in March. **Ted Dykstra** also won a Dora for his performance in the musical *Fire*, and Dancap earned a feather in its cap with a Dora for best outstanding touring production for *The Drowsy Chaperone*.

* * *

Names in the News: Seymour Mayne, poet and Ottawa professor, recently returned from a lecture tour in Argentina on the occasion of the launching of *Relojos: Sonetos de una palabra*, a collection of his writings in Spanish translation. Mayne, a professor of creative writing and co-ordinator of the Vered Jewish Canadian Studies Program at the University of Ottawa, met with various academic, community, literary and religious figures in the Jewish community of Argentina.

A proponent of a poetic form called the "word sonnet," his poetic output includes *Killing Time*, *The Song of Moses*, *Carbon Filter*, *Light Industry*, *Hail*, *Ricochet*, *Overheard*, *September Rain* and *A Dream of Birds*. Mayne has also written a short memoir that is scheduled for publication in this month's edition of the journal *Midstream*.

* * *

Names in the News II: Eduardo Propper de Callejón, the maternal grandfather of British-born actor **Helena Bonham Carter**, was recently named a Righteous Gentile by Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum. A wartime Spanish secretary in Bordeaux in 1940, Propper de Callejon, who was of half Spanish and half Jewish ancestry, issued thousands of visas to refugees escaping Nazi-occupied France for Spain and Portugal. The family is also genealogically connected to the Rothschilds and the Fould-Springers, a French banking family. Bonham Carter's many films include *Room with a View*, *The Wings of the Dove* and *Sweeney Todd*.

* * *

Dramatic Notes

• Three Toronto Fringe Theatre plays continue at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre until July 13. They are: *Lost Daughter* by **Tara Goldstein**; *The Barbeque King* by **Mark Brownell**; and *Taking Liberties*, written and directed by **Dave Carley**. www.fringetoronto.com or 416-966-1062.

• Soulpepper Theatre Company presents **William Congreve**'s comedy of manners *The Way of the World* in a co-production with Ottawa's National Arts Centre. The witty 1700 restoration classic, re-imagined to the late 1950s, explores themes of social convention, artifice, love and sexual power. Young Centre for the Performing Arts, 55 Mill St., Distillery District. Now until Aug. 2. 416-866-8666, soulpepper.ca.

• *Time To Put My Socks On*, a one-man show about disabilities and love by **Alan Shain** of Ottawa, finishes its run this week at the Toronto Fringe Festival. (It's at the Tarragon Theatre until Saturday.) Shain has been preparing the show for its debut at the National Arts Centre's Fourth Stage next spring.

• Dancap Productions presents the quirky musical comedy *Avenue Q*. Elgin Theatre, July 29 to Aug. 31. $50 to $100. Ticketmaster 416-872-5555, dancaptickets.com.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Guernica Editions presents a celebration of the life and work of **Malca Litovitz** with the launch of two new books: *First Day* by Litovitz; and *Slow Dancing: Creativity and Illness* by Litovitz and **Elana Wolff**. Bar Italia, 582 College St. Sunday, July 20, 2 to 4 p.m.

• The Royal Conservatory of Music has launched a new $50-million capital campaign, co-chaired by **Tony** and **Elizabeth Comper** and assisted by a "cabinet" of 56 business and civic leaders including **Sharyn Salsberg Ezrin, Hershell Ezrin, Arlene Perly Rae, Bob Rae, Amy Sky** and **Marc Jordan**.

Joan Rivers revels in being politically incorrect

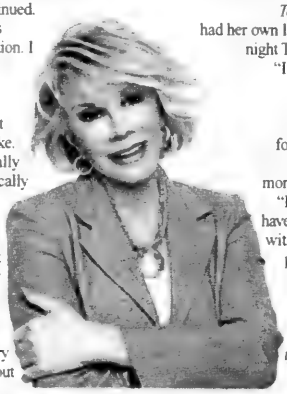
By RON PASCOE AND PAUL TELNER
Special to The CJN

Joan Rivers, one of our time's most unconventional comedians, is returning to Montreal for the *Just For Laughs* comedy festival.

The irreverent Rivers hosts the festival's Videotron Just for Laughs Gala on July 16.

When the *Canadian Jewish News* got on the phone with Rivers from her New York apartment, she immediately asked, "So what do you want to know?"

Has she been outspoken from day one?, we asked. "Probably not," Rivers replied. "I think most of us that go into comedy go into it because we were always thinking rather than saying what we thought was funny," she continued.



"In high school, I was not the class clown. I was the class wit. Big distinction. I never put the lampshade on my head, but I made the joke about *Moby Dick*."

Rivers thinks comedy is the last bastion of being able to say what you like. "Absolutely everything is so politically correct nowadays. My act is so politically incorrect," she said.

"It has to be, please! If it's funny, people laugh. If they don't laugh, then perhaps you've gone too far. I do that at least twice in my act every night. I say to the audience, 'Too far, eh?'"

Along with longtime fans, college students often populate her shows, in part because her act is not about memory lane. "People interview me and ask about Johnny Carson. Who cares – you know? I'm talking about being green, old, sex, death, the absolute fallout from 9-11, and terrorists being hideous and ugly – all current," Rivers said.

After gaining much notoriety from a 1965 appearance on *The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson*, among other gigs at the time, she wrote for the hidden-camera show *Candid Camera*. She said she found writing for *Just For Laughs Gags*, also a hidden-camera show, difficult.

"For everyone that you see that gets hysterical or funny, you really have 15 hours of people going, 'Oh, okay,' and walking away.

"I did a thing once where I was shoplifting and people would just watch me. Lily Tomlin was on the show with me, and she couldn't take it anymore, she was so bored."

In the 1980s, Rivers was the first permanent guest host of *The Tonight Show*; appeared on *Saturday Night Live* and had her own late-night show on Fox, but she doesn't watch late-night TV anymore.

"I don't tune into Leno or Letterman. Those shows have become so commercial. I have yet to see someone come out that isn't pushing something," she said. "Wouldn't it be nice if someone came on for no reason other than just wanting to be there?"

After having celebrated her 75th birthday last month, Rivers continues to have a full schedule.

"I have a play in Edinburgh that will go to London. I have two books coming out. I have a tour going around with my comedy act. I have my jewelry company. I perform Wednesday nights at [the New York club] The Cutting Room," she said.

"I'm in a series called *Z Rock* coming to IFC [Independent Film Channel], doing a TV pilot, offered another game show and will be on *Celebrity Apprentice*."

She admits that she's never seen *Celebrity Apprentice*, Donald Trump's reality TV show. "They are going to send me tapes."

Rivers and her daughter, Melissa, have worked together as co-hosts of endless red-carpet events, starting in 1996 for the TV channel E! Entertainment, then for the TV Guide Channel and next for AOL. "It's a lot of fun to work with your daughter. She's the only one that I'm happy who does better than I do," Rivers said.

"I'm very competitive. I'm not sitting back and passing the mantle. You're going to have to rip it from my shoulders."

She expressed her admiration for the comedian George Carlin, who died recently. "I knew George, and he had a great life. They are replaying all his specials. A star for 40 to 50 years. He worked the week before died," she said.

"How nice not to be forgotten, to die with your boots on? I think that's exactly how he wanted it. He left a great legacy for being a respected comedian among his peers. He was great."

One of Rivers' mainstays is talking about celebrities she can't stand. "Russell Crowe is very, very rude," she said. Tommy Lee Jones, too. Diane Keaton is rude and weird. She's always dressing in a Charlie Chaplin outfit. I have pictures of her on the red carpet with white gloves. They're like clown gloves."

She doesn't hate everyone. In fact, she thinks Rosie O'Donnell is brilliant, finds Nicole Kidman charming, adores Howard Stern, who often has Rivers on as a guest, and speaks highly of her fellow *Just For Laughs* guest Kathy Griffin.

Just For Laughs *has expanded to include shows in Toronto from July 23 to 27, including galas hosted by Martin Short (July 24), Jason Alexander (25) and Jimmy Fallon (27). In Montreal, the festival runs from July 8 to 20 and includes a special event featuring* South Park *creators Matt Stone and Trey Parker, and Canadians Jeremy Hotz and Seth Rogen.*

The hosts of the signature gala series at St-Denis Theatre include Kathy Griffin (July 17), Craig Ferguson (18), Jeremy Piven (18) and Jimmy Fallon (19). For tickets, visit hahaha.com.

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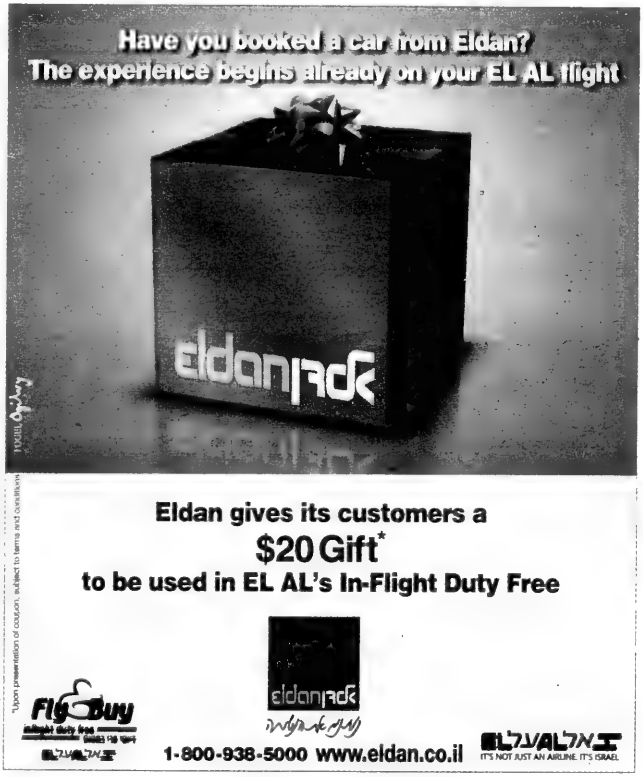
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Artist trades IT career for paintbrush and beeswax

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

Nava Waxman's studio is filled with everything but her paintings.

Pieces of copper in every shape, form and texture spill out over her desk. A can of beeswax, white and solid, sits in the corner and, on the other side of the tiny room, hangs a thin string, almost like a clothesline. Instead of clothes, it holds sketches, side by side in chronological order.

"Drawings are my passion. I do drawings in sequence," she said.

Waxman turns her drawings into paintings using ink, oil paint, pieces of copper and beeswax.

"I started working with copper before beeswax," she said.

Ever since her father-in-law brought a bag of junk home, Waxman has been scouring garage sales for copper pieces.

It was only during an encaustic course (the process of burning in colours) that she realized the two materials fit together.

"To be honest, when I took the encaustic course, I started using copper in class. Once I layered the beeswax, I was almost crying – it looked like they were meant to be," she said.

When I visited Waxman's studio, most of her paintings had been moved to the Blue Dot Gallery, where she had her first solo show last month. The few that were left in her studio were in various stages of creation.

The paintings I saw there were painted with similar earth tones. Smoky reds and blues dominated, and the images included barren trees, electric wires, hills and shaky-looking ladders.

"I guess I feel comfortable in an environment that looks raw," she said, staring at the softly sloping hill in a painting behind her. "Without it, nothing would work. I want to make a really natural piece of land, a simple hill, a simple valley. That's where I feel comfortable."

Born in Israel, Waxman, 34, used to work in information technology. She moved to Canada in 2003 to pursue a career in art.

"It was something I was wishing and dreaming about all my life. I was always creative. I did art in my spare time," she said. "I knew that in order to pursue my dream, I needed to make a radical change. Moving to Canada was the best choice."

In Toronto, Waxman could do little else but paint.

"When I moved to Canada, I was pretty much alone. I had no friends, no family. I didn't work. I had so much spare time. I woke up, took the subway to the art supply store, got home and sat and worked," she said.

It didn't take long for her paintings to sell.

"The community here in Toronto is very embracing," she said. "My paintings sell fast – nothing stays for a long time. It took me a long time to do a solo show. When I did… people knew me, they were waiting for me."

Waxman's show at the Blue Dot attracted about 180 people for the opening. By the second-last day of the show, three-quarters of the paintings were sold.

Deenah Dunkelman Mollin, her public relations representative and friend, isn't surprised by Waxman's success.

"I saw her work and I wanted to cry. It moved me. There's so much meaning in every square inch," she said.

When describing her paintings, Waxman was hesitant to analyze them.

"I feel that the people who buy my paintings try to build their own meaning," she said. "I don't think they're really urged to know what it means to me. The people who are drawn to my paintings are people who like the abstract."

While Waxman is a full-time artist, she doesn't spend all her time bent over her canvas.

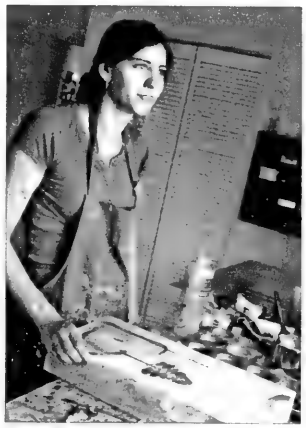
"People have the impression that an artist has dramatic moments when lightning strikes and they are suddenly inspired. It is not that way for me. I find myself constantly reading, writing, sketching, pondering the most fleeting to the deepest of thoughts," she said.

"Being a constant observer of life, immersing myself in nature, taking photos, collecting found objects and then integrating aspects of these elements into my work. This is all inspiring to me."

Waxman is preparing for her second solo show in October. In the meantime, she's developing an international clientele.

"I'm sending paintings to England, the U.S., Vancouver, Israel. It's amazing," she said.

For more information, visit www.navawaxman.com.



Nava Waxman at work

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Israeli artists show works at Toronto outdoor exhibit

Two Israeli artists, Rachel Goldraich and Moshiko Botser, are participating in this year's Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibit at Nathan Phillips Square.

Goldraich was born in Zimbabwe and moved to Israel as a child. She graduated with a degree in art from Haifa University and envisioned her future as a painter.

However, her path was altered when she attended a workshop put on by an American lampworker, where she was taught the basics of creating small sculptures out of borosilicate glass.

"I had collected these as a child, and the realization that I could actually make them fascinated me," Goldraich said.

After many hours of practice and a lot of shattered glass, she began making sculptures worthy of sale.

During a workshop years later, Goldraich learned to work with soda glass and thus opened up the world of glass beads for herself.

"I was completely addicted. The medium of hot glass, the flame, and the magic of transforming a solid glass rod into a miniature piece of art," she said.

When asked about presenting her art to more than 100,000 people in three days, Goldraich admitted she is panicky and overwhelmed, however, she added that she is also excited and honoured.

Moshiko Botser's reaction to the large number of visitors was slightly different.

"I hope to be exposed and find an art dealer and galleries in Canada," he said.

Botser was a self-professed nomad when he was younger. His travels around the world eventually led him to Katmandu, where he met the silversmith for the king of Nepal.

Botser was taken to a studio there, where 15 men were working. "They were doing all the fireworks of welding with the power of their lungs," he said.

That night, the workers gave him a ring. "It has been almost 20 years now, and I still have the ring with me. I sleep with it," Botser said.

His visit to the studio inspired him to become a silversmith.

At one point, Moshiko found pieces of plastic in the garbage that he decided to use to create artwork. "I started to combine gold and plastic. That was the beginning," Botser said.

His art is a reflection of the time we live in. "Polymers, which I am working with, [are] the most important material of our time. If in the Stone Age people built their things from stone, in the Iron Age, they built their tools from Iron, then today is the polymer era," Botser said.

He will be in Booth 725 in the purple section at the art show, and Goldraich will be in Booth 667 of the yellow section.

Admission is free for the exhibition, which runs July 11 to 13. For more information, visit the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibit website at www.torontooutdoorart.org.

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120 COTTAGE WANTED
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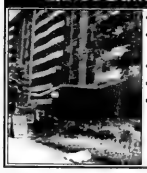

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Canadian cyclists sought for Maccabiah Games

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — By day, Sylvan Adams, head of Iberville Developments Ltd., is a savvy, successful real estate developer.

Come evening, though, you're just as likely to catch Adams, 49, manoeuvring his mega-expensive racing bike around a looping track, competing in a bike race on the Criterium circuit.

And as often as not, he's a fair bet to win.

Adams said these days, he competes "two to four" times a week in the masters category in the sport he loves.

He loves cycling and racing so much, in fact, that he recently took up former Maccabi Canada president Roy Salomon's offer to captain Canada's first cycling team entry at the next Maccabiah Games in 2009.

Salomon told *The CJN* that cycling has received the go-ahead to be a competition sport at the next games, set for July 12 to 23, 2009.

"There should be 11 or 12 countries competing," he said. "It's got the potential to be very big."

For Adams, who has been to Israel many times but never to the Games, the opportunity is more than welcome.

"I've known Roy and [his late brother] Dick my whole life," Adams said in an interview. "I don't take on many of these types of projects, but Roy tells me there's a very, very special feeling when you're there."

Indeed, Adams believes that heading Canada's first Jewish cycling team will be a fine way to mesh his abiding respect for the Maccabi cause with his own passion for the sport.

Sylvan Adams careers around a turn at a recent Père Sablon Criterium race.

It was a passion that was rekindled for Adams about a decade ago. Always active in sports, Adams grew into adulthood on his bike. "I didn't even own a car until I was 24."

Although he always stayed active in one sport or another, he took up serious cycling in his late 30s, which he acknowledged was "relatively late." He then got the racing bug after seeing a Criterium race in Laval. The person who urged him to go was Paulo Saldanha, a former top Canadian and two-time Canadian masters road cycling champion.

Adams confesses that before that moment, he didn't even realize that there was an organized bike-racing circuit.

"I left there completely exhilarated," he recalled, and at age 40, decided to try racing out for himself. He got the required licence to race, and he was off. One year into it, Adams had already won four races in his age group – 39 to 49. One of his more recent competitions was a Père Sablon race on the Criterium circuit.

Adams said in terms of recruiting members for the Maccabi Canada team, he would be "putting feelers out," reaching out to Canadian Jewish cyclists who might be interested in competing at the Games, which are expected to see the participation of a record 8,000 Jewish athletes from around the world.

The overriding criteria for qualifying, Adams said, will be racing results. "No trials are necessary." Adams himself plans to compete in the masters category.

Perhaps only cycling aficionados would truly understand the appeal of the sport, but for Adams, it's a matter of the harmony it produces between the rider and the bike.

"I love the noises of the bicycle, the sound of the bicycle, the speed of the bicycle," he said.

Sports like tennis and hockey are "all-skill sports," Adams said. Cycling, of course, also takes talent and training, but it's less technical in nature, and in that sense, more democratic, allowing all, regardless of age, to enjoy those qualities.

Individuals interested in competing in cycling at the 2009 Maccabiah Games can contact Adams by e-mail at sadams@ibervilledev.com.

Canada hopes for medal in golf at 2009 Maccabiah

MONTREAL — Don't be surprised if Canada shows itself to be bona fide medal contender when members of its golf team take their first swings at the Maccabiah Games in Israel next year – the 18th, or chai, edition.

So says Montrealer Richard Marsh, one of the province's best Jewish amateur golfers, who at 56 is captaining Canada's Maccabi golf team along with Danny Zack of Vancouver.

"It will be a very competitive team," Marsh promised. "I would really like to see 30 to 40 people coming to the tryouts."

National trials will take place at Montreal's Elm Ridge Golf Club on Sept. 14 and 15, but Marsh said there's a new wrinkle this year to attract people: the tryouts will also be a trophy tournament.

The event will be called the Canadian Maccabiah Golf Championship. Needless to say, not just anybody will be able hit the links. For the men's open tournament, you need a verifiable handicap of no more than six, and for the women's open, 10.

Already, Marsh noted, there are some very talented golfers with an excellent shot at being on the team that will hit the links in Caesarea, which is about 90 minutes outside Tel Aviv and whose course, the only 18-hole course in Israel, recently underwent a complete renovation.

They include 23-year-old Montrealer Jeff Barkun, who Marsh said "hits the ball a mile," is a very good control player, and plays on the Quebec amateur tour; one-handicapper Evan Krakower of Montreal, who's only 19; and McGill University student David Albert, who plays on the McGill gold team.

Among the contenders on the women's side is Torontonian Stephanie Klein, who has competed at several national events and plays the amateur circuit in Ontario.

The number of individuals competing in the juniors or master's levels will depend entirely on how many express an interest. Golfers at the national trials are expected to pay an entry fee of $180. Master's players going to Israel – in any sport – must pay for the entire trip themselves. Marsh said Canada has fielded some "good, good teams" over the years. Co-captain Zack was a member of a bronze medal-winning team in 1977, and in 1981, Canada earned a team silver while Billy Holzman of Ottawa's Rideau View Golf Club earned an individual bronze.

There were no Canadian golf medals during the 1990s, and Marsh said that next year's Maccabiah will see Canada facing some stiff competition in golf, especially from South Africa and the United States.

But he thinks there's hope.

"If you don't go into it thinking you can win it, then there's no point going in," he said.

Marsh, who is married to an Israeli, is looking forward to being in Israel again.

"The Maccabiah is something that gets into your system, your bloodstream" he said. "It feels like you're going home."

For more details on the tryouts, visit Maccabi Canada's website at www.maccabicanada.com, e-mail Marsh at r.marsh@maccabi-canada.com, or e-mail Zack at d.zack@maccabicanada.com.

— D. L.

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Some advice for Bridezilla

Sandie Benitah
20Something

After a long, dreary winter, summer is finally here – the season for suntanning, vacationing and, of course, getting married.

I've been fortunate enough to have been a bridesmaid close to 10 times in my life, and, no, I'm not being sarcastic when I say fortunate.

I've been fortunate because I've stood under the chupah for some amazing friends, including my sisters. But I'm also fortunate because being a bridesmaid has taught me a lot about women, about friendship and, most of all, about patience.

The best brides that I've had the pleasure of helping have been the girls who haven't been planning their wedding since they discovered Bridal Barbie as a kid.

These brides are considerate and easygoing. They let me choose the kind of dress I want to wear, they didn't insist on having me wear lavender or seafoam green, and they were certainly appreciative of my efforts.

These are the brides that make it a pleasure to bend over backward for.

Then there are other brides who take their friends dedication to them for granted.

I have one colleague who was her best friend's maid of honour this past May. She made us all laugh when, at lunch one day, she showed us a long "to do" list that she had just received from the bride via e-mail.

My colleague's chores included picking up the bride's wedding dress, spending a Saturday afternoon wrapping bonbonieres and putting together a video scrapbook to show at the reception.

"The worst thing is, she wants me to run the video myself throughout dinner," she complained to us. "I don't even get to eat dinner at her wedding!"

My friends and I have a book full of horror stories to tell about our experiences with Bridezillas, but I don't think venting is the solution to this problem.

Now, I know that brides need all the support they can get. They've got a great party to plan and a new life to prepare for. But many of them get carried away planning their big day and lose sight of what it's all about. That's when they morph from Bridal Barbie into Bridezilla.

A wedding is a declaration of commitment and celebration of love between two people – nothing more, nothing less. It's not about a bride's dress, the floral centrepieces or the colour scheme. In my opinion, these frivolous details don't bring much value to the big day. If anything, they take away from it.

A lot of brides consider their wedding day to be a day to shine and be the centre of attention. The grooms are simply there to stand beside them and act as Prince Charming in this stage production.

Even retailers are keen to jump on this notion. One commercial for tuxedos always irks me when it says, "When everyone's looking at her, she'll be looking at you."

I feel for the grooms out there. I really do.

While wedding receptions can be beautiful, emotional and incredibly special, so is the relationship that is being celebrated. Years later, no one will remember the dresses your bridesmaids wore (I hope!), but they will remember the kind of relationship you have fostered since the wedding.

So to my fellow bridesmaids, I say let's gently remind our bride friends that we're here to support them as much as we can, especially when it comes to helping them keep some perspective.

And to the brides that we have the honour of standing next to, please remember that in they eyes of your family, friends and, especially, new husband, you don't need a princess dress to be special to us.

After all, a good friendship and good relationship makes every day a special day for all of us, not just for you.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

I have a very close circle of friends. Janice, one of my dearest friends, broke up with Josh more than a year ago, but they remained close, and he has become an important member of this circle.

A couple of months ago, Josh's mom passed away. Since this incident, Josh and I have become closer. I lost my mother last year, and this common grief has bonded the two of us. It's obvious that Josh and I are headed into a relationship that will extend beyond the boundaries of "just friends." I have no idea how Janice is going to feel about this, and I love her dearly and don't want to hurt her. I also don't want to give up on what Josh and I have developed. It's a very special relationship and we have become very close. I'm stuck and scared. Help!

Testing Loyalty

Dear Testing Loyalty,

Dating your friend's ex falls into the category of a "dating grey zone" and there are no easy answers here. Your situation is a little unusual, because although Janice and Josh have broken up, Josh remains within this close circle of friends. This means that Josh and Janice were mature enough to put their breakup behind them and continue with their friendship. Often a relationship will end badly, and hard feelings and anger are left behind.

Don't let Janice discover this through the grapevine. It's possible that if you play your cards right, you will end up in the best possible scenario, with both friendships intact.

You must be honest with Janice. Explain how innocently your bond developed. Hopefully, Janice will be onside, but you have to prepare yourself for the chance that she won't approve. In that case, you will have some hard decisions ahead of you. But even if Janice gives you her blessing, the dynamic of your relationship could change. However, you are not at that stage yet, and you may never be.

Often the best relationships are created when the two people involved start out as friends first. More often than not, those are the relationships that can truly survive the test of time, and it sounds like this is what you and Josh share.

Friendship is about honesty, loyalty, support and respect. Your circle of friends has already tested some difficult situations and has come out on top.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN. *email: eb@cjnews com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional*

We began before birth

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

I was born on April 27, 1960, but I began much before that.

Canadian Jewish News columnist Bill Gladstone is my second cousin on my father's side. He is a fine man, a journalist, and someone with a commanding sense of family and history so much so that he has spend years ensconced in genealogy, revealing his roots and mine.

Recently, Cousin Billy published a book on his findings titled *One Hundred Years in Canada: The Rubinoff-Naftolin Family Tree* (www.rubnaft.com). This masterful book took 20 years to create. Billy interviewed some 200 people and researched ships' manifests, naturalization papers, and marriage and death records. He also designed and edited the book.

In *One Hundred Years*, Billy reveals his talent as a writer and researcher, and his eagerness to share with readers gems of information he discovered, as well as the simple truth – that we are part of history and connected to all of its dots. Billy is gifted.

So what happened before April 27, 1960? According to Cousin Billy's findings, a lot!

It all began – or at least as far back as documents reveal – in the early 1800s with Mr. and Mrs. Rubinowitz who were "born between Bobruisk and the Dneiper River in a region now southeastern Belarus." The Rubinowitzes had five children: Rachel, who married Shmuel Chaim Rubinowitz; Riva Rishe, who wed Itsha Maisha Naftolin; Binyamin, who made Esther (Dobin) his wife; Minya, who accepted Elimelech Arnoff's proposal; and Aaron, who married Esther Cahansky. Bill divides the book into five sections – one for each branch of the families – and takes us on a century-long trek with each one of them.

In my family, the Naftolin branch, Cousin Billy introduces us to my bubbie, Mary (Naftolin) Rosensweig, through a literary synopsis of her life and a charming picture dated 1911, which revealed a fashion sense that was quite contrary to my memories of her. Her life was hard.

I read about my parents' sojourn to Kitchener in 1954 and saw an intriguing snapshot of my Uncle Berel visiting former president Jimmy Carter at the White House in 1977. I learned I had a cousin who was a barber, and another who married the "city legend" Sammy Taft, the owner of the Toronto store The Hatter. He was renowned for bringing the tradition of the "hat trick" into the National Hockey League. (Taft offered a hat to any player who scored three times – a hat trick – in a game at Maple Leaf Gardens. Fans followed his lead and offered their hats to players as well, throwing them onto the ice.)

Billy is a very heimish fellow. He is warm in spirit and generous, and one gets the sense he is making a very real-life connection between us and the family members in his book, especially those who risked life and limb to ensure our lives in this *Goldene Medina* (golden land).

The 600 pictures in the book are riveting and almost put us in the same room with the many characters in our family. A black and white two-page spread from 1937 of members of the Agudos Hamishpocha (also known as the United Families Organization, an affinity group launched in 1928 that offered newly arrived family members free loans and a familial place) reflects the varied emotions of those who preceded me by decades yet share a special DNA and history unique to us. It's nice to meet you.

Cousin Billy is humble and a spiritual person. In the acknowledgements, he writes, "I would like to thank the Rebonno shel Olam, the Almighty, for putting this task before me, then granting me the privilege of completing it."

Thank you, Bill, for this treasure. You remind us that we began long before our birth dates, and that family and personkind are inextricably connected. This alone contributes greatly to shalom, peace in our world.

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This Week

National

Seniors troupe dances up a storm in Ghana. ***Page 3***

Campus

Montreal Hillel looks to go green. ***Page 19***

Heebonics

Shane Kippel grows up on *Degrassi*. ***Page 29***

Arts & Travel

Tiny island in a charming Mediterranean setting. ***Page 31***

On cjnews.com

The clock is ticking on Iran. *Analysis*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions.....10
The Kirshner File 11
According to Reports 13
Jewish Life 14
On Campus 19
Health & Lifestyles.....20
Family Moments 21
What's New 22
Obituaries and Notices 24
Yiddish Corner 24
Heebonics.....29
Arts & Travel.....30

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Aftermath of an attack in Nahariya during the Second Lebanon War in 2006. *[Isral Sun photo]*

Israeli Canadians sue Lebanese bank

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — In what is being described as an unprecedented Canadian civil action, a Lebanese bank is being accused of being complicit in terrorism against Israeli civilians by virtue of providing financial services to Hezbollah.

The Beirut-based Lebanese Canadian Bank (LCB), which has a Montreal office, is being sued in Quebec Superior Court by four Canadian citizens living in northern Israel for damages they say they suffered during the war between Israel and Hezbollah in 2006.

The plaintiffs are seeking more than $6 million in total from the LCB, which they hold liable because they allege it knowingly and unlawfully did extensive business during and for two years prior to the conflict with two Lebanese groups that have been identified by the United States as financial arms of Hezbollah.

"LCB, in providing banking services to Hezbollah-related finance companies, has facilitated Hezbollah's terrorist activities," the suit alleges. "In so acting, LCB facilitated and lent support to the violent acts of Hezbollah, and violated the rights of the plaintiffs whose injuries were caused by LCB in providing the financial infrastructure and facilities for the funding of those violent acts."

The suit further claims that the rockets fired by Hezbollah from southern Lebanon into Israel during the war targeted civilians and that their firing constitutes terrorism as defined by Canadian and international law.

"We deny all allegations," said the LCB's Montreal representative, Tina Al-Hattouni.

The suit was filed July 2 by Sarah Yefet and her daughter Shoshana Sappir of Safed, and a couple, Rochelle and Oz Shalmoni of Karmiel. All are Canadian-born, except Oz, who came to Canada as a child.

Continued on page 17

Destroying myths about organ donation

By RABBI REUVEN P. BULKA

Once an idea gets crazy glued into the brain, it is hard – indeed, almost impossible – to detach. We Jews have our fair share of such myths, so many, in fact, that I have written two books about them, *What You Thought You Knew about Judaism* and *More of What You Thought You Knew about Judaism*. A few teaser myths are that we are the chosen people (really we are the choosing people), that the term goy means someone non-Jewish (we are often referred to as goy, a nation, including in the Shabbat afternoon Minchah service), or that Judaism is anti-pleasure.

Comment

For the moment I would like to zero in on one myth (and a very significant one at that): the myth that Judaism is against organ donation.

In a word, this is simply untrue.

Just recently, a highly respected sage, Rabbi Zalman Nehemiah Goldberg, son-in-law of the late, great venerated sage Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, shocked many by stating that Judaism is in favour of organ donation. He attached the usual caveat that one should consult one's rabbi on this. But the message is clear and unequivocal.

The question is, will it make a difference?

Why would it not? Because it remains an entrenched myth in the mind of so many that Judaism is against organ donation. Jews and non-Jews are convinced of this.

Why do so many people believe this? There are a number of possible reasons. One is simple: ignorance. People don't know, and therefore assume, often incorrectly. Another is that it is convenient to believe that Judaism is against organ donation, because that way, you are off the hook and don't need to contemplate this urgent and life-saving matter. People generally avoid all conversation regarding their eventual demise, including buying burial plots. Organ donation fits with this avoidance response.

Continued on page 16

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We are on vacation until July 21. Our next issue will appear July 31.

The News in Brief

CANADA

Jailed Man Released

VANCOUVER — A Canadian Jew who spent 12 years in a Bulgarian jail for a crime he says he didn't commit arrived in Vancouver July 6. Michael Kapoustin 56, who was released July 3 from a Sofia jail, has been reunited with his wife and son, who is now 15 and hadn't seen his father since he was two. Kapoustin was charged with fraud and embezzlement in the early 1990s in connection with a business venture. He was jailed in 1996 and eventually cleared of fraud, but was convicted of embezzlement in 2002. The Bulgarian-born Kapoustin, who came to Canada with his family from Hungary in 1956, was released after Ottawa lobbied on his behalf.

Resort Purchased

TORONTO — The Tel Aviv-based Mishorim Development Group, chaired by Israeli Canadian businessman Gil Blutrich, has purchased the Horseshoe Valley Resort in Collingwood, Ont., north of Toronto, the *Toronto Star* and Israel's *Globes* newspaper reported last week. The sale price was around $38 million, the *Star* reported. Blutrich's Skyline International Development Corp. recently bought much of the nearby town of Port McNicoll on Georgian Bay for $100 million.

WORLD

Obama To Visit Israel

NEW YORK — Barack Obama will visit Israel next week. The Democratic U.S. presidential nominee is expected to arrive on July 22 or 23 for a two- or three-day visit, *Yediot Achronot* reported. Obama, who is seen as keen to boost his security credentials and support among U.S. Jews, confirmed he plans to visit Israel as part of a Mideast tour. He's expected to meet Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and other top leaders, as well as visit Sderot to show solidarity with residents there. His Republican opponent, John McCain, also visited Israel recently.

Dachau Seeks Twin

BERLIN — The German city of Dachau is seeking a new image – through a sister city in Israel. "Of course the city of Dachau would like to have a partner city in Israel. But it must be organized with great sensitivity," mayor Peter Bürgel told the *Welt am Sonntag* newspaper. Dachau is the site of one of the first concentration camps created on Hitler's orders. Bürgel, a member of Bavaria's conservative Christian Social Union Party was elected mayor in March. He said he wants to improve international contacts, particularly with Israel.

Attack Arrests Made

PARIS — French officials have charged two men in their 20s for the beating of a 17-year-old Jewish boy in an incident that prompted an outcry in Paris. On July 10, Foued O., 26, and Sekou M. 25, were charged with "attempted murder and group violence aggravated by their anti-Semitic character" for assaulting Rudy Haddad on June 21. Haddad, who was wearing a kippah, was brutally beaten with metal bars while on his way to synagogue. Both the suspects deny the charges but admit to being present during the attack on Haddad. Four other suspects being held by authorities earlier last week were released.

Group Ends Agriprocessors Boycott

NEW YORK — An Orthodox social justice group has called off its boycott of America's largest kosher meat supplier less than a month after it began.

The boycott, organized by Uri L'tzedek, went into effect in mid-June in an effort to pressure Agriprocessors to institute mechanisms to ensure compliance with U.S. labour laws. On July 8, the group said it was suspending the boycott because the company "is beginning to take significant steps towards directly addressing the concerns" raised about treatment of its workers.

Agriprocessors has sustained a wave of negative media coverage since May 12, when U.S. authorities conducted the largest workplace immigration raid in American history at its meat-packing plant in Postville, Iowa. In the wake of the raid, employees have claimed they were underpaid and sexually and physically abused. Agriprocessors officials deny the allegations and the federal government has yet to bring any charges against the company's owners, the Lubavitch Rubashkin family of Brooklyn, N.Y.

Uri L'tzedek cited a number of reforms it says have been instituted by Agriprocessors' new compliance officer, including the creation of an anonymous tip line for workers, a new safety department and new safety training.

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Seniors dance troupe performs in Ghana

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

It took less than five minutes for each member of the Vintage Dancers, a local dance troupe, to respond affirmatively about performing in Ghana.

When their teacher, performing artist and educator Sarina Condello, e-mailed the 12 women, all between the ages of 62 and 73, she wasn't surprised at the quick responses, she said.

The troupe, 11 of whom are Jewish, travelled in March along with Condello; Kwasi Dunyo, an internationally recognized drummer and teacher; and two photographers, to Dagbamete, Ghana, to take part in the spring festival, a spiritual event in that region of Ghana.

"Most had not been to Africa, and they all have a sense of adventure. They were ready immediately to come with me," Condello said.

Dancer Frances Bleviss, who was accompanied by her 33-year-old daughter, said that despite the "extreme heat and humidity, the trip was amazing.

"The dancing was a hit – about 1,000 people attended one performance – and we all managed to ignore the drops of blood from a goat carcass on the floor of the shrine when we danced barefoot wearing traditional African gear."

When one dancer, whom Bleviss described as short and heavy, came onto the stage, the crowd went wild, she said.

Esther Pifko

"There were cheers and shouts. They applauded her for her size and her spirit. She said she had never been appreciated like that before."

Condello, 44, said that our culture is youth-driven. "We do not recognize the creativity, wisdom and power of our elders. They are almost invisible. Attached to that is the notion that their bodies are not sexually attractive, and that they have no agility. All of that is absolutely untrue. My dancers are sensual and energetic, and most are over 65."

Condello said that Africa is the birthplace of communal dance, and her intention in planning the trip was to bring the women together to celebrate the ecstasy and joy of communal dancing.

"Dancing is an inherent part of African culture. They dance to pray, to mourn, to celebrate, and I wanted my dancers to experience that. In Africa, they dance until they die moving. Nothing is ever the same after you've danced to drums in Africa."

Bleviss, who has been dancing with Condello for three years, said that until then, she hadn't danced in three decades.

"Then I retired, my mother died, and a 9½ year relationship ended. I knew I would find myself through dance, because it was a way to connect my heart and spirit through movement."

Every woman on the trip came back with a sense of pride, she said. "We all got something from the experience, and we

Continued on page 12

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Uplifting and impressive

From the editor's desk

In an old, renovated building, on a street that is a small capillary of intense Jerusalem life, connected to and running north from Yafo Road, one of the city's oldest arteries of traffic and history, some 100 students from around the world gather every day to learn filmmaking.

Talented, earnest and imaginative in their studies, the students are also de facto "ambassadors" of a way of life not normally found in the film industries of most western countries.

The creative and guiding ethos of the Ma'ale School of Television, Film and the Arts is respect for traditional Jewish values. It is without a doubt the only such school of its kind in the world.

Founded 18 years ago by individuals who mostly came from observant homes, it has become today, one of the great social, cultural and artistic successes of Israeli society.

Last month in the company of Steve Solomon, the director of the Canada Desk of the Jerusalem Foundation, the *Canadian Jewish News* visited the school to see first-hand this busy hive of artistic endeavour, which after less than two decades has already achieved such wide acclaim.

"There is rarely a film festival in Israel and Europe that does not show a Ma'ale film," the school's director Neta Ariel told us. "The quality of the films speaks for themselves. Ma'ale films, shorts of about 20 to 30 minutes in length, are sent to festivals all around the world. Many have won awards."

Last month, a trio of Ma'ale films were shown in Vancouver, Montreal and Toronto. They won the hearts of the audiences, as noted by our correspondent Reva Kaiser Wein in the June 12 issue of *The CJN*, Toronto edition.

Typical of all youthful quests, the films of Ma'ale deal with themes such as the search for love, questions of identity, relationships and one's place in society. But their special lens is that of deference for Jewish tradition.

Though the school began as a way to open up the observant community to the world of filmmaking, people from all parts of Israeli society attend the school today. Its students and teachers come from the left and the right, the observant and the non-observant, from the culture of Tel Aviv and from the culture of Jerusalem.

"Admission is open to anyone," Ariel said, "but there is a 'religious' orientation to the school and the curriculum. Ma'ale does not apologize for its Zionist and pro-Jewish philosophy."

The school's graduates have now taken their place in the ranks of the television and film workforce in Israel as directors, producers, scriptwriters, editors, journalists and reporters. But the success of the school was hard won.

Acceptance of the school within the Orthodox community came very slowly. "Indeed, the first few years were very difficult for the school and for the community," Ariel confided.

But ultimately, the school proved it belongs within the Orthodox world, too. The breakthrough followed the creation of the Machon Torah V'Yetzira (The Institute of Torah and Creativity – my translation), a rabbinical cinema club of sorts that has become a forum for the discussion of controversial and difficult issues. The popular monthly meetings are attended by diverse individuals. We were told that the film *Trembling Before God*, which explored homosexuality within the Orthodox community, attracted some 80 rabbis to the meeting, some of whom come from the haredi community.

"Though it started as an institution for teaching films," Ariel told us, "it is now apparent that Ma'ale is an instrument of 'outreach.' Secular and Orthodox people learn about each other. The school, its films, the way we operate, opens people's hearts. The response to the school and to its films has been overwhelming," Ariel enthused.

One current project of a student in the school is producing a survival narrative of the Ethiopians who came to Israel, modelled on the Spielberg Holocaust Archive in Los Angeles.

"Reform and Conservative congregations have started to show interest in Ma'ale films. Some secular high schools in the country, too, are using Ma'ale films for their curricula," Ariel told us.

The values taught in the school also propel it to become involved in social-action projects for the benefit of the wider community. We were told of two projects, one involving children with special needs and one with Arab children from east Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Supported by the Jerusalem Foundation as part of the dream of the Jerusalem's late mayor Teddy Kolek to build a thriving, tolerant city, Ma'ale is a non-profit organization. Student fees cover about 25 per cent of the actual cost of running the school. The rest comes from various donors. Most of the funding from the Jerusalem Foundation is dedicated to assisting students with their tuition for the four-year cinema and television program.

The slogan of the school was written on a bulletin board in Ariel's office: "Bringing Judaism to Art and Art to Judaism."

The school defies typecasting. Indeed, that is Ma'ale's key message: all human beings defy typecasting. Each of us is unique. And Ma'ale enables individuals, for whom the opportunities in the past were so rare, to prove this very precious, universal, "religious" point. It is an uplifting and impressive place.

– *MBD*

See]N CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

COURAGE TO DREAM, STRENGTH TO HOPE

Theodor Herzl, widely regarded as the founder of modern political Zionism, died on the 20th of Tammuz (July 3) in 1904. Here is seen in a stylization of his famous pose in 1895 looking out of his hotel balcony on the Rhine River in Basel, Switzerland. In this drawing, however, he is looking out onto the ramparts of the Old City of Jerusalem. The Tower of David is in the background, and a group of Jews are walking into the Old City. The drawing was on a stamp issued by the Jewish National Fund in 1929. After his exposure to the rampant anti-Semitism in France in the wake of the Albert Dreyfus trial near the end of the 19th century, Herzl decided that the Jews needed a homeland of their own. "If you will it, it is no dream," he wrote of the possibility of national home for the Jewish people.

[WZPS photo courtesy of the Zionist Archives]

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Toronto camp caters to special-needs kids

Chai Lifeline helps provide inclusive experience

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

It's almost lunchtime and Adventure Valley day camp is a flurry of excitement.

Screaming kids run the length of the soccer field, trying to get in one more goal. Tennis balls bounce up and down in the courts, and Kool-Aid rockets are being launched high into the air.

In the middle of it all sits Owen, arguably one of the most popular campers in his group.

Kids circle him, showing off their homemade rockets, chattering about lunch and arguing about who will push his wheelchair.

Owen, 9, has cerebral palsy and is profoundly deaf, but none of that matters right now, because he is about to launch his rocket.

Two counsellors gently place an empty Kool-Aid Jammers container in his lap. Both his hands are brought together and the straw flies into the air, bringing a wide smile to Owen's face. It's obvious he wants to do it again, and again and again.

Owen is one of a few campers with disabilities at Adventure Valley camp, located at Leslie Street and Steeles Avenue. The camp, which is in its second summer, prides itself on inclusion. The camp's staff is made up of various special needs specialists and one-on-one counsellors who help cater to each camper's needs.

"Some camps have the illusion of inclusion," said Tammy Zaldin, Adventure Valley's co-inclusion liaison director. "Here, the whole camp is accommodating."

This summer, Adventure Valley has teamed up with Chai Lifeline, an organization that supports Jewish children with serious illnesses and their families. Chai Lifeline has just started a "Kindness Fund" to send siblings of disabled children to camp.

"Parents dealing with [their child's] illness don't have money to spend on camp," said Rabbi Mordechai Rothman, Chai Lifeline's regional director in Canada.

Rabbi Rothman found Owen through one of the parents at Adventure Valley and decided to help him as well.

According to Rabbi Rothman, Chai Lifeline will send five children with disabilities and 12 siblings of kids with disabilities to Adventure Valley this summer.

While Owen benefits from this program, so do his fellow campers.

"Other children are not necessarily exposed to kids with disabilities," Rabbi Rothman said. "It's important to learn that kids with disabilities are the same as you and me, they're just in a wheelchair."

Lynda Fishman, executive director of Adventure Valley, agrees.

Owen, one of a handful of special needs campers at Adventure Valley day camp, poses with his counsellors, from left, Sallyanne Hadzalic, Evan Lighter, Josh Garbe and Kevin Feng. [Rita Poliakov photo]

"Owen is so visibly special needs, I think it's a wonderful life lesson for [campers]," she said.

Adventure Valley is a 20-acre camp with facilities such as a soccer field, nine tennis courts, a pool and hiking trails.

The camp is ideal for children like Owen, Fishman said.

"Most camps won't take [children with special needs] or aren't equipped. We have qualified teachers and expertise. It's a small camp, we're able to integrate children with serious special needs."

While Owen can't participate in every activity, many games are modified to include him.

Josh Garbe, one of Owen's counsellors, has helped in the inclusion process.

"When things started two weeks ago, we didn't know what to expect. We knew his condition, but we didn't know what that meant... [but] we've realized that Owen is just like the rest of the kids. He wants to have fun just the same," Garbe said.

"Although [Owen] can't participate fully, he does all the arts and crafts and sports. He became one of the group."

Owen's fellow campers agree.

"Having Owen in our group doesn't hold us back, he helps us understand. Just because someone's different doesn't mean there's something wrong with them," Jack, 11, said.

Although Owen can only communicate using sign language and facial expressions, the campers and staff have learned how to understand him.

"Part of it is about finding a way to communicate his needs and desires and teaching his peers how to understand, teaching them that a smile is a whole conversation," said Zaldin.

Luckily, Owen loves to smile.

"A lot of the time, he's really funny. He smiles and laughs a lot. Yesterday, one counsellor was arguing with another over a cheer, and he started laughing," said Ethan, 10, who is in Owen's group.

Eleven-year-old Philip summed up the campers' attitude toward Owen.

"He's a friend," Philip said.

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PUBLIC

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Global insecurity

"We will defend our interests and defend our allies. We take very, very strongly our obligations to defend our allies and no one should be confused of that." Those were the very blunt and forthright words of the U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice last week at a news conference in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia. She was speaking on the subject of the latest showcase of missile launchings by the Iranian regime. And of course, she was speaking directly to the decision-makers in Tehran.

"Anyone trying to destroy Israel will find France blocking the way." Those were the equally blunt and forthright words of French President Nicolas Sarkozy last month in Jerusalem.

The world should be worried.

Iran is raising the temperature under an already stewing cauldron of potential Middle East confrontation. It has emphatically refused to accede to the increasingly desperate pleas by the United Nations Security Council and the European Union to give up its military-use nuclear program. The much-publicized display of missile testing last week was as much a jab and a poke in the pleaders' eyes as it was a show of strength for all the interested Middle Eastern onlookers. It should be made clear that those interested onlookers are decidedly more than simply Israel. The hated, predominantly Sunni Muslim, oil-producing world of the Persian Gulf will be no less a target for Iranian missiles than the despised Jewish state. The Iranians themselves make this plain: "Tel Aviv *and U.S. shipping in the Persian Gulf* will be Iran's first targets." And Iran's Sunni neighbours harbour no contrary illusions. Hossein Salami, a commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guards, said in a televised address last week that "thousands" of missiles are ready for firing.

By raising the heat and further stoking fears of possible military confrontation, Iran is also driving up the price of oil. Economies throughout the world are reeling as they try to absorb the upwardly spiralling base costs of their respective infrastructures.

And of course, Iran is the world's leading sponsor of terrorism, encouraging anarchy and anti-western mayhem wherever its petrodollars can buy influence.

It is thus no overstatement to suggest that Iran is effectively destabilizing the security of the entire globe in pursuit of its apocalyptic visions of theological supremacy.

"This is a challenge not only for Israel, but for the entire world," Israeli Defense Minister Ehud Barak said last week. "The focus now is sanctions and diplomatic action."

The civilized world must immediately heed Barak's words. Russia, India and China must join forces with the EU and the West to bring a halt to Tehran's military-use nuclear program.

Iran presents an ominous, present danger to the region and the world. Severe, stringent sanctions must be imposed against the Iranian regime. Urgently. Now.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

The New York State legislature passed a landmark bill to help solve the situation of agunot, women whose husbands refuse to give them a *get*, a Jewish divorce, and who, therefore, can't remarry. The bill required anyone involved in a religious marriage to ensure that all barriers to remarriage have been removed prior to them being granted a civil divorce.

Dry Bones IRAN'S MISSILES
AFTER BOASTING THAT HE WOULD WIPE ISRAEL OFF THE MAP...
AHMADINEJAD SAYS HE'LL RELY ON THOUSANDS OF MISSILES TO DEFEND HIMSELF.
MISSILES?
I REMEMBER WHEN HE WAS COUNTING ON THE 12TH IMAM TO DESCEND FROM HEAVEN TO LEAD THE BATTLE!
SO?
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Speaking freely about Zionism

Gil Troy wonders why young people do not keep Zionism "at the centre of our story" as modern Jews, in the way as described so eloquently by Democratic presidential nominee Barack Obama ("Obama gets Zionism – why don't our youth?," *CJN*, July 3).

I am in my 30s and have always loved Israel, and I've never doubted its importance as an ideological and spiritual anchor for us as Jews. I grew up in a post-1967 world, and in my eyes, Israel was always an established and, in may ways, blessedly normal country. Given that, I do not see why it is acceptable in the current Canadian Jewish community to criticize the prime minister of Canada and his polices, but not the prime minister of Israel and his polices, while still affirming my support for either country. I find it hard to voice my deep support for Israel in an atmosphere where criticism and nuanced views are shunned. If you want youth to engage with Zionism, you need to create a space where they can speak freely.

Aurora Mendelsohn
Toronto

* * *

How Israel defends itself

Stephen Tannenbaum's rhetoric denies facts, while his calling me names ("apologists for Palestinian terror") is mere baiting ("Palestinian propaganda in *The CJN*," *CJN* letters, June 5.) I haven't and don't condone acts of terror from either side. I never "denie[d] Israel the right to defend itself and its citizens" – the issue is *how* it is done. Israel frequently commits acts of terror against non-combatant civilians: firing assassination missiles at cars driving down busy streets or repeatedly breaking the sound barrier over Gazan children's heads.

Do I propose "a moral equivalency between the Israel Defence Forces and murderous [terrorist] groups"? I do, when they drop a one-ton bomb on an apartment complex to kill one terrorist, and there are 14 civilian deaths, including nine children as young as two months old. This happened on July 23, 2002, when an Israeli F-16 dropped a laser-guided 1,000-ton bomb on an apartment complex in Gaza City in order to kill Sala Shahada, a senior Hamas terrorist, while he was visiting his family in their apartment. Israel shares responsibility for innocent deaths in civilian areas when it uses lethal force far beyond international humanitarian law's principle of proportionality.

Is it "Palestinian propaganda and revisionism" to cite the International Court of Justice? Canadian Foreign Affairs' website says Israel should build "the [security] barrier on its own territory for security purposes... Israel's construction of the barrier... [is] contrary to international law under the Fourth Geneva Convention."

Sadly, these aren't anomalies, but typical of Israel's actions. I condemn Fatah's corruption and Hamas' intransigence. However, Israel shares in the "true root causes of the [Palestinian's] misery." I speak as a Canadian Jew who loves Israel and values justice. These truths require more, not less, attention from our Jewish press.

Bernard Katz
Toronto

* * *

Pluralism of Thornhill community

I'll admit I was surprised that the Toronto Jewish community did not make the list of top 10 Jewish neighbourhoods in *Jewish Living* magazine ("Let's open up the 'hoods," *CJN*, June 26). Since we arrived in Canada two years ago, we have found the Greater Toronto Area to be one of the most vibrant, committed, involved and visible Jewish communities we've ever encountered. I was surprised when I read columnist Yoni Goldstein's reaction to our being left off the list, specifically that "the Achilles hell of Jewish Toronto" is the "inability, and in some cases unwillingness, to mix various Judaisms together."

In Thornhill, we have two Reform synagogues, two Conservative synagogues, chassidic synagogues, mitnagdic synagogues, Sephardi, Ashkenazi – you name it, Thornhill has it! One of the reasons we love living in Thornhill is the dynamic pluralism of the Jewish community here. So maybe *Jewish Living* magazine will take notice of us next year, because few neighbourhoods in the Jewish world allow for the range of Jewish expression we have found in the GTA, and, specifically, in Thornhill.

Rabbi Cory Weiss
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

We're beaming

Mazel tov to the entire staff of *The CJN* on winning for 13th time in 14 years a prestigious Rockower Award at the annual conference of the American Jewish Press Association ("*CJN* wins award," *CJN*, July 3). Long may you continue to maintain your extraordinary accomplishments.

Monty and Blema Mazin
Toronto

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Renewed peace talks must start with Jerusalem

By YITZHAK REITER

When the Oslo accords were signed in 1993, there was a sense of euphoria on both sides that, at last, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict would be solved.

The failure of Oslo, however, brought about a sense of disillusionment and despair, and it reinforced the view that the conflict is insolvable. What was wrong in the Oslo process, in my view, was the fact that the hard-core issues, and particularly the Jerusalem entanglement, were delayed to the final stage of negotiations.

The architects of Oslo should not have rushed to sign an agreement and then limited themselves to the principles involved in starting the process only. Perhaps the secret phase of the Oslo talks during 1993 should have lasted a year or two longer, until the parties had solved the major issues. They might not have been able to come to an agreement on the holy sites of Jerusalem. After all, seven years later, the issue led to the failure of the Camp David II summit. But at least we would have been saved from the tragedy that followed. The collapse of the Oslo process in July 2000 devastated the peace process for years to come.

Yitzhak Reiter

Thus, any attempt to resume serious negotiations should start with the issue of Jerusalem. Since a major problem today is the phenomenon of Arab-Muslim denial of the Jewish connection to Jerusalem and the Temple Mount (as I argued in *The CJN*'s Perspectives essay on July 10), trust can be built between the negotiating parties only after a mutual declaration has been agreed upon that recognizes the attachment of all religious denominations to that holy space.

As for the solution itself, there is no foreseeable alternative to the parameters presented to the negotiating parties in July 2000 by then-U.S. president Bill Clinton: the city would remain physically united, but the control of Arab and Jewish neighbourhoods should be divided accordingly between Israel and a future Palestinian state.

One can envision that the Arab part, consisting mostly of villages that Israel annexed in 1967, will serve as a venue for establishing the headquarters of the Palestinian capital. The Old City, however, which is the most delicate issue internationally, should be treated separately as a universal city in which all related parties would have a stake.

There is no doubt that the major issues are the right of administration of the holy sites and other religious institutions, and that *the* central site is the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif compound. In analyzing the prospects for a future agreement on these issues, one must distinguish between the maximalist claims of the sides and their vital, minimalist needs on which there will be no compromise.

In my view, the basic interest of the Palestinian side is the need to exercise more control and management of the site than the Palestinians have today. They absolutely reject division or sharing sovereignty of the site, but they could agree to resume control under international supervision without mentioning the word "sovereignty" in any agreement itself.

I assess the minimum Israeli demands to be:

• Continued free access to the Temple Mount site at agreed upon times under continued authority of the (Jordanian-Palestinian) Muslim Waqf to manage the site. I distinguish this right from the right to perform Jewish religious rituals on the Temple Mount.

• Palestinian recognition of the historic and religious connection of Jews to the Temple Mount.

• Restricting the Muslim Palestinian managers from being able to make physical changes to the compound while maintaining their responsibility for the preservation of the ancient artifacts.

• Retaining the right to ensure the well-being of those praying at the Western Wall.

• Retaining complete control of the Western Wall plaza.

Since the Six Day War and Israel's annexation of east Jerusalem, the Jewish narrative has stressed the indivisibility of Jerusalem. But Palestinians and the Muslim world will not relinquish their claims to a political capital somewhere in the eastern part of Jerusalem (al-Quds) and to control the administration of Haram-al-Sharif, their name for the Temple Mount.

Israel and the Palestinian Authority have a central role in finding a solution to the problem, but there are many other actors whose points of view must be taken into consideration:

• The various Christian denominations and institutions;

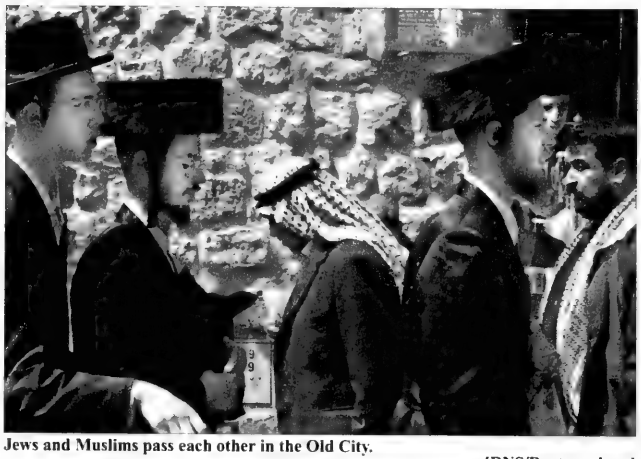
• Jordan;

• Perhaps the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), which brings together 57 countries and runs a special committee on the matter of al-Quds (Jerusalem), and of course

• the Jewish Diaspora.

The inclusion of the interests of so many "outside" actors makes the Jerusalem question a matter for the international community. Indeed, since July 2000, there has been a growing understanding among academics and politicians that the Old City should be administered under some kind of international trust.

A Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies think-tank, headed by the renowned Israeli professor of international law, Ruth Lapidot, two years ago studied five options for the "Historical Basin" (the Old City and some holy sites attached to it). Three of the options suggested the involvement of an international body in the administration of Jerusalem's holy and historical sites. It's interesting to note that in the original UN Resolution 181 of Nov. 29, 1947, Jerusalem was designated as an international city. In hindsight, this proposal was a logical one.



Jews and Muslims pass each other in the Old City.

[RNS/Reuters photo]

In a recent study that I conducted at the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, I suggested a solution based on management of the holy sites by a third (international) party for an interim period, with a delegation of powers from the third party to those who manage the sites and institutions today.

> *'The inclusion of the interests of so many "outside" actors makes the Jerusalem question a matter for the international community'*

This period of third-party management could last for 20 years, over the course of which the two sides would negotiate the terms of a permanent settlement. If the two sides failed to reach an agreement by the end of the 20-year period, the third-party management would continue for another 20 years, and it would continue to be renewed until a final agreement was reached.

The reason for the device of interim period agreements emanates from the difficulty of the Israeli and the Palestinian political leadership to espouse the legitimacy of "compromise" for the sacred space of the Old City. It would likely be easier for both parties to achieve political support if the agreement would be for renewable, interim periods of some 20 years. The leaders could thus claim that they made no "historical concessions" and that the issues were yet to be negotiated.

The third party would be an international body whose composition and responsibilities will be detailed in an agreement between the two parties. It would be authorized to manage the relevant sites, but would make minimal use of its right to do so and instead would delegate these responsibilities to the communities that are in charge of their sites today.

The international body would have the authority to monitor and enforce the implementation of the agreement. If the two sides did not uphold their responsibilities or did not comply with the restrictions put upon them, the international body would have the right to take on the role of managing and administering the sites, until such time as the two parties return to shouldering their responsibilities, settling their conflicts, and creating the circumstances necessary for reinstating the agreement.

The international body would be expected to:

• guarantee freedom of access and arrangements for non-Muslims to visit the Haram al-Sharif/Temple Mount compound;

• guarantee Muslims the freedom to perform religious rituals on Haram al-Sharif

• guarantee Jews the freedom to perform religious rituals at the Western Wall;

• prohibit digging, building or razing of structures by unilateral decision;

• ban changes that will affect the character of the sites or the display of symbols of national sovereignty;

• maintain public order and security, and

• prevent any form of incitement or political activity.

A strong international body would prevent conflict and be a guarantor of the viability of the agreement. In addition, I suggest the creation of an inter-religious body to cultivate the traditions of the different religions and national communities in Jerusalem, prevent friction and clashes at the holy places, and arrange pilgrimages and other religious rituals in such as way as to avoid conflict.

Because the Jerusalem question is extremely important to the three Abrahamic faiths, and many Israeli Jews and Arab Muslims believe in the centrality of Jerusalem and are not prepared to renounce the fundamental interests arising from their beliefs, it's crucial to start any political negotiation with the Jerusalem question. If the parties can find agreement on this issue, the other issues can also be solved.

Yitzhak Reiter teaches Middle Eastern studies at Ashkelon Academic College and Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His recent book is titled Jerusalem and Its Role in Islamic Solidarity.

Opinions

Why I love to teach

Here I am happily organizing my courses for the fall. After a difficult year's absence, I find myself eager to get back to the classroom. After all, this is what I came here to do.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

But it's ironic that I recognize teaching as my raison d'etre.

I remember all too well my last year of college when my parents and in-laws (I married very young) tried to pressure me into becoming a teacher. Not for me. I was going to be an anthropologist. In Australia. Me, the wife of an Orthodox rabbi!

They were right, but for the wrong reasons. I love teaching, but not because it fits a mother's schedule. Rather, I love it because I love the whole process of learning and sharing knowledge.

I'm passionate about new ideas, about the way a new concept can penetrate our understanding and change our whole perspective.

Knowledge is exciting, transformative and inspiring. Every time we add new information, we engage all our systems. All of our vast stores of information might be touched by this new piece. All might be challenged or moved or displaced. Adding a bit of salt to the pot changes it forever. And it's such a creative process. I love initiating and participating in that process.

But more than that, I am also acted upon in the process. As my students learn, I, too, learn with them. They challenge me and open wide my own systems of information. Most significantly, when I teach, I'm not focused on adding that pinch of salt (though it's more often garlic), but rather in shaking up our preconceived notions of what food or soup is. (Please pardon my food metaphors – I'm planning my course on religion and food.)

Education is not so much about adding data as it is about teaching people how to think critically, how to interpret and analyze, how to ask questions, and how to rethink what appears to be self-evident. We have to chase away those stereotypes (not all Jews eat gefilte fish, or even chicken soup).

Real learning is about new thinking and new questions. In that paradigm, I, too, become a student, and I learn as much from my students as they might learn from me. So I love learning, because I am a perpetual student. I love to ask new questions, share information and watch how students and friends take it, shake up our world view and come out with new visions and new recipes for understanding. There is a wonderful rabbinic statement that applies to me: I learned a great deal from my teachers, but I learned the most from my students.

Thank you, my students of the past, present and future.

Lessons from Wannsee

Recently, we joined friends in watching the movie *Conspiracy*, a fictional re-enactment of the Wannsee Conference in January 1942. Stanley Tucci was a perfect, affectless Adolph Eichmann, while Kenneth Branaugh portrayed a reptilian Reinhard Heydrich, architect of the Final Solution.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

It was a stunning, 90-minute re-enactment of the fateful meeting of Gestapo, SS, army and Nazi bureaucrats as they were led by a sly Heydrich into agreeing to a "resolution" of the Jewish question.

All minutes of the meeting were to be destroyed and no official records kept. Only because one Martin Luther (!) left his copy in an archives do we know what transpired. The minutes reveal the subtle way in which the group was led to agree that Europe's Jews – beginning with German Jews and then those in the east, finally including those they thought would be found in a defeated England – would be "evacuated" and killed by gas.

Food, drinks and cigars were abundant for the participants in the meeting. The only thing missing was a voice calling on them to halt their plans. Fear for their own futures and loathing of the Jew drove them forward. And we know the result.

It was an auspicious time to see this film, as we are about to begin the three weeks between the 17th of Tammuz and Tisha b'Av, the time *ben hametzarim*. The 17th of Tammuz marks the beginning of the end for Second Temple Jerusalem, as the Romans breached the outer walls and began fighting their way into the city toward the Temple Mount.

These two things connected in my mind: days of destruction 2,000 years ago and the years of death and horror more than half a century ago. Both armies were ruthless and merciless in their efforts to destroy the Jewish nation. In fact Rome could be – from today's perspective – seen as, if not more merciful, then more limited in its intent, since Rome wanted only to destroy the nation-state. Jews in other parts of the empire – indeed even in the capital city of Rome – weren't molested.

The Nazis were much more thorough in their planning and efforts.

Years ago, on Tisha b'Av night, we walked the route that the Roman armies took, beginning with the pitiful remnants of the outer wall and winding our way into the Old City of Jerusalem until we stood at the Kotel. We imagined the mountain burning with such fierce heat that stones burst out of the supporting walls and fell around its base, where some can still be seen today. Lamentations could be heard on all sides as youth groups as well as old men in gabardines wept for the destroyed city.

So Jan. 20, I think, should be a second 17th of Tammuz. As the latter day sealed the fate of the uprising 2,000 years ago, so, too, did Jan. 20, 1942, seal the fate of European Jewry.

But these catastrophes don't define who we are, although they did shape us. After Tisha b'Av come the Haftorot of consolation, leading up to celebration of a new year. After the destruction of the Second Temple came scholars who created the rabbinic Judaism that we now practice. After the Holocaust came the chance to build a Jewish state.

One more thing: the rebellion against the rule of Rome brought no other community into its ranks. The Jewish fighters stood alone (in fact, they often quarrelled with one another, but that's another matter). There is a telling moment in *Conspiracy* when Branaugh as Heydrich reminds the group that emigration – letting Jews leave Germany – had been tried. "No one wanted them!" he exclaims triumphantly. See? They are alone and we can do with them what we wish.

It's all too true. There were few refuges on earth from the Nazis. We know that Canada's own homegrown anti-Semites kept the doors firmly locked against the victims.

But today, Israel has allies and the means to defend itself. In Canada, there is no comparison with those dark days of F.C. Blair's and W.L.M. King's willingness to see Jews die.

We now have power and allies. Let's use that ability to assure that others can be rescued before they, too, perish.

The limits of freedom of speech

Most Canadians strongly believe that freedom of speech is a value and a principle that is the lifeblood of democratic society.

The Jewish community shares this appreciation and places a premium on free thought, discourse and open debate. Freedom of speech is consistent with our tradition of lifelong learning, questioning and discussion.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

But throughout history, Jews have been victims of hate, repression and discrimination. That is why the organized Jewish community, through such governing organizations as Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), has also recognized that most freedoms are not absolute. When necessary, there must be limits on freedoms in order to protect the integrity and security of minority communities from harm.

This harm can follow as a result of hateful, vicious or even disrespectful expression – particularly when that expression encourages others to target minority communities and cause physical, emotional or psychological distress. There are different kinds of harm – but the effect of hate on survivors of the Holocaust and their children can be particularly traumatic.

This explains why more than 40 years ago, the organized Jewish community responded affirmatively to the creation of the Cohen Commission, following anti-Semitic rallies in Toronto's Allan Gardens. The Cohen Commission, in turn, ultimately led to the enactment of the current but rarely used hate propaganda provisions in the Criminal Code. These provisions have been employed to prosecute purveyors of hate such as James Keegstra and David Ahenakew. Not surprisingly, in some of these cases, the accused have defended themselves on the basis of the freedom of expression provisions in Section 2(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The constitutional protection of freedom of expression is, of course, strongly supported by most Canadians. But many members of the Jewish community and others, such as the drafters of the Charter itself, realize that rights are not absolute. In fact, our constitution states that all rights in the Charter are subject to reasonable limits in this free and democratic society.

The anti-hate provisions in the Criminal Code are not the only legislative restrictions on free speech. Both federally and provincially, anti-discrimination laws – commonly referred to as human rights legislation – also contain prohibitions against certain kinds of expression that are viewed as discriminatory in nature.

These laws, however, have recently come under attack for being used in inappropriate circumstances. The attacks have focused on Section 13 of the Canadian Human Rights Act and similar sections of anti-discrimination legislation in British Columbia, Alberta and elsewhere. Most recently, they arose out of complaints by Muslim organizations against cartoons, originally published in a Danish newspaper, and other depictions and descriptions viewed as anti-Muslim. This had led to some controversial complaints and suggestions by some that the anti-discrimination laws affecting expression should be abolished.

What is the position of the organized Jewish community regarding these anti-discrimination provisions? The CJC supports these laws to ensure that another level of protection is afforded minorities in Canada.

At the same time, Congress proposes that a review of the substance and administration of these laws be undertaken to ensure that a line can be drawn between permissible and offensive speech, and that these laws are only used in appropriate circumstances.

The Canadian Jewish community is not alone in its concerns. In April 2007, the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation Commission in Australia supported a government proposal to order Internet service providers to refrain from hosting racist and anti-Semitic websites.

Some believe freedom of speech is absolute and that there should be no legal limits or constraints on its exercise. They argue that there should be a marketplace of ideas from which the truth would emerge. But there are limits on any marketplace. No commercial marketplace should allow the sale of toys that are dangerous to children or foods that are harmful to health. That is why consumer goods are regulated. Equally, laws are needed to ensure that hateful and discriminatory expression does not cause harm to vulnerable groups in society.

For hundreds of years, the law has recognized the harm caused by defamatory speech. Anti-hate and anti-discrimination laws essentially achieve the same objective by prohibiting group defamation.

In Psalm 34, we are warned, "Guard your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking guile." As a community, we should strongly support free speech while, at the same time, we should continue to censure unbridled expressions of hatred.

The Kirshner File

Wolfgang Lotz, Israel's 'champagne spy'

Spies have fascinated Israeli film director Nadav Schirman since he was a child. "I grew up idolizing James Bond," he said.

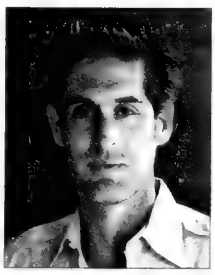
Schirman has parlayed his fascination with espionage into a gripping, prize-winning movie on one of Israel's most legendary spies, Ze'ev Gur Arie, or Wolfgang Lotz. *The Champagne Spy*, an Israeli-German co-production, took top honours in the documentary category at the 2007 Israeli Academy Awards and won the John Schlesinger Award for Outstanding First Feature at last year's Palm Springs International Film Festival.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Screened at the recent Toronto Jewish Film Festival, *The Champagne Spy* is about a Mossad agent in Egypt who melted into his undercover identity.

"Lotz's exploits in Cairo could make any James Bond fiction pale in comparison," mused Schirman, who made the movie with the support of the Israeli New Film Fund. "Espionage in glamorous circles. Fancy riding clubs. Exotic women."

Behind the facade was a person at odds with himself. Lotz grew addicted to his role, married a German woman while still wed to his wife and left the country for which he had risked life and limb.



Nadav Schirman

To Schirman, 36, *The Champagne Spy* is a cautionary tale about the place of family in a spy's career and the risks of assuming a double identity.

"Being a spy is a very lonely job" he said in an interview. "Lotz wanted someone to share his double life. Of course, it's crazy and goes against all the rules, but I still understand him. I think he felt very much at home in his second skin, living the life of a millionaire playboy. It's not surprising that he would want to hook up with another woman to reflect this new image of himself. There is a very high divorce rate among spies. Some have run off with women they met while on duty."

Lotz was born in Mannheim, Germany, in 1921. His Jewish mother was an actress and his Christian father was a theatre director. They divorced in 1931. With the rise of Adolf Hitler's Nazi regime, Lotz and his mother resettled in Tel Aviv. Lotz joined the Haganah, and during World War II, while serving in the British army, he was posted to Egypt.

He fought in the 1948 War of Independence and rose to the rank of major before being seconded to Israeli military intelligence in the wake of the 1956 Suez War.

Lotz was sent to Egypt – then Israel's most formidable enemy – to sabotage its budding missile program, which was developed by German scientists who had worked for Adolf Hitler, and to gather information about its weapons buildup.

Blond, blue-eyed and uncircumcised, with "Aryan" features, Lotz was the perfect candidate to pose as a wealthy German horse breeder who had been an officer in the Wehrmacht. As it happened, Lotz was in Egypt while his equally famous but doomed colleague, Eli Cohen, spied on Syria from his base in Damascus.

Lotz embarked on his mission from Paris, the European headquarters of the Mossad. Waiting for him in France was his wife, Rivka, and son, Oded. Typically, he would spend months in Cairo, return to Paris to recharge his batteries and reconnect with Rivka and Oded and then resume his activities in Egypt.

Lotz moved in Egyptian military circles and cultivated German expatriates. One of them, Waltraud Neumann, whom he met on a train, would become his lover and second wife. Mindful of his value, the Mossad grudgingly tolerated his bigamy.

Caught by the Egyptians in the mid-1960s, Lotz was put on trial as a German spy and sentenced to life imprisonment. He may well have been executed had his cover as an Israeli been blown. Waltraud was given a three-year sentence as an accessory.

Released after the Six Day War in exchange for some 5,000 Egyptian prisoners of war, including a handful of generals, Lotz was repatriated to Israel. He divorced Rivka and lived with Waltraud, but could not replicate in Israel the swanky life he had enjoyed in Egypt. A horse-breeding farm he bought with the Mossad's assistance went bust, and after Waltraud's death, he lost his bearings.

To pass the time and fatten his wallet, he wrote his memoirs, *The Champagne Spy*. After getting remarried, he settled in Germany, where he made a meagre living as a salesman in a Munich department store. He died in 1993, a broken man.

Several years ago, Schirman – whose father was a diplomat and Israel's consul consul general in Montreal from 1984 to 1989 – read Lotz's book. He was immediately intrigued, but unable to option it. "I was stuck," he said.

Wolfgang Lotz, left, an unidentified man in uniform and Waltraud Neumann in Egypt

One day, while Schirman sat by a pool as his son took swimming lessons, an older man engaged him in conversation. As they talked, Schirman told him he wanted to make a documentary on Lotz. Schirman had the credentials to make such a film. A graduate of Dartmouth College who had studied film in Tel Aviv and screenwriting at the University of California in Los Angeles, he had established a niche in Israel as a director of TV commercials. The stranger, who turned out to be Oded Gur Arie, said he could be of help. Two weeks later, Schirman got a call from him.

A 58-year-old business consultant who resides in Ann Arbour, Mich., and divides his time between the United States and Israel, Gur Arie remained silent about his father for 40 years. "I was proud to share his secret, and had no urge to tell my friends. My father's life depended on my silence."

But now he was ready to co-operate with Schirman, who has lived in Paris, Montreal, Brussels, Tel Aviv and the United States as his father, Shalom, filled a succession of diplomatic postings abroad.

Gur Arie showed Schirman eight-millimetre home movies of Lotz as he secretly visited Paris. "In those clips, I clearly saw how Lotz was gradually becoming more distant from his family, sinking deeper into his make-belief identity," said Schirman. "I knew I had a film there, an untold story about a spy. I saw a unique opportunity to examine the effect of spying on a family. Oded was extremely brave to open up."

Although *The Champagne Spy* unfolds from Gur Arie's perspective as a boy who adored his father, his testimony had to be supplemented by interviews with former Mossad officials. Schirman spent about a year gaining their trust. "You have to bear in mind that, for these people, exposure is the enemy. They thrive on anonymity and secrecy. But when they realized that my intent was not to criticize and reveal state secrets, but rather to tackle the emotional and personal aspect of their trade, they opened up to me."

Schirman also interviewed Nadja Kiesow, an Egyptian Muslim who was married to a German, who knew Lotz and who currently lives in southern France. "At first, she didn't want to discuss this affair, but I called again and again, and we had brief conversations in French. I presented myself as a Belgian director, since I was not sure how she would feel about Israel or Jews. After a year, she asked, 'Isn't Nadav a biblical name? Are you Jewish?' I hesitated before saying yes 'Why didn't you say so?' she asked. 'I have a lot of Jewish friends. We became very close, and today, she's like my adoptive grandmother."

Having finished the film, Schirman put on a special screening for some 400 Mossad agents and army intelligence agents and their families in Tel Aviv. The reaction was positive, and since then, the Mossad has used *The Champagne Spy* in group discussions about family and spying.

Gur Arie is pleased with Schirman's film, too. "I'm pretty much happy with it, though it misses some of my father's successes as a spy."

Although he has not forgiven Lotz for having betrayed and abandoned his mother, Gur Arie said he had a good relationship with him and considers him a hero. "He lived the life of Wolfgang Lotz. He was Wolfgang Lotz."

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Volunteer helps kids to 'think before you act'

Uses chess to teach life skills to troubled children

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

When chess maven Ted Winick read an article about a day camp program that helps children with emotional challenges learn to control their anger, he immediately volunteered to teach them chess.

He said the article resonated with him, because he felt that the strategies utilized in chess, which basically boil down to "think before you act," would complement the skills the children were acquiring through a behaviour management program called SNAP.

He explained that SNAP, an acronym for Stop Now And Plan, was devised by the Child Development Institute, a Toronto-based mental health agency that serves 4,000 children under 12 and their families each year through a variety of programs.

The agency, which runs the camp where Winick has been volunteering, recently honoured him by naming him volunteer of the year, in appreciation of the services he has provided over the course of three summers.

He recalled making the connection with the agency in 2005, shortly after registering the Chess Institute of Canada, which he founded, as a charitable organization. "Our mission is basically a form of tikun olam, improving or repairing the world.

"I use chess to help the kids improve their life skills. Part of it incorporates the premise of thinking before you act and taking responsibility for helping others," he said. "My guideline or what I call my fundamental principal of chess, is consider the consequence of your actions before you do them, or think before you move."

Winick is now heading into his fourth summer at the camp, which has seen some 300 children with a variety of emotional and behavioural problems learn chess skills over the past three years.

The camp can handle 48 kids a month, he said. They are split into two groups of 24 each month – a younger group in grades 1 to 3 and another for grades 4 to 6.

"I go in twice a week and work with each age group to teach them principles of chess that can be adapted to life," Winick said. "I want to get these kids thinking so they can make better choices and start exhibiting better behaviour."

These are only a portion of the children, who have benefited from Winick's volunteerism. He offers chess to elementary school kids in the inner city through teenage mentors or by running classes himself.

"I'm training kids through their community service hours to be mentors and role models for the younger children," he said. "I am always looking for mentors. You don't have to be good in math. You have to be interested in the kids."

Winick noted that chess is becoming increasingly recognized as an educational tool.

"A number of countries and provinces are considering including chess in the curriculum, because of the academic benefits. It helps the children improve their math and reading skills, their concentration and their critical thinking skills."

He noted that when he first established the chess institute four years ago, most of the classes were after school and at lunchtime. "Now we're in 30 schools and the majority of classes are part of the curriculum.

"At the Paul Penna [Downtown Jewish] Day School, I run chess classes for every student as part of their curriculum."

Winick said that for centuries, rabbis have valued the skills developed through chess. "Ever since Abraham Ibn Ezra, one of the great medieval Jewish scholars, championed the game, Jewish scholars have long recognized chess as way of focusing the intellect."

On Aug. 1, Winick will be launching a new chess centre at Brunswick Avenue and Bloor Street, where he will be hosting a day that will incorporate chess and other games of strategy with sports and culture.

"The centre's chess education program will be for all age groups from four to 104."

He also runs the National Chess Camp at the end of the summer at Camp Wahanowin in partnership with the National Music Camp and the Nashman family.

Winick said he was honoured to be named volunteer of the year by the Child Development Institute. "It felt great. But more than that was the deeper satisfaction that my program is recognized as making a positive difference in the lives of these children."

For more information about the chess camps, chess education or the mentorship program, contact Winick at tedwinick@rogers.com.

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Michelle Illiatovitch

Dancers perform in Ghana

Continued from page 3

all have a magic moment that opened our hearts. We came face to face with the good things and the bad things that drive humanity."

A defining moment for her, she said, was a banquet that took place on dancer Sharon Hampson's – of the children's singing group Sharon, Lois and Bram – 65th birthday.

"Fifteen elder women invited us to the banquet. There were 15 of us and 15 of them, and only one of them spoke English. The African women came in full traditional gear and tasted champagne for the first time.

"We proved that people can bond without language when we danced the horah together to drums, and when we all hugged and kissed good night."

Bleviss said that since she met Condello, "I have been moving in ways our culture does not promote. For the first time, it really feels good to be a woman. Dancing has freed me in ways I never thought possible. I may move less and less, but I will never stop."

The Vintage dancers will be performing in African outfits at a cabaret in November to raise money for a water reservoir in Dagbamete. For more information, e-mail Condello at sarina@sarinacondello.com.

Sandler made a difference despite MS

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Despite his own challenges and disabilities, Gary Sandler, in his 35-year battle with multiple sclerosis, was still able to be an inspiration and source of strength for many others who struggled with their own challenges.

Obituary

On July 1, Sandler, 56, suffered a cardiac arrest and died quickly and peacefully, just as he hoped he would, said his father, Al Sandler.

"He was overall, a great humanitarian, and the world is going to have a great loss because he was a mentor to hundreds of kids… He was a human being worthwhile being around, because he was so generous with his time and so good with children," he added.

Fay Sandler, Gary's mother, spoke about the kind of man her son was and his many accomplishments despite the obstacles he faced.

"He was intelligent and very kind and very full of life. He was one of those people who were larger than life," she said.

"He got MS at a very young age, about 23," she said, adding that he was determined to obtain his master's degree in business from York University and did so even after he was diagnosed with the condition in which the immune system attacks the central nervous system.

His mother said that following school, he worked for Wycliffe Homes, a construction company, for 10 years before he became a quadriplegic and decided to quit of his own volition.

"When he became a quadriplegic, he used that [experience] to do a lot of lobbying to get wheelchair accessibility to buildings in the city," Fay said.

"He started with Mel Lastman's Square. It was just being completed when he went up in his wheelchair… and he was appalled to find that the new square was totally inadequate in terms of accessibility. He met with the councillor and Mr. Lastman was involved, and they put a lot more money in and they re-did it to make it wheelchair accessible."

When he discovered that he had developed cancer in one of his kidneys, he decided that he would undergo the risky operation to remove the kidney.

"He could have just let himself die… but he decided to take the kidney out and said, 'If I survive, I will make a difference,'" Fay said.

His father explained that when he recovered, he lived up to his promise and became involved with the Hospital for Sick Children.

He got in touch with Arlette Lefebvre, a child psychiatrist who is on staff at SickKids, and they developed a website called Ability Online (www.ablelink.org).

"This program was designed to help kids of all ages who were sort of homebound and couldn't or wouldn't communicate. They were very depressed, they had no outlet for their feelings, they were frustrated, and it allowed them to interface with hundreds of other kids who may have had similar problems," Al said.

Gary's involvement with this program is one of the reasons he was one of the first recipients of the Courage to Come Back Award, given by the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry (now the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) in 1993.

"Gary was the mentor or the point man of the program. As such, he became the godfather of all these kids. We keep getting letters and thank-yous from people he helped."

Friends and family have written messages of comfort to the family on the Steeles Memorial Chapel's online condolences book.

Sandler is survived by his wife, Vida, and his two sons, Daniel and Randy, as well as his stepchildren, grandchildren, siblings and parents.

Iran attack stories fuelled by speculation

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

In pursuit of a hot story, the media sometime rely on speculation rather than facts. This has certainly been the case in many recent reports about the likelihood of Israel attacking Iran's nuclear facilities.

The theories began percolating in the media after Israel staged a long-range military air exercise over Greece and the eastern Mediterranean. These June manoeuvres involved more than 100 F-16 and F-15 fighter planes, ostensibly in preparation for long-distance bombing assaults on Iran.

In "Strait front line in attack on Iran" (*National Post*, July 7), Matthew Fisher reported from the Canadian warship HMCS Protecteur, in the Strait of Hormuz, about what could happen "if recent Israeli and American threats to destroy Iran's nuclear program are carried out."

Fisher wrote: "As 40 per cent of the world's oil passes through the strait, any attack would cause a drastic spike in already volatile prices. If Iran responds by closing the waterway, as General Mohammad Ali Jafari, commander of the Revolutionary Guards, promised… some oil analysts have guessed oil might cost $500 (US) a barrel or more, with predictably calamitous economic consequences worldwide."

Fisher noted that Israel considers Iran's nuclear program an "existential threat." The fact that Iranian leaders have repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel means the Jewish state cannot just sit idly by while Iran becomes a nuclear power.

Israel is still counting on sanctions and diplomatic pressure from the international community to move Iran from its current course. But what if all else fails and Israel feels it has no option but to act militarily?

Fisher asked: "Could Israel successfully attack Iran? Could the Iranians really close the Strait of Hormuz or launch accurate missiles that could reach Israel?

"There are doubts on all counts, as there are doubts about whether Iran is within one or two years of building a nuclear bomb, as Israel says."

In "Mideast collision course" (*National Post*, July 5), Peter Goodspeed looked at what could prompt Israel to attack Iran. Goodspeed remarked: "The most obvious 'red line' would be proof Iran has produced enough highly enriched uranium at its Natanz facility to build a nuclear bomb."

Goodspeed wrote that "the U. S. intelligence community insists Iran stopped weapons research in 2003."

In fact, last year's U.S. intelligence community report, to which Goodspeed refers, only said there was a high probability that Iran had stopped its weapons program in 2003. But nuclear fuel enrichment, the most difficult part of the program, has moved ahead, while the weapons component could be restarted at any time. And many experts – not only in Israel – now believe the weapons program has been revived or was never really stopped.

Israel's assertion that Iran is close to building a bomb was underscored by Con Coughlin in "Iran has resumed A-bomb project, West says" (in the U.K. *Daily Telegraph*, July 7).

Coughlin asserted that "Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which has overall responsibility for the country's nuclear program, has set up several civilian companies to work on the program whose activities are being deliberately concealed from the United Nations nuclear inspection teams."

He reported that the Iranians are developing advanced gas centrifuges, which can greatly increase the speed of enriching uranium to weapons grade.

Coughlin also noted that, contrary to some reports that Iran might be prepared to suspend uranium enrichment in return for a package of economic incentives being offered by several world powers, Tehran has announced "that it has no intention of halting its uranium enrichment program."

After all, the very western countries, including the United States, that have promised to tighten economic sanctions on Iran have actually increased trade in the past year.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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The Family of the late, beloved

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would like to express its sincere gratitude to all of our relatives and friends for their overwhelming outpouring of sympathy upon Shelly's untimely death. The acts of kindness through donations to foundations and charitable organizations in Shelly's name, as well as the many cards and letters of condolence, have given us support during this difficult time and will help to keep Shelly's memory alive forever.

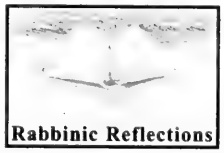
The Goldberg Family

Betty & Lou, Bunny, Noah, Daniel, Joel, Jack, & Eric

853

To improv the Torah

By RABBI YECHIEL M. GOLDREICH



The recent passing of Paul Sills was a true loss to the international performance art community.

Continuing in the tradition of his late mother, Viola Spolin, the founder of Theatre Games, he taught many students the value of improv performance. Improv maintains that faithfully following even the most random of offers can force a player into an act of creative discomfort. If you are told to act like a ballet dancer waiting at a bus stop, this creates dissonance as well as an interesting result. Heightening the stakes of the scene by detailing pirouettes onto the bus steps stretches the performer's flexibility and makes a situation even more interesting and of greater performance quality.

Improv theatre also provides an important model of how Torah Jews conduct themselves. Although the instructions are not random, they do often force us into creative discomfort. Our God-given list of life rules turns us into performers, ballet dancers at a bus stop.

We move to a music that no one else can hear. We follow instructions that the rest of the world knows nothing about. The tension between fitting into normal life and trying to properly follow the Torah produces creative dissonance, stretching our flexibility as a people and creating interesting solutions.

It took the infinite wisdom of the Almighty to let loose on the world a few million people who were instructed not to knit on Saturday or eat shellfish and see what we do to the place.

Despite our failings, we've done an admirable job so far.

The Torah rules themselves were never especially helpful to our lives. On the contrary, they usually pleasantly complicate things. Following the instructions of God has always been a labour of love. Skilled Torah scholars might disagree in determining how to carry out the essential parts of our performance, but at least they know the same tune. Although it may not be their direct intention, they enjoy learning and trying out new moves that they uncover in the heavenly will.

Sadly, not all Torah players understand it this way.

Some joyless souls exaggerate the creative tension. They think of it as painful. They create a very distasteful performance. On the opposite end, some apologists – well-meaning people – refuse to admit difficulties. Sometimes they speak of the material advantages of observing a Torah life. They too misrepresent the Torah to downplay the tension. A third group avoids the tension by changing the tune. They blather vaguely about "tikkun olam," turning the splendid music and breathtaking choreography into a muted, one-note, foot-stomping shuffle of their own creation. Perhaps this is all they themselves know, or perhaps they mistakenly doubt that the Children of Israel can handle the full range.

Whatever the case, we can only hope that every Jew can one day experience the full range of true beautifully complicated Divine Jewish expression.

May we all merit dancing in the circle that God will create for the righteous in the end of days.

Rabbi Yechiel M. Goldreich is the rabbi of Congregation Bnai Torah of Toronto.

A 95-year-old inspiration

IDEAS ON IDENTITY

By Rabbi Elyse Goldstein

"You are only as old as you feel." I learned from a wonderful 95-year-old woman that you are only as old as your attitude.

I received a phone call requesting information about my women's trip to Israel, a trip that specialized in both physical and spiritual activity, from a 95-year-old lady named Kitty. Oh-oh. I warned her: we'd be running from morning until night, eating dinner late and breakfast early. It would be a fast-paced experience, packed all day long. Long bus rides. Lots of learning sessions. She warned me in return: with all that activity, she was definitely up for it, but was I?

Our assumptions rose to the surface at our first pre-trip meeting. Ninety-five? Would we spend the trip worrying about her? Would she hold us back? Would we feel comfortable in her presence, to laugh or cry, letting our emotions show? Would she "mother" us all and somehow we'd feel patronized?

Our ageism cracked once we got to Israel. She led us in dancing at the top of the Ramon Crater. She was the first one to don the jangling scarf and learn belly dancing. She was the first one up on the camel, composing silly songs the whole ride to make us laugh. She squeezed every moment to its fullest. She asked pertinent questions, contributed to every session, sang every song, shlepped, laughed and cried, ate heartily and even drank at the bar with us more than once!

She was only disappointed when we wouldn't let her climb Masada. We made her take the cable car. When I reached the top, she greeted me with the exclamation, "Rabbi, I could have done it! And I will next time!" She exuded joy and passion. She was the essence of "l'chaim" – to life. She inspired us all.

As we get older, we keep redefining what old is. I used to think 30 was old, then 40, then 50. Now I simply don't know what "old" looks like anymore, because I've met people in their 40s who "act" old and people in their 90s who "act" young. But it's good to grow older, because, given the alternative, who wouldn't choose it?

No, not all older people will inspire us. Some are frail or ill, or have lost their memory. Some are truly crotchety old folks. Some don't grow in wisdom – they don't learn new ideas or try new things, and they're stubborn and set in their ways. But they have attained a degree of experience that's worth listening to, and they've lived through things we haven't and don't understand. Our community is, on the whole, wiser because of them, and we really don't engage them the way we should.

"Rise before the aged one," the Torah tells us. Kitty made us all stand up and look at ourselves anew.

Jewish Life

Paying for hostages

Money Matters

By Rabbi Jay Kelman CA

How much is a human life worth? While such a question may seem immoral to even ask, all societies place limits on the value of human life. We (thankfully) don't spend all our resources on health care, despite the fact that by diverting money to other endeavours, people will die.

Unfortunately, the realities of Jewish life forced our sages to deal with such tragic questions. Among the talmudic ordinances designed to promote tikkun olam – the betterment of the world – is that "one is not permitted to redeem captives for more than their monetary value," despite the fact that "there is no mitzvah as great as redeeming captives." Our commentaries have defined that value to be roughly equivalent to the value of a person's potential future earnings.

Individual needs are to be subservient to the needs of the community. Based on this ruling, the Maharam of Ruttenburg (in 13th-century Germany) refused to allow the community to ransom him from captivity. Only seven years after his death, with the payment of ransom, was the body released – the money given on condition that the "donor" be buried next to this towering rabbinic giant.

The Talmud posits two possible reasons why we must let the individual languish in captivity: the paying of an exorbitant ransom will have a detrimental financial impact on other communal needs, and giving in to kidnappers just encourages more of the same. The difference between the "practical" approach and "ideological" approach is whether we would allow a wealthy family member to pay the ransom themselves. While such a private ransom alleviates strain on community coffers, it nonetheless emboldens the kidnappers. Interestingly, the Talmud does not rule as to which reason is normative.

While such a discussion might be relevant when money is the motive – the Patty Hearst kidnapping comes to mind – it seems less so when dealing with political – i.e., terrorist – kidnappings in which monetary considerations play no role. In such cases, any wrong move can lead to death for the captives.

Interestingly, our commentaries are divided as to whether our refusal to pay too high a price for hostages applies even when there is an actual danger to their life. Do the normal rules of pikuach nefesh apply, whereby all is set aside in order to preserve the current danger to life? Or does the fear of strengthening the hands of terrorists compel us to potentially sacrifice the life of the current hostages so that even more people aren't placed at risk in the future?

In dealing with soldiers of the State of Israel at war, there are further complicating factors. In addition to concern for the individual soldier, there are national issues at stake. On the one hand, many have argued that the laws of pikuach nefesh have little or no application in a war situation – war by definition means risking one's life. On the other hand, doing whatever is humanely possible to rescue soldiers boosts the morale of all other soldiers. While the discussion in the Talmud is based on the assumption that the captives are redeemed alive, perhaps (and only perhaps) the concern for national morale might allow ransoming a dead body.

As the rabbinic decree forbidding us from redeeming captives was done for the overall benefit of society, there might be exceptional cases in which tikkun olam would warrant paying an exorbitant ransom. Thus, a Torah scholar, or even a young budding scholar, should be redeemed almost at all costs. So important is teaching, Jewish law insists that a teacher who is sitting shiva should get up from shivah and go to the "classroom" if the alternative is for his students to miss time from study.

Send comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org.

Jews and the Olympics, Pt. 1

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

In a few weeks, the entire world will be focused on Beijing, as elite athletes meet to compete in the 29th Olympic Games. Although Jewish competitors have shared in Olympic glory, historically Jews have had mixed feelings about the Olympics, ancient and modern. The fact that this year's Games are taking place in Beijing has added to the controversy.

In his essay "Why the Olympic Spirit Lacks a Jewish Neshamah," Eliezer Segal suggests that "whereas Jewish objections to Greek sports were primarily due to their inherently pagan character – as well as to their immodesty and frivolity – the Romans introduced a new dimension to the arena: cruelty which even surpassed that of professional hockey." One notable supporter of athletics was Israel's first chief rabbi, Abraham Isaac Kook, who believed in the importance of maintaining a healthy mind in a healthy body. That is, as long as the healthy body would permit Jews to better perform their religious duties. **[tinyurl.com/5rfszv]**

Richard Greenberg says that Jews can learn valuable lessons from Olympic athletes. In Olympics & Kavanah, he draws a parallel between the intense concentration that athletes use to visualize their goals and the kavanah, focus, used in the performance of mitzvot and recitation of prayer. However, Greenberg concludes by drawing a distinction between sports and Judaism. "In sports, winning is everything. But in Judaism, trying your very best can also get you to the medal stand." **[tinyurl.com/5pg734]**

Rabbi Mitch Smith is a certified sports psychologist who has worked with Israeli national teams. "To be the very best in life, we can take our cue from the gold-medal athletes. If we dream dreams for ourselves, if we summon the dedication and commitment to those dreams and take the steps necessary to achieve them … and if we cast our portion with something larger than ourselves, then we can hold our head proudly as we take our place on the gold medal podium of life." **[tinyurl.com/6428qe]**

As for these particular games, Jewish organizations have deliberated whether they should adopt a stand given China's human rights record. A coalition of 185 U.S. rabbis and Jewish community leaders recently released a statement urging Jews to boycott these games. "I am suggesting that Jews not spend their discretionary income supporting a regime that supports genocide in Darfur and suppression in Tibet, and provides missiles to Iran and Syria," Rabbi Daniel Freelander of the Union of Reform Judaism told the New Jersey *Jewish Standard*. "I think Jews can watch the Olympics [on television], but there is no positive reason for them to be present at the games." **[tinyurl.com/4namjk]**

In separate statements, the Anti-Defamation League, Agudath Israel and the Orthodox Union suggested that a Jewish boycott is inappropriate. "We, too, are deeply concerned about reports of human rights violations in China," said the Agudath Israel statement. "We believe, however, that it is presumptuous, and perhaps even counterproductive, for a group of private citizens to urge a boycott of the Beijing Olympics – and to direct their appeal specifically at members of the Jewish community." **[tinyurl.com/5nkwrn]**

Whether you are staying home or have tickets to the Games, there is much to learn about Jewish life in China. Jews may have arrived as early as the Han Dynasty in 231 BCE, and the story of Jewish community of Shanghai during the World War II is well-known. There is much more history, and the Wikipedia entry on Jewish life in China is a great starting point. Check out the excellent links at the bottom of the entry. **[tinyurl.com/2msl9m]**

Although only about1,000 Jews live in Beijing, a city of 17 million, kosher visitors to the ancient capital needn't go hungry. Dini's Kosher Restaurant offers western and Chinese food all under Chabad supervision. **[kosherbeijing. com]** Business is booming with tourists, and the restaurant is even attracting local clientele. Waiters bring new Chinese customers a handout to introduce kashrut, which is called *jie shi* in Chinese – clean food. Assistant manager Zhao Haixia has to explain the exotic fare like matzah ball soup and chopped liver. Some foods are more challenging to the local palate than others. "In China, eating cold fish doesn't sound so good," Zhao said. "Gefilte fish is a hard sell." **[tinyurl.com/4u3mcl]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

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Saving a life 'is an overriding mitzvah'

Continued from page 1

Or, people might actually be afraid of donating an organ. Why? Perhaps they give credence to the preposterous statements they may have heard, and attributed to some otherwise sage individuals, to the effect that if you donate an organ, you will come into the afterlife without that organ, as a punishment for having saved someone's life! This is so ridiculous as to defy comment, yet it circulates and does its own incalculable damage.

Imagine that God would punish someone for having fulfilled the supreme mitzvah of saving a life. Or that God, who generates life, cannot generate another kidney. Or that someone who donates a heart will walk around in the afterlife without a heart!

By the way, what happens to those who did not donate a life-saving organ, but nevertheless had a lung or kidney removed because of cancer? Do they likewise get punished for having cancer? The more we splice this, the more absurd it sounds, because it is absurd.

Not absurd is the presumption made by many that Judaism insists on burial after death, and that by donating an organ, that body part is not buried. The premise is correct, but the conclusion is not. The Torah obliges us to bury those who have died. That is clear. Equally clear is that saving a life is a vital mitzvah that is praised and encouraged as the most noble deed that we are humanly capable of.

Until this generation, these two concepts never met after death, because organ donation was not a viable medical procedure. That has changed in the past few decades, such that organ donation is now part of after-life care. The human body is sacred, both in life and after death. If after death, one can save a life with a body part, that is an overriding mitzvah, *pikuach nefesh*, that pre-empts the other competing mitzvah obligations.

We understand that one must treat the Shabbat as an ordinary day in order to save a life. The same logic applies to the mitzvah of burial, namely that the rule of mandatory burial is waived for that organ or part (cornea) used to save life, or sight, as the case may be. Admittedly, it will take more than a few years to have an entire faith community re-adjust thinking that dates back thousands of years, thinking that has given birth to a noble Jewish reflex: death followed by funeral and burial, done as soon as possible with no delays.

The reality is that donating organs after one has passed from the world is a difficult concept, and it takes only a slight blip to convince people to back off from it. We continue to face an acute shortage of organs, to the extent that every three days, a person in Ontario dies waiting for an organ.

Principle pre-empts other competing religious obligations

And to be fair, there are challenges, the most critical of which is assuring that the person donating an organ is dead according to halachic definition. For this, we have a major difference of opinion surrounding the issue of brain stem death, specifically whether it is a sufficient criteria to establish that the person is dead according to Jewish law.

The Halachic Organ Donation Society (HODS) has many rabbis associated with it who have signed their organ donor card. They have made this known in a public manner, and they have endorsed the brain-stem death concept. The issue is still not finalized, but it's still possible to be an organ donor even with this challenge. And in many places in Canada, DCD, short for donation after cardiac death, has been implemented to help save lives.

Since the principle of organ donation is a most laudable concept, it remains for us to find acceptable halachic mechanisms to make this possible. Those mechanisms are readily available.

Perhaps the best imagery to help change our mindset is to think of what we would want to happen if, God forbid, we would need an organ, for ourselves or for a loved one. We would want that organ to be readily available. In other words, we have no trouble being recipients. Therefore, we should think about being donors, because without donors, there are no recipients.

Another piece of imagery issue deals with the legacy we want to leave for posterity. Our wills deal mainly with our material possessions – who gets what after we are gone. Of even greater importance is what values and ideals we leave for our children and grandchildren for them to enlarge upon in their own lives. And added to the equation is what we want to do with our bodies – how much life we are ready to save with the body entrusted to us by God. What a marvellous legacy that gift of life would be.

Speaking of legacy and myths, I'd like to venture into another end-of-life-care matter related to the late Sam Golubchuk, of blessed memory. He is the Winnipeg man who wanted to live, who wanted to be treated so he could continue to live. He had suffered brain damage and was in a compromised state, but he was still able to communicate with his family in some manner.

His wishes clashed with the desire of some doctors and other health care providers to remove him from life support and let nature take its course, a course regarding which you can well imagine its direction and intent. This dispute, as it developed, was scheduled to be aired in court. Sam passed away before his case came to trial.

Sam did not leave any organs for donation, but he left his heart and soul with us. He left his courage, his determination and his fighting spirit. And he left a most important legacy.

There is a myth about this case that needs to be addressed. The fight that Sam's children waged on his behalf was not about imposing Jewish law on Canadian society. It was about the right to live, which is a most fundamental human right. The fact that most Canadians in Sam's state might have opted for being kept comfortable is totally irrelevant. What is relevant is that Sam – for reasons that he, like everyone else, is entitled to – wanted to live. No one had a right to deny him, or anyone else, that choice, that right.

The media, in their frenzy on this matter, poured a goulash of issues into the mix that were at best misleading and at worst inflammatory. The picture painted was of a fundamentalist Jew who was costing the province a fortune, who was jeopardizing health care, who was putting doctors into the uncomfortable position of having to care for someone they did not want to treat, to the point where a few of them actually resigned so as not to have to look after him.

The Golubchuks held their ground, and good that they did. In so doing, they did everyone a supreme favour. Until the next challenge, if it ever comes, people can rest more assured that if they want to live, even if others in their state would not, they will be looked after. Even more important is that no one, no matter what their position, will have the right to decide unilaterally, and against a patient's desires, who should live and who should, well, you know what.

The Golubchuk matter was not, is not, and should never be allowed to become a "Jewish" issue per se. The Golubchuk case transcends Jewish borders. It is a Canadian issue, a human rights issue, a "right to live" issue. As Jews, we are obligated to be concerned, because a Canadian human rights issue is by definition a Jewish issue.

And Sam Golubchuk, in his own way, was more than a organ donor. He was a donor, and champion, of life itself.

Rabbi Reuven P. Bulka is spiritual leader of Machzikei Hadas in Ottawa and co-president of Canadian Jewish Congress.

Palestinian village sues Montreal firms for war crimes

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Two Montreal companies and their director are being sued in Canada for war crimes for constructing residential units for an Israeli settlement on lands claimed by the Palestinian village of Bil'in, in the West Bank.

Legal documents filed last week in Superior Court in the District of Montreal allege Green Park International and Green Mount International, acting as agents of the government of Israel, are violating a host of international laws that govern conflicts, as well as Quebec's Charter of Rights.

Also being sued is Annette Laroche, sole director and officer of the two corporations. Two million dollars in punitive damages are sought, as well as an order to cease construction.

The court documents allege the defendants, "on their own behalf and as de facto agents of the State of Israel, are… aiding, abetting and assisting and conspiring with the State of Israel in carrying out an illegal purpose."

Mark Arnold, the Toronto lawyer who is acting for Bil'in and the village head, Ahmed Yassin, said the gist of the case is the assertion that Israel is violating the 4th Geneva Convention, which prohibits a state from transferring its population into territories it occupies. Canada has incorporated that provision into its domestic law and it applies to Green Park and Green Mount. Arnold said the lands in question are under the jurisdiction of the municipality of Bil'in and are part of Israeli-occupied Palestinian territories.

"Israel's policy is to put [its] population in the lands of the village of Bil'in, and that's wrong," he said.

However, an expert in international law suggests the suit is problematic at best, and faces jurisdictional and factual hurdles.

Ed Morgan, a professor of law at the University of Toronto and the immediate past president of Canadian Jewish Congress, called the claim "creative." But, he added, "I can see a few potential legal impediments to it."

The plaintiffs could run into a problem in dealing with the concept of "sovereign immunity," he said. That's the principle that prevents a Canadian from suing a foreign government or its agents. If the plaintiffs pursue its alternative claim, suing the companies and alleging they acted on their own behalf (thus removing the sovereign immunity defence), then the Geneva Conventions and other war crimes law would not apply, Morgan said.

Other legal obstacles include the question of extraterritoriality – applying Canadian law to a situation that has no real and substantive links to Quebec. And there is the question whether the village and its leader should have been the plaintiffs. It's likely the village did not own the land, which was most probably formerly Jordanian-owned state land, Morgan said.

Arnold said Israeli courts have refused to take jurisdiction on settlement issues, calling them non-justiciable. But he said there are important links to Canada that would give a Canadian court jurisdiction,: the companies "are registered in Quebec and as such are required to comply with the laws of Canada and international law."

The concept of sovereign immunity does not apply. "In this case, the wrongdoer is Canadian, subject to [Canadian law]," he said.

As to whether the village of Bil'in was the proper plaintiff, "the village has municipal jurisdiction," he said. "It is our belief the village of Bil'in has municipal jurisdiction over the land of Bil'in."

Bil'in, home to about 1,700 Palestinians, is 18 kilometres west of Ramallah and adjacent to the Israeli settlement of Modi'in Illit. The construction project calls for 42 new buildings containing 1,500 apartments, *Ha'aretz* reported.

OSCE to fight anti-Semitism in media, academia

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The parliamentary assembly of the Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe (OSCE), the world's largest regional security organization, has adopted another resolution against anti-Semitism.

At its 2008 annual meeting, held late last month in Astana, Kazakhstan, the 56-member body – comprising states from Europe, Central Asia and North America – passed a three page resolution titled *On Combating Anti-Semitism, Especially its Manifestations in the Media and Academia*, with a particular focus on the Internet.

One year ago, the assembly passed its Kiev Declaration, a comprehensive, six-page section on combating anti-Semitism, racism, xenophobia and "other forms of intolerance" throughout Europe.

Canadian senator Jerry Grafstein, the vice-president of the OSCE parliamentary assembly and a driving force behind the resolution, told *The CJN* last week that the latest motion is "far-reaching" and asks OSCE member governments to study it and report back next year.

It also addresses anti-Semitic "movements afoot" that target Jews online, he said.

In its preamble, the resolution acknowledges previous efforts by OSCE members to fight anti-Semitism and lauds the 2006 publication of the All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Anti-Semitism in the United Kingdom.

"Incidents of anti-Semitism occur throughout the OSCE region and are not unique to any one country, which necessitates unwavering steadfastness by all… to erase this black mark on human history," reads the sixth paragraph of the document.

Grafstein said that while the resolution passed by about two-thirds after its committee approval process, it was not easily done.

"There was a heated debate. The Nordic states and Britain in particular were against it," Grafstein said, adding those members thought that the resolution's phrasing might make people think that any critique of Israel would be construed as anti-Semitic.

The same countries also argued against the Kiev Declaration last year.

Grafstein said two sections in particular gave pause to dissenting members.

The first is section 16, which calls on OSCE member-states to condemn "the use of double-standards in media coverage of Israel and its role in the Middle East conflict."

Additionally, section 17 asks media outlets in OSCE member states to "have discussions on the impact of language and imagery on Judaism, anti-Zionism and Israel and its consequences."

Grafstein said he countered challenges to the inclusion of these sections by arguing that there should be no concern about valid criticism of Israel, "just the relentless, onslaught of criticism against Israel," citing a disproportionate amount of resolutions brought against Israel at the United Nations over the last 50 years.

He said the Germans and Americans were the "greatest supporters" of the Astana resolution.

Other provisions of the resolution include calling on members to prevent distribution of anti-Semitic TV programming; urging editors to refrain from publishing anti-Semitic material; developing a code of ethics to deal with anti-Semitism in the media, and preparing standards on "academic responsibility" to protect Jews and other minority students from harassment.

The resolution also contains "implicit criticism" of the upcoming 2009 Durban Review Conference in Geneva, Grafstein said.

In its final sections, the Astana document asks any OSCE member states who are participating in the conference to ensure that it will "not be misused as a platform for promoting anti-Semitism."

The first such conference – the United Nations World Conference Against Racism – was held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001 and was widely panned as a blatant anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist gathering that was hijacked by NGOs and Muslim states out to vilify Israel.

The OSCE parliamentary assembly will hold its fall meetings in Toronto from Sept. 18 to 21, when Grafstein said he will chair a discussion on issues facing the Middle East.

Similar suit filed in U.S. against other Lebanese banks

Continued from page 1

They are represented by professor Ed Morgan of the University of Toronto's International Law and Counter-Terrorism Project (he is also immediate past president of Canadian Jewish Congress); Montreal lawyer Jeffrey Boro, immediate past president of CJC's Quebec region, and Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, founder and director of the Israel Law Center (Shurat Hadin), an independent organization whose mission is to take the perpetrators and financial supporters of Islamic terrorism to court in democratic countries.

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner

While the 2001 Terrorism Act allows the government of Canada to prosecute acts of terrorism against Canadian citizens that occur anywhere in the world, this is the first time a private civil action has been taken on behalf of Canadians harmed by terrorism in Israel, Morgan said.

The claim alleges that, since 2004, the LCB permitted the Yousser Company for Finance and Investment and the Martyrs Foundation to maintain accounts and "to freely transfer substantial amounts of Hezbollah funds and to carry out significant financial transactions, within and without Lebanon, by means of wire transfers, letters of credit, checks and credit cards provided by LCB."

The amounts are said to have been "many millions of dollars," according to the Israel Law Center.

The centre was also involved in a similar lawsuit filed July 7 in the United States against several other Lebanese banks on behalf of a group of Israeli victims of Hezbollah attacks during the war, which lasted 33 days during July and August 2006.

The LCB, originally the Lebanese branch of the Royal Bank of Canada, according to the Quebec claim, is listed by the federal government's Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions as a regulated financial institution, and is therefore subject to Canadian law. The plaintiffs are not implicating the Royal Bank.

The suit details that several Hezbollah rockets struck the property of the plaintiffs, making them uninhabitable, and that they suffered psychological stress and that one of the women's health was seriously jeopardized.

Sappir, who was five months pregnant at the time, went into early labour, had to be hospitalized, and gave birth prematurely. She and her mother were relocated to a shelter for bombing victims for several months.

The Shalmonis were visiting Canada in July 2006 when a Hezbollah rocket partly destroyed their home, delaying their return to Israel by several weeks. They then had to live in a small apartment in Tel Aviv with 12 other people for several more weeks and lost employment income. They say their three children have been especially traumatized by the attack.

The $6.15-million sought includes $1 million in "punitive, exemplary and aggravated damages" for all the plaintiffs.

The Lebanese-based Hezbollah is identified by the federal government as an "Islamist terrorist organization" and, since 2002, it has been a criminal offence to directly or indirectly support it materially, including, as is specifically spelled out, provide financial services.

While Canada has not specifically named the Yousser and Martyr groups in its legislation, Morgan said, U.S. officials have drawn a clear link between them and Hezbollah.

The U.S. Treasury Department has identified Yousser as "Hezbollah's unofficial treasury, holding and investing its assets and serving as intermediaries between the terrorist group and mainstream banks." The department described Martyrs as "an Iranian parastatal organization that channels financial support from Iran to several terrorist organizations in the Levant, including Hezbollah."

Ed Morgan

Moreover, the plaintiffs claim it is "public knowledge" in Lebanon that these two groups are associated with Hezbollah.

The suit states that the LCB had "full knowledge that Yousser and Martyrs are part of Hezbollah's financial arm and that the financial services were being provided to Hezbollah… LCB and its management, officers and employees were grossly negligent in omitting to take measures to comply with section 83.03 and 83.08 of the Criminal Code and failed to take any reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that accounts and funds in LCB were owned or controlled by or on behalf of a listed terrorist group."

Darshan-Leitner said in a press release that the lawsuit "is only the beginning of the uncovering of Hezbollah's extensive financial network in Canada." However, it's not alleged that any of the financial transactions took place in this country.

Morgan said he expects the first court appearance to take place in August.

"This is very much a test case," he said, but he added that he's confident it will be heard by the Superior Court, because the defendant, the LCB, is operating in Canada, and its Montreal branch is, in fact, its only overseas outlet.

Suing Hezbollah directly would not be possible, because it has no official representation here, and civil action against a foreign government, such as Lebanon, is not possible under Canadian law as it currently stands.

A group of more than 50 Israeli citizens injured by Hezbollah bombings or who had relatives killed by Hezbollah attacks two years ago have filed a lawsuit in a Manhattan federal court against five other Lebanese banks.

These institutions are alleged to have provided financial services to Hezbollah's fundraising arm, the Islamic Resistance Support Organization, and it's alleged that U.S. currency was made available to Hezbollah through unidentified U.S. banks.

Lone Jewish director of public education retires

Led turnaround at Ottawa school board

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

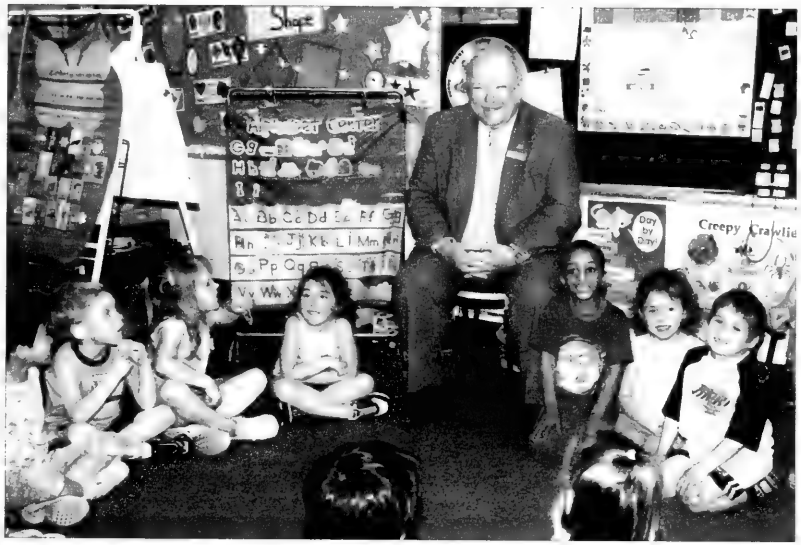
OTTAWA — Lorne Rachlis, the director of education of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB,) the largest public school board between Toronto and Montreal, has retired after 37 years in the field of education, the last five in his present position.

From his early years as a science teacher, Rachlis progressed through the ranks to increasingly senior and challenging positions. "There are some people who enjoy doing the same thing over and over, but I needed to do something completely different about every five years, and my career allowed me to do that," Rachlis said.

Beginning as principal of the night school at Bathurst Heights Secondary School in what was then North York in 1975, he expanded the evening program from mainly interest courses and English as a second language courses to include a large selection of credit courses. He also extended the program through the summer by making it North York's adult summer school site, and then he expanded the program into daytime hours.

When Rachlis left in 1980, it was the largest adult continuing education program in North York.

"Over a five-year period as night-school principal, I turned what had been a small, winter night school into a full-year program, in effect creating one of the first adult day schools in Ontario," he said.



Lorne Rachlis in class

"The day school alone had 800 adults enrolled, with 800 adolescent students, and the non-credit day, evening and summer programs had 6,000 registration annually," he added.

As director of the Avon Maitland District School Board in Stratford from 1998 to 2003, he was instrumental in creating an e-learning distance education centre.

During the mid-1990s, Rachlis created a Grade 11 archeology course in Ottawa that allowed students to take a senior level credit for their diploma while spending three weeks in Israel. They spent a week on a kibbutz and then participated in archeological digs. Although the course was popular, the cost contributed to its demise.

Rachlis received an award, among several others, for creating and implementing the former Ottawa Board of Education's anti-racism and ethnocultural equity education policy. "The Ministry of Education used our processes and plans as an example to other school boards," he said.

Rachlis took the job as OCDSB director in August 2003, when the board was under provincial supervision after failing to balance its budget. It was created in 1998 out of a merger of two local boards. After almost five years of school closings and a re-organization, its budget is balanced and new schools are now being built.

> ***'I will miss the opportunity to make things better for the next generation'***

As well, Rachlis has overseen new initiatives such as the Education Foundation of Ottawa, the Outdoor Education Council and the Ottawa Student Transportation Authority, which were all created during his tenure.

Board chair Lynn Scott also noted that Rachlis "was the guiding force behind the now annual Student Recognition Awards, which recognize secondary students from across the district who are making a difference in their schools and communities."

As the only Jewish public school director in Ontario, Rachlis credits his religion with helping him grapple with complex decisions in his career. "My faith is at the core of my being, and it is through that moral centre that I filtered my actions as a son, a husband, a father and an employer."

A life-long member of Ottawa's Temple Israel synagogue, Rachlis served two terms on its board of directors and sat on the education committee.

Reflecting on his retirement, Rachlis commented: "I will miss the wonderful people I work with, the opportunity to make things better for the next generation through education, seeing the talents and inquisitiveness of children."

Rachlis will not be leaving the field of education completely, however. This fall, he will be teaching two courses in the master's of education program at the University of Ottawa.

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Canadians to research water management in Israel

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — There are those who might describe Christine Melnick, Manitoba's minister of water stewardship, as a Zionist.

Melnick has visited Israel – both as part of official missions and on her own – four or five times over the past few years. And she is so impressed with the Jewish state's accomplishments that she has persuaded her cabinet colleagues to come up with $250,000 for the University of Manitoba to send masters and doctoral students to Israel for a year at a time to research water management.

The funding will be given out in 10 annual $25,000 scholarships.

"These important new scholarships will support scholarly development in a range of areas, including nanotechnology, water conservation and water reuse," Melnick said. "Today's students are tomorrow's leading voices on water protection, and these scholarships will give our young people a unique international experience as they complete their studies."

The new scholarship program, to be administered in partnership with the Jewish National Fund of Canada, will allow the Manitoba students to study at Israeli educational institutions such as the Weizmann Institute of Science.

"We worked out the funding with our Israeli partners," Melnick said. "Each student will be in Israel for one calendar year. We wanted to be sure that the student could afford decent housing and food, and be able to go out to a movie now and then."

The grad students would be paired with Israeli host families, to help out with their expenses and to make their stay more enjoyable.

It was while Melnick was on her most recent visit to Israel – a personal journey – in January 2007 that she learned a lot about Israel's record of water stewardship research. While speaking for the provincial government at the most recent JNF Negev Gala in June, she related how Rami Kleinmann, who was the JNF shaliach for Canada at the time, took her around to different Israeli water research projects.

"I was impressed that Israel has this entire infrastructure based on water stewardship," she said. "We have plenty of water in Manitoba, but we don't do a good job of managing it. We have a lot we can learn from Israel about water stewardship. Why reinvent the wheel when we can learn from Israel's expertise?"

The successful applicants for the program, Melnick noted, have to commit to working in Manitoba for two to three years after their return. "We will have positions for them in the Department of Water Stewardship, where they can apply their new-found knowledge. We expect that there may be quite a demand for their services."

Melnick said that she is not aware of any other government or university in Canada with a similar relationship with Israel. The first scholarship candidate will be announced at the upcoming international symposium on water management scheduled to take place in Winnipeg in August.

Melnick noted that the symposium and the new scholarships build on a partnership between the Jewish National Fund and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives in the interchange of agricultural and food-production technology.

Hillel goes green

By RIVA GOLD
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — Like a childhood monster, Hillel is going big and green.

This summer, Hillel hopes to become significantly more sustainable and environmentally friendly, with a wide range of "green" projects planned for the year to come.

Samantha Banks, Hillel Montreal student president, started the initiative in May.

"Environmentalism is all the rage, and I'm really passionate about it," she says. "Looking at the pathetic backyard of Hillel House, I realized it was definitely time to go green."

Hillel's plan follows several other student-led initiatives to promote sustainability on campuses across Montreal. Concordia University has been called the most green-friendly university in Canada and has brought in guests speakers such as activist David Suzuki and former U.S. vice-president Al Gore to talk about the environment.

McGill University has also had a very active green movement and support for the project has been widespread.

Hillel student Eddie Fuchs, left and Samantha Banks hang on to a tree in front of the Hillel house. [David Kogut photo]

"Students have noticed that there are ways we could be more efficient, more sustainable," says David Kogut, outreach co-ordinator of Jewish Campus Service Corps.

"They realize it, and through them, we realize it. Our members have expressed an interest in conserving energy and have proposed a number of projects."

Four major green Hillel campaigns are expected to run this year, with a particular emphasis on the compatibility between Judaism and environmental sustainability.

Rabbi Dov Whitman has suggested a Green Shabbat challenge, and the connection between Judaism and animal welfare has also been a popular topic amongst students.

Other plans for the year include rabbi-led sessions, talks on Israeli environmentalism and even a benefit concert for the environment.

Topics for sessions are set to range from the impact of toxic cleaning products to the water shortage in Israel.

"What we really want is to give students a broader perspective and an initiative to go green," Banks says.

Until then, Banks and her team are working on improving the Hillel House on Stanley Street.

"We're starting by adding recycling bins and composting, and helping the kitchen become more sustainable… Baby steps," she concedes, "but every hand helps."

Kogut notes that they also have high hopes for the Hillel backyard, where he hopes to grow fruit, which would be free for students. In the future, they plan to install light sensors, low-pressure shower heads, waterless urinals, bike racks, and two-flush toilets.

Banks and Kogut both feel that the Jewish student community is a great place for this initiative.

"Every community has a special responsibility towards the environment," says Kogut.

"It's crucial that everyone jumps in and helps. Just by putting a can in a recycling bin… it helps," Banks adds. "Once we reach this community, we can reach out to all of Montreal."

So far, students from across the country have readily offered their input and have come up with several project ideas. Hydro Quebec and the Office of Energy Efficiency have offered support, and funding options are presently being discussed.

"As much as I believe it's a fad, it's a very beneficial one, and I want to help get Jewish communities in on it," Banks says.

For more information, e-mail sambanks@klayman.com or visit the Hillel Montreal website at www.hillel.ca.

Child support: for how long?

Family Matters
by
John Syrtash
B.A. (Hon.), LL.B.
Counsel
Garfin Zeidenberg LLP
Family Lawyer & Mediator for 26 years

Question. If I'm married do I still have to pay the same amount of child support?

Answer. Yes. Even if you earned a small living and your ex-wife married Donald Trump you would still have to pay the same amount.

The amount you pay under the Child Support Guidelines is based entirely upon your gross yearly income, usually found at line 150 of your tax return for last year. The basic table amount payable is not based upon the recipient's income except in calculating payment for "extras", like orthodontics, post-secondary school tuition, certain extra-curricular activities (like hockey) and daycare costs.

Then you pay in proportion to each other's gross income. But the Court never considers the new boyfriend or husband's means, unless one is reconsidering spousal support.

Question. I am paying child support for children eight years and 12 years old. Until what age does child support have to be paid?

Answer. It is not by an age limit that Canadian law answers your question. Child support under the Divorce Act is payable until the children are no longer "children within the marriage."

This is generally understood to mean: no longer dependent. If a child uses his parent's residence as a home base (i.e. vacation breaks, weekends etc.), then child support is payable as late as the end of his first post-secondary degree, like a four-year B.A, although some decisions have gone beyond that.

If the child drops out of school and "bums around", then he's usually no longer dependent and child support ceases after a Court order says so.

Then again, if he's a drug addict and "bums around", one Judge declared that the addiction was a mental illness so the child was still dependent because of his "disability."

So, in many cases, child support is payable as long as it takes to find a good lawyer to stop it.

Mr. Syrtash is Counsel to Garfin Zeidenberg LLP, Suite 800, 5255 Yonge Street (at Norton) just north of Mel Lastman Square, Civic Centre Subway station, Toronto, ON M5G 1E6. John Syrtash can be reached at (416) 642-5410, Cell (416) 886-0359. Visit www.freemychild.com; www.spousalsupport.com; www.garfinzeidenberg.com.

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Hospital's high-risk pregnancy unit gets DVDs

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Melyssa Aronson and her husband, Michael Goldberg, were grateful for the care she received from Dr. John Kingdom of Mount Sinai's fetal medicine unit during three high-risk pregnancies.

They wanted to thank him in a tangible way and decided to donate a DVD library to the in-patient high-risk ante/postnatal unit and the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) of Mount Sinai Hospital. The library was dedicated to Kingdom and the maternal fetal medicine group in May.

The DVDs include children's movies such as *Mary Poppins*; new releases and box sets from TV series such as *Friends*; old movies, like *Casablanca* and *Spartacus* new films such as the Harry Potter and the Oceans series, along with action movies and comedies.

The DVDs were donated by friends and family, and by Rogers Cable and other cable companies.

The DVDs are kept at the nurses' station on seven south – the hospital ward where most of the high-risk maternity patients stay – in a cabinet donated by IKEA. Five portable DVD players are available. Aronson said that the plan is to eventually have a player for every room.

Aronson, a genetics counsellor at Mount Sinai, knows only too well what it means to go through a high-risk pregnancy, including staying on bed rest so that the baby remains in the womb as long as possible. Her first baby, Noah, now seven, was born at 24 weeks' gestation.

While Noah is doing well in Grade 1 at Wilshire Public School, where he just received a courage award, his eyesight is poor and he has learning disabilities, which is not uncommon in very premature babies.

Melyssa Aronson and her husband, Michael Goldberg (not in the picture), donated a DVD library to Mount Sinai Hospital. Above are Aronson and Dr. John Kingdom of the hospital's fetal medicine unit.

Aronson was considered high risk for her next two pregnancies as well, so she maintained close contact with Kingdom and the maternal fetal medicine group.

"I wanted to do something to help the women on seven south and especially to honour Dr. Kingdom. But Dr. Kingdom insisted that the whole unit be honoured."

Kingdom said he was humbled by Aronson and Goldberg's tribute.

Mount Sinai has the largest and most diversified high-risk pregnancy program in the country, Kingdom said. Each year, the hospital cares for 2,000 new high-risk patients and 1,000 women who previously had a high-risk pregnancy.

"We are a national centre for fetal therapy, such as for congenital heart disease," Kingdom said.

Mount Sinai is part of the Fetal Alert Network (FAN), an initiative of the Ontario Ministry of Health to help pregnant women whose babies may have birth defects. A high-risk pregnancy is not only difficult for the mothers, Aronson pointed out. Their older children who come to visit are tense and frightened, and the DVDs serve to entertain them as well as occupy them while the parents have some time to be together or talk to the doctors.

About Nutrition

Q. I am wondering if it is OK to drink tomato juice. I know many juices are high in sugar.

A. Tomato juice is great to drink, as it is much lower in sugar than fruit juice or other vegetable juices such as carrot juice, and it has very few calories, only about 60 calories per eight-ounce serving. Tomato juice is packed with vitamins and prostate-protecting lycopenes, and it has the added bonus of being filling without having a lot of calories. I think tomato juice is a good thing to order in a restaurant, on a plane, at a bar or at a cocktail party. It will help fill you up so that you don't load up on bread, hors d'oeuvres or salty, fried snacks. The only possible negative element here is that some tomato juice brands have a fair amount of sodium – so watch for that on the label.

Q. With summer approaching, I love berries, cherries, grapes and similar fruit, but I am never sure what a proper serving size is of these fruits?

A. Most people are surprised to learn how small a serving of these kinds of fruit are: one serving of grapes or cherries is about 10, a serving of strawberries is 1 cup, and for other berries, it is ½ cup. Don't shy away from these very nutritious little gems – blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, cherries and the like are all full of fibre, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. So enjoy!

Q. I have heard a lot about probiotics, and now I am seeing the word prebiotics. Are they the same thing?

A. Prebiotics are basically the tools for your body to create or grow or retain probiotics – the good bacteria that live in our gut and that we want living in our intestinal tract. Prebiotics typically come from inulin, a type of fibre found in some whole grain breads and cereals. Prebiotics help to feed the good bacteria so that they multiply and flourish and thus improve our digestive health. Both are very worthwhile as part of a balanced healthy diet.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

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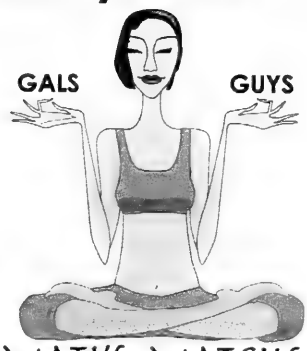

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Planning essential for senior years

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Estimates are that 21 per cent of the population in Canada will be over 65 by 2011. And the fastest growing demographic is people over 85 years of age.

These statistics, provided by financial security advisor Harold Goldberg, were the focus of a seminar held recently at the offices of usefulideas, a financial planning company in Toronto.

Goldberg pointed out that because people are living longer, they will need more money over the long term and an assured retirement income.

"If you preplan, you have a better chance of ensuring that the money you have will still be there and enabling you to plan your estate and adapt for inflation."

You must recognize, he said, that very likely, you will be, in some measure, dependent for five to 10 years, needing either some degree of home care or residence in a long-term care facility.

"These costs are not covered by government," Goldberg said. Neither are a number of drugs.

Also, he said, more people are self-employed and are therefore not part of any pension plan. "You have to take care of yourself."

The most common investment, he said, used to be the GIC, which, in the 1980s, gave 10 to 12 per cent interest. "Now you are lucky to get 2½ to four per cent – all taxable, and not even taking inflation into account."

The fear that you will run out of money is a very real one, he said.

Joel Rose, a principal at usefulideas, addressed other worries that can arise from the longer life span. For instance, he said, "women live longer than men. If your husband becomes ill, you will look after him. But if he dies, who will care for you?"

Other considerations, especially if you need long-term care, Rose said, are that staffing is frequently insufficient and personal care is at a minimum and you worry about who will look after you after you are in a facility if you can't advocate for yourself. This does not begin to address concerns about who will look after your money, he added. The yearly cost of private care for 34 hours a week is calculated at $37,544, Rose said. "That leads to a big hole in your funds."

Joanne Rose, also a principal of the company, noted that there are different phases of retirement. "Costs don't always escalate over the years – that's why planning makes good sense."

However, she said, planning should be done with care. "You need a contract. Then you need to understand the contract. You need an adviser who is able to explain things and is willing to take the time to explain."

The bottom line, she warned, is that 40 years of work now has to finance 40 or more years of retirement.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

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NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES. What's New deadlines: Monday, July 28, is the deadline for the Aug. 7 issue; Thursday, July 31, is the deadline for the Aug. 14 issue; and Monday, Aug. 11, is the deadline for the Aug. 21 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, July 17

SUMMER FUN FEST

Beth David Congregation hosts Summer Fun Fest, a barbecue with snow cones, bouncy castles, relay races, inflatable obstacle course and more. 5:30-8 p.m. Rain or shine. $10, children $5, in advance; $13, children $8 at the door. 416-633-5500

Saturday, July 19

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

Eyal Bitton talks about the weekly portion Pinchas. 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue.

OSHAWA SYNAGOGUE

Beth Zion Congregation, a Conservative community in Oshawa, has Shabbat services led by **Rabbi Israel Man** at 9:30 a.m., followed by kiddush. For information about religious school and bar mitzvah lessons, call 905-723-2353. www.bethzionoshawa.com

HALTON-PEEL SERVICE

Join B'Nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel for Shabbat services held at a hotel in Oakville at 10 a.m. This Conservative egalitarian group welcome new members to their monthly services followed by a kiddush. Info, www.bnaishalom.ca or 905-901-9889.

Sunday, July 20

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc., a walking group for Jewish Singles 50+, for a hike through the forest in Colonel Danforth Park. Meet in the last parking lot at 73 Colonel Danforth Trail at 9:30 a.m. Info, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

Tuesday, July 22

SUMMER CLOSET SALE

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section, hold a Summer Closet Sale, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., every Tuesday through Aug. 26. 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100

Wednesday, July 23

JEWISH JOKERS GROUP

The Jewish Jokers, Humour and Trivia Group meets at 7 p.m. at the Antibes Community Centre. All welcome. Call Irv Helpert for info, 416-661-2541.

Saturday, July 26

AYIN L'TZION OPEN HOUSE

Congregation Ayin L'Tzion, a modern Orthodox congregation housed in Netivot HaTorah School invites the community to Shabbat services and hot neighbourhood kiddush. 9 a.m. Child-care program begins at 9:45 a.m. 416- 312-0690

Wednesday, July 30

PROSTATE CANCER

Man to Man and Side to Side prostate cancer support groups present a Prostate Cancer Awareness Night with information on treatment options as well as the sharing of personal experiences. 7:30 p.m. at the Toronto Botanical Gardens. Family members and partners welcome. 416-932-8820

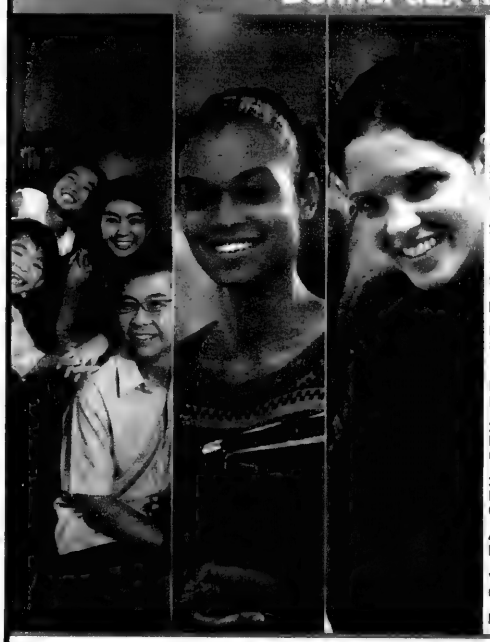
Sunday, July 27

GIANT GARAGE SALE

Beth Emeth Synagogue hold a garage sale of household items, clothing, books, toys and more.10 a.m. 155 Wilmington Ave. Beside Irv Chapley Park. 416-633-3838

Continued on page 23

Giving newcomers a head start
Donner aux nouveaux arrivants un bon départ



The Government of Canada believes in immigration. We want more newcomers to join us and be an important part of Canada's future. That's why we are improving our immigration system by:

1. Creating a more flexible, fair and responsive immigration system
The changes to Canada's immigration laws will help to attract the skilled workers Canada needs most and ensure families are reunited faster.

2. Helping internationally trained individuals
The Foreign Credentials Referral Office was created in 2007 to help newcomers get the information they need to have their credentials assessed and recognized in Canada

3. Increasing settlement funding
The Government of Canada has invested $1.4 billion* more in settlement funding, which includes language training and job search and employment services to help newcomers succeed and make a new home in Canada.

4. Reducing the Right of Permanent Residence Fee
The federal government reduced the right of permanent residence fee from $975 to $490.

* Excluding Quebec. In Quebec, the Canada-Quebec Accord gives the province the exclusive responsibility for providing settlement and support services to all immigrants in Quebec in exchange for financial compensation from the Government of Canada (approx. $198.2 million in 2007-08)

Learn more at **www.cic.gc.ca** or call **1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)** TTY: 1-800-926-9105

Le gouvernement du Canada croit en l'immigration. Nous voulons accueillir plus de nouveaux arrivants et que ces derniers jouent un rôle actif pour assurer l'avenir du Canada. Voilà pourquoi nous améliorons notre système d'immigration en prenant les mesures suivantes :

1. Créer un système d'immigration plus souple, plus équitable et mieux adapté
Les modifications apportées à la législation canadienne en matière d'immigration contribueront à attirer les travailleurs qualifiés dont le Canada a le plus besoin, ainsi qu'à réunir les familles plus rapidement.

2. Aider les personnes formées à l'étranger
Le Bureau d'orientation relatif aux titres de compétences étrangers a été mis sur pied en 2007 pour aider les nouveaux arrivants à obtenir l'information dont ils ont besoin pour faire évaluer et reconnaître leurs titres de compétences au Canada.

3. Accroître le financement en matière d'établissement
Le gouvernement du Canada a investi un montant supplémentaire de 1,4 milliard** de dollars en fonds d'établissement, notamment pour financer les cours de langue et les services d'orientation et d'aide à la recherche d'emploi pour permettre aux nouveaux arrivants de s'intégrer avec succès au Canada.

4. Réduire les frais relatifs au droit de résidence permanente
Le gouvernement fédéral a réduit de 975 $ à 490 $ les frais relatifs au droit de résidence permanente.

** Exclut le Québec. Au Québec, l'Accord Canada-Québec donne à la province la responsabilité exclusive des services d'établissement et d'intégration des immigrants au Québec en échange d'une compensation financière du gouvernement du Canada (environ 198,2 millions en 2007-08).

Pour en apprendre davantage, visitez le **www.cic.gc.ca** ou composez le **1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232),** ATS : 1-800-926-9105.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada | Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Canada

Continued from page 22

Other News

YU SUMMER KOLLEL

Yeshiva University Summer Kollel offers a free study program Monday through Thursday throughout the summer. Each evening begins with Minchah at 7:30 p.m. **Rabbi Shmuel Marcus** gives a shiur at 7:45 p.m., followed at 8:30 p.m. by a half hour "Torah Buffet," workshops on Jewish philosophy, medical ethics, Shabbat, Tanach, prayer, the weekly portion, Talmud, and understanding Jewish law. Ma'ariv takes place at 9 p.m., followed by refreshments and an opportunity to ask questions. The program takes place Mondays at Adas Israel of Hamilton, Tuesdays at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Wednesdays at Bnai Torah Congregation, Thursdays at BAYT and Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue. The kollel will run a Shabbaton program in the following communities: BAYT, July 19-20; Bnai Torah Congregation, July 26-27; Sparrow Lake, Aug. 2-3; Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Aug. 9-10; Adas Israel of Hamilton, Aug. 15-16. Visiting scholars **Rabbi Reuven** and **Shani Taragin**, July 31-Aug. 3. Info, 416-783-6960 or canada@yu.edu.

EMUNAH STRATFORD TRIP

Emunah Women is organizing a trip to Stratford to see *The Music Man* Tuesday, Aug. 26. Cost is $120, which includes bus transportation, picnic lunch and a balcony ticket to the matinée performance. Deadline for paid reservations is July 22. Reserve, 416-636-0036.

YARCHEI KALLAH

The 14th annual Nishmat Yarchei Kallah takes place Aug. 5-7 at Yeshivat Or Chaim. **Simi Peters**, an instructor at Nishmat, the Jerusalem Centre for Advanced Jewish Study for Women, will teach "Exploring the Midrashic Mind." Information, registration at cfnishmat@gmail.com.

KOLEL SUMMER ULPAN

Study at Kollel's summer ulpan and learn basic conversational Hebrew in eight classes. Tuesday and Thursday nights, Aug. 5-28, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Bathurst JCC. Preregistration required. Call 416-636-1880, ext. 235.

YIDDISH ARTS CAMP

The Koffler Centre offers a week of art, dance, music and Yiddish culture for kids ages 6-12, with guest artists from the Ashkenaz Festival Aug. 25-29, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Also offered is a free CIT, counsellor-in-training program for those ages 13-15. Registration and information, 416-636-1880, ext. 269, or info@kofflerarts.org.

2008 ASHKENAZ FESTIVAL

The Ashkenaz Festival takes place Aug. 26-Sept. 1 at Harbourfront Centre and at locations throughout Toronto. The festival celebrates Yiddish and Jewish culture. Includes music, film, theatre, dance, literature, crafts and visual arts. Most events are free. Info, 416-979-9901 or www.ashkenazfestival.com.

LUNCH AND LEARN

Beth Tikvah Synagogue Lunch and Learn runs Tuesdays, Sept. 9-Dec. 2. Lunch at 12:15 p.m. Program at 12:45 p.m. Sept. 9, TBA; Sept. 16, **Dr. Irving Abella**, author of *None Is Too Many*, will talk about Canadian Jewish immigration; Sept. 23, **Moshe Hammer**, violinist, will share personal anecdotes on "The Violin: A Versatile Instrument in Any Musical Genre"; Oct. 28, "Finally: The Presidential Election" with **Dr. Ron Prussen**, professor of history at U of T; Nov. 4, **Gerald Ziedenberg** speaks on the life of **Elie Wiesel** and his impact on Holocaust recognition; Nov. 11, **Dr. Adam Chapnick**, deputy chair of education at the Canadian Forces College, speaks on "The United Nations: Blessing or Burden? A Canadian Perspective"; Nov. 18, **Marilyn Herbert** will review *The People of the Book* by **Geraldine Brooks**; Nov. 25, **Joseph Glass**, a geographer, will speak about "The Development of Modern Jerusalem During the Late Ottoman Period 1800-1917;" Dec. 2, **Michael Ettedgui** speaks on "Cyberhate: Racism's New Front Line." Series, $110 or $125 for non-members before Aug. 1, $125 and $140 after Aug. 1. Reservation, 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

KNITTERS NEEDED

Knitters are needed to knit mittens, hats and scarves for inner-city school children. Wool is provided. A project of Jewish Women International Canada. 416-630-9313, info@jwicanada.com

WOMEN'S SUPPORT GROUP

National Council of Jewish Women hosts a women's support group that meets to network, share, address concerns and have fun. 4700 Bathurst St. TTC and wheelchair accessible. For information, call 416-633-5100. Free. Open to all women in the community.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tikvah Friendship Group hosts **Allan Brender**, presenting "A Trip to Alaska," a slide show. Refreshments will be served. Thursday, July 17, 2-4 p.m. $3.

55+ Forward for Seniors at the MNJCC hosts "Heart & Mind: Promoting Health, Preventing Disability," a talk by gerontologist **David Tal**, Thursday, July 17, 1:30 p.m.; and a talk by Ontario Jewish Archives director **Ellen Scheinberg**, Thursday, Aug. 7, 1:30 p.m. Info, **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Beth Emeth's Chai Shalom Social Club presents **Yitzhak Argaman**, Wednesday, Aug. 13, 7:30 p.m. Members $6, guests $10. Pay at the door. Information, 416-633-3838.

The Association of Jewish Seniors holds its 36th anniversary gala luncheon celebrating Israel @ 60 with entertainment by **Aetal**. Thursday, Aug. 21, noon at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Members $20, guests $25. Reserve by Aug. 11. Call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Fallsview Casino, Wednesday, July 30; Casino Rama, Wednesday, Aug. 6; Seniors walking group, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.; Conversational Hebrew, Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Info about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Join The Terrace for a barbecue on Monday, July 28, in the dining room at noon. $12.58. Reserve by Monday, July 21, at service desk or ext. 2267.

The Book and Munch Club has resumed meeting with group leader **Marilyn Fine** on Wednesdays from noon to 1:15 p.m. in the Gathering Place.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Mix and Mingle at Betel Centre, Wednesday, July 23, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Free.

"Between the Covers," a lecture by film critic **Kevin Courrier**. Tuesday, July 29, 10 a.m. Members $3, non-members $.

Chiropody clinic, by appointment only, call ext. 131.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

Sizzling South American Samba, the launch of Café Atid, the MNJCC's new program for young adults 25-35. The evening includes a Spanish lesson, flamenco dancing and a South American barbecue. Thursday, Aug. 14, on the rooftop. Weather permitting. $18, kashruth observed. Contact **Randi** at ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

MNJCC Community Choir is looking for male tenor and bass singers to join the choir, which sings jazz, world, folk, Jewish, swing, popular, Canadian, classical and more. Women are invited to audition for soprano, alto or tenor positions. Rehearsals Wednesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Contact **Harriet**, ext. 133 or harrietw@mnjcc.org.

Into the Woods: Junior, by **Stephen Sondheim**, a production of No Strings Theatre Summer, summer music theatre by actors ages 13-21, July 30 and 31, 7:30 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre. Tickets, in advance, $22; seniors/students $17; at the door $25. Call ext. 0.

Summer Ulpanim, Intensive Grammar Course: The Verb System, two sessions, July 21-24, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., or Aug. 18-21, 6:15 p.m.-9:15 p.m. Members $132, non-members $160. Hebrew Through Songs: learn Hebrew and Israeli culture through modern Israeli songs. Aug. 18-21, 4-6 p.m. Members $90, non-members $110. Modern Hebrew Ulpan for Beginners: Level Bet: listening comprehension and conversational Hebrew, Aug. 18-21, 7-9 p.m. Members: $90, non-members $110. Information, registration, **Randi**, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The BJCC has a block of tickets for the first night of the play *Jersey Boys*, Thursday, Aug. 21, at the Toronto Centre of the Arts. This event gives disadvantaged children a great summer at the BJCC's Centre Camp. Tickets, ext. 240.

Registration is continuing for September 2008 for BJCC morning school for Tic Tac Two, nursery and junior kindergarten. The program includes music, Hebrew, fun centre time, gym time and swimming. Call ext. 248 for info and to book a tour of the school.

Volunteers needed

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

Join the Betel Centre team of volunteers. Visitors are needed to visit seniors at home, call **Bev**, 416 225-2112, ext. 134, or become a Meals on Wheels volunteer. Choose the day of the week, length of commitment flexible. Mileage is reimbursed. Call **Naomi**, 416-225-2112, ext. 127.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 20

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Ter-Tovmasyan, Svetlana	June 24/08	Private
Ship, Alexander	June 26/08	3560 Bathurst St
Bolotovsky, Mikhail	June 28/08	Private
Freedman, Clara	June 27/08	4 Mascot Place
Miller, Jack	June 30/08	Private
Sandler, Gary R.	July 1/08	39 Parliament St
Klein, Isaac	July 3/08	Private
Tozman, Eugene	July 2/08	211 Searle Ave
Greenberg, Harry C.	July 4/08	Private
Rosencwajg, Joe Zisa	July 4/08	
Cheskes, Jona	July 5/08	1101 Steeles Ave. W
Nahmad, Israel	July 6/08	1111 Steeles Ave. W.
Goltsman, Rayisa	July 6/08	Private
Tsimberg, Isaac	July 6/08	625 Finch Ave. W.

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Shirley Firestone	Jun 29/08	1 Benvenuto Place
Cecilie Nash	Jun 29/08	20 Shallmar Blvd
Sam Zelin	Jun 28/08	40 Windsor St
Helen Laywine	Jun 28/08	11-C Tranby Ave
Sheldon Shuster	Jun 29/08	34 Little Norway Cres
Carl Hendeles	Jun 27/08	8 Covington Rd
Marion Simon	Jun 29/08	1014 Glencairn Ave
Eudy Halberstadt	Jul 1/08	11 Townsgate Dr
Victor Spence	Jul 1/08	355 St. Clair Ave W
Moniek Prusznowski	Jul 2/08	7300 Yonge St
Gerald King	Jul 4/08	205 Cummer Ave
Eisig Kieselstein	Jul 3/08	484 Steeles Ave W
Cory Mintz	Jul 3/08	429 Deloraine Ave
Samuel Goldstein	Jul 6/08	500 Avenue Rd
Bunny Katz	Jul 5/08	55 Skymark Dr

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of
PEARL WEINMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, July 20th, 12:30 p.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Community Section "V"
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling.
To place any other family related notice, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date.
(416) 391-1836

YIDDISH CORNER
Edited by: ALEK SILVER
ייִדיש־ווינקל
רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

לכבוד דעם 100סטן יובילעום פון דער יידיש־קאָנפֿערענץ אין טשערנאָוויץ

פֿון אַלעק סילווער
(צוויטער טייל)

ד"ר נתן בירנבוים (1864־1937)

מסתמא האָבן נאָר וויניצק מענטשן זיך דערוווּסט פֿון דער נייער שפֿראָכלעכער פֿראַגע, אַבער די פֿאַר האָבן זיך זיכער שטאַרק צעלאַכט. נאָר פֿונדעסטוווייניקן איז דער גרעסטער נישט געשטאַנדן, און אייניער פֿון זיינע ערשטע פֿיאַנערן, אויב נישט דער ערשטער, אָלכסנדר האַרקאַווי, לעבט נאָך היינט אין ניו־יאָרק און האָט זיך פֿריידן דערלעבט בײַ זײַן אידעאַל.

ווי די יידישע אינטעליגענטן זיינען נאַציאָנאַל גע־ווארן, האָבן זיי, אמת, אויך ניט מיט גרויס חשק געקוקט אויף דער יידישער שפֿראַך. זיי האָבן זי גאָר באַטראַכט פֿאר אַ מין אַנשיקעניש, וואָס מען מוז ליידן, אַבער וואָס מען טאָר זיך איר נישט אויסרעגבן.

עס איז זיי גאָר נישט אויפֿן זינען אַרויף, אַז אַ נא־ציאָנאַלער אינטעליגענט באַהאַרף ניט נאָר זײַן צוגע־קניפּט מיטן האַרץ מיט ווילן צו זײַן פֿאָלק, נאָר אַז ער מוז קודם־כּל צווישן אים לעבן. ער מוז אָטעמען אין דער זעלבער קולטורעלער אַטמאָספֿער און זײַן גייסטיק לעבן מוז אַרויסוואַקסן פון זײַן פֿאָלקס־נשמה און מוז זיךווידער מיט אַ מין הייַמישן כּוח קאָנען אַרייגלאָזן אין איר. און עס איז אים נישט אייגנטפֿאַלן, אַז רעדן אַן אַנדער לשון, ווי דאָס פֿאָלק רעדט, און אין וועלכן עס דענקט און פֿילט, קלאָגט און פֿריידט זיך, ווײַנט און לאַכט, הייסט פֿאַרלאָזן זײַן פֿאָלק, הייסט עס צוריקלאָזן אין אַ ווייסטענײַש, אָן פֿריינד און אָן פֿירער, הייסט אַליין גיין אויף אַן עולם־התוהו, זיך אַליין מאַכן פֿאַר אַ פֿאַר־וואַגלטן, פֿאַר אַ פֿאַרבלאָנדזשעטן פֿון זײַן היים און פֿון זײַן פֿאָלק.

און אַז מ'האָט צו אָט־די אינטעליגענטן גערעדט אינעם דער זאַך, אַז מ'האָט געפֿרווווט זיי אינערצייגן, האָבן זיי געשמייכלט אַדער געלאַכט: „וואָס, איר ווילט גאָר, אַז מיר, געבילדעטע, זאָלן זיך באַנוצן מיטן זשאַרגאָן, מיט דעם מיאוסן זשאַרגאָן דאָס וועט איר בײַ אונדז בשום אופֿן ניט פֿונעלן. מאַכט זיך בעסער נישט נאַרישן!" — האָבן זיי געזאָגט און האָבן באַטראַכט פֿאר משוגע דעם, וואָס האָט געריעדט צו זיי וועגן יידיש.

אַבער די יידישע שפֿראַך האָט זיך נישט געמאַכט פון זייער שמייכלען, פון זייער לאַכן, פון זייער פֿאַרנא־ריש־אוך־משוגע האַלטן. שטיל און בעיומרת איז זי זיך געגאַנגען איר וועג, אָן זיכערן וועג, דעם וועג, וואָס די נייע צייט און דאָס אלטע פֿאָלק האָבן פֿאַר איר אויסגע־גליכט. די נייע צייט האָט זי באַהאַרט, כּדי דעם פֿאַסטן עולם די אויגן צו עפֿענען, צו זאָל אויך עפּעס קאָנען זען, אויך עפּעס קאָנען פֿאַרלאָנגען, אויך עפּעס קאָנען האָבן פון דער וועלט.

(דריטער טייל אין קומענדיקן „ווינקל")

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Israel not afraid to take action against Iran: Barak

By YUVAL AZOULAY
AND YOSSI MELMAN
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Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak said last Thursday he favoured the use of diplomatic pressure and sanctions against Iran's nuclear program but cautioned that Israel was "not afraid to take action."

"Currently, the focus is international sanctions and vigorous diplomatic activity, and these avenues should be exhausted," Barak said during a speech at a Labor party meeting.

However, he added that "Israel is the strongest country in the region and has proved in the past it is not afraid to take action when its vital security interests are at stake."

Barak's remarks came hours after Iran test launched a second round of missiles in the Persian Gulf before dawn last Thursday. Last Wednesday, the Islamic republic tested nine ballistic missiles it claimed were capable to striking Israel.

Last Wednesday's tests prompted the United States to declare that it would defend its allies at all costs.

Last Thursday, Iranian state radio reported: "Deep in the Persian Gulf waters, the launch of different types of ground-to-sea, surface-to-surface, sea-to-air and the powerful launch of the Hout missile successfully took place." Iranian satellite channel Press TV said Hout was a torpedo.

Israeli experts have said that the missile launched as part of large-scale military exercise in Iran on Wednesday is not a more capable version of the Shahab-3 ballistic missile.

Revolutionary Guard Commanders said that the nine missiles tested were medium and long-range weapons, including some that are capable of striking Israel.

General Hossein Salami, head of the Revolutionary Guards Air Force, claimed on Iranian television that a Shahab-3 long-range ballistic missile had been tested, which is capable of travelling longer distances, with greater accuracy, and with a larger payload.

However, Uzi Rubin, who was a program director of Homa, under which Israel developed the Arrow anti-missile system, is convinced that this was not a new version of the Iranian ballistic missile.

"From what I saw, this is an old version of the Shahab-3, and contrary to their claims, it is not capable of reaching 2,000 kilometers, only 1,300 kilometres," he said last Wednesday.

Rubin raised the possibility that a version of Shahab-3, with a 2,000-kilometre range, has still not been tested or is still not operational.

"Without being hasty, I note that the Iranians have a tendency to exaggerate to a certain extent the capabilities of their missiles," he said.

The test-firing of missiles was aimed at showing Israel and the United States that Tehran is capable of responding to threats against its nuclear installations.

Recently, a large-scale Israeli air force exercise, comprising approximately 100 aircraft, carried out a sortie to a distance of 1,500 kilometres over the Mediterranean – the same distance from Israel to some of Iran's nuclear installations in Isfahan. The air armada included fighters, aerial tankers, electronic warfare aircraft, and search and rescue helicopters.

Iranian officials have strongly suggested the country's missile test last Wednesday was itself a warning to Israel not to attack Iran's nuclear facilities. Israel has left that option open.

Is an attack on Iran a big risk?

By YOSSI MELMAN
© *Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.*

The standard assumption is that a military attack by the United States or Israel to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons would be disastrous for the attackers and would threaten the stability of the entire Middle East.

Various experts outline doomsday scenarios for such an occurrence and warn especially of Iran's harsh reaction. Fearing the reaction of the ayatollahs has a paralyzing effect. Even before the first shot has been fired, Iran can credit itself with a success. It created an image of an omnipotent country that will not hesitate to use its power to respond and avenge a military operation against it. This is an impressive psychological achievement.

But a new paper, to be published this month in the United States, sketches a different and more complex picture. The paper is *The Last Resort*, by Patrick Clawson and Michael Eisenstadt of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. The main point, notes Clawson in an interview with *Ha'aretz*, is that the success or failure of a military attack depends on many variables, and not just the degree of damage the attack would cause.

What are these variables?

The type of weapons chosen for the attack – will nuclear or conventional weapons be used? Who attacks – the United States or Israel? Will the attack cause serious collateral damage to the surroundings, that is, causing a lot of civilian casualties? Will only the nuclear sites be attacked, or other regime targets? After the attack, will President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad announce Iran's departure from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty? If the attack completely destroys Iran's nuclear program, that is one thing, but if it does not, that is a different story. Then Iran will be able to continue to develop its nuclear program and the world will no longer care.

Nevertheless, what would be deemed a success – if the attack does destroy the nuclear facilities and it leads to a broad consensus in Iran that nuclear weapons are dangerous for the future of the regime or the nation? In other words, success or failure is determined by the political result of the military attack. The primary objective of the military option has to be to convince Iran to cease its nuclear program and that it's not worthwhile to continue. Destroying the nuclear facilities is not an end in and of itself – it is merely a means to an end. It is necessary to create the political conditions that will increase the chances for the success of the attack.

And what will be a possible result of an Israeli attack? Again, my answer is that it depends. Israel has to create the circumstances in which world public opinion will understand Israel and its motives, even if it regrets the attack.

That is more or less what happened with the attack against the nuclear facility in Syria. Israel benefited from President Bashar Assad's hostile attitude to the world, and therefore the international community showed understanding of the Israeli air force's attack. Israel did not have to do much because Assad did the job for it. In this respect, Israel also benefits from Ahmadinejad and his statements. They help Israel present its position to the world and explain the threat it faces.

Do you share the sweeping assessment of most experts that Iran's reaction, if attacked, will be harsh and painful? No. Iran's record when it comes to its reactions in the past to attacks against it, or its important interests, is mixed.

When the Taliban assumed power in Afghanistan and persecuted the Shiite minority there, Iran mobilized military forces on the border and threatened to respond, but in the end it did nothing. The same occurred when the United States shot down an Iranian passenger airline in 1988: Iran threatened to avenge the incident, but in the end the exact opposite happened. Not only did Iran not respond, but also the incident hastened its decision to agree to a ceasefire in the war with Iraq for fear that the United States was about to join the war on Saddam Hussein's side.

In another incident during the war, Iranian boats attacked an American naval force that set out to mine the Persian Gulf. The United States did not expect Iran to react, and was surprised. This did not stop it from sinking half of the Iranian fleet in response.

Iran has lately been threatening that if it is attacked, it will close the Straits of Hormuz and block the flow of oil, and thereby damage the world economy. But this is a problematic threat, since it would also affect Iran's friends and supporters, such as China and India. I have no doubt that in such a case, they would be angry at Iran.

But most experts estimate that in the event of an Israeli attack, the Iranians will respond with force and launch Shahab missiles at Israel.

It is possible, but first, the Shahab missiles are not considered particularly reliable. Iran deploys them without having done hardly any significant tests. Second, the Shahab's guidance system is not very accurate. The missile's range of accuracy is up to a kilometre. And finally, Israel's aerial defence system – the Arrow missiles – would certainly intercept quite a few Shahab missiles. Moreover, Iran's firing missiles at Israel would enable Israel to respond in a decisive manner.

My assessment is that contrary to the impression that has been formed, Iran's options for responding to an attack are limited and weak.

French Jews demand al-Dura probe

By DEVORAH LAUTER
JTA

PARIS — The organized Jewish community in France is publicly calling on President Nicolas Sarkozy to launch an investigation into the controversial television broadcast of an alleged Israeli shooting of a 12-year-old Palestinian boy.

Last week's call by CRIF, the umbrella Jewish organization, increased the pressure on the French government to intervene in the eight-year-old debate over the authenticity of the September 2000 video report by France 2 TV and its Jerusalem correspondent, Charles Enderlin.

The call for a probe lent new legitimacy to concerns that the broadcast was staged and sparked a new debate in the French media over the issue.

The video helped fan the flames of the second Palestinian uprising and spurred anti-Israel and anti-Jewish sentiment across the globe.

It showed Mohammed al-Dura and his father cowering in terror while trying to shelter themselves from gunfire. The film then cut to a slumped, motionless Mohammed lying in his father's lap.

Israel, after initially apologizing for the incident, said a subsequent investigation showed its troops could not have struck the boy from their positions.

Until recently, much of the French media tiptoed around the issue. The few French intellectuals who questioned the tape's authenticity were branded extremists.

The controversy stayed alive with the lawsuit involving a little-known media watchdog, Philippe Karsenty, who was sued for claiming the France 2 broadcast was a fake.

In May, an appeals court ruled for Karsenty, reversing a 2006 decision that had found him guilty of libel.

The anticipated public debate following that ruling, which included an exhaustive court examination into the Karsenty's claims, was slow to make French headlines. It was partly silenced as well by a petition signed by more than 300 French journalists and intellectuals denouncing the Paris court's decision for allowing "anyone" to "smear with impunity the honour and reputation of news professionals."

Now the issue is back in the limelight. It took editorials by left-leaning, respected figures such as France's former ambassador to Israel, Elie Barnavi, and the July 2 public appeal by CRIF to help crack the shell of what some have termed French "ideological and corporate protectionism" surrounding the issue.

"The winds are turning," said Pierre-Andre Taguieff, the author of *La Nouvelle judéophobie*, analyzing repercussions of the al-Dura broadcast.

Taguieff, the research director at the National Center of Scientific Research, was stonewalled at first by much of the French media and intellectual elite for his early, vehement questioning of the Enderlin report. "We're evolving now toward a real debate," he said.

Stéphane Durand-Souffland, the journalist responsible for covering the al-Dura story for the French daily *le Figaro*, considered by many to be the most important paper in the country, said that "the CRIF is a serious organization. If they ask Sarkozy to create this committee, it means it is important."

Seeking Sarkozy's intervention in media controversy

Durand-Souffland told JTA in a telephone interview that the CRIF demand and Barnavi's editorial in the left-leaning magazine *Marianne*, both proposing the same investigative committee, were more significant than Karsenty's claims.

Durand-Souffland covered the original Karsenty trial in 2006 but not the appeal.

"Nobody in France knows who Karsenty is," he said.

Durand-Souffland downplays the importance of the al-Dura incident and the Karsenty libel trial, but others say the al-Dura incident played a role in the surge of anti-Semitism in France following the outbreak of the second intifadah.

"The manifestations of violence against France's Jewish community were extremely strong" in 2000 and 2001, recalled the CRIF president, Richard Prasquier, during last week's news conference calling on Sarkozy to open an investigation.

"The Israeli-Palestinian conflict was transferred to France, and in that conflict the image that was truly emblematic was that of the al-Dura child," he said when asked why the CRIF should get involved in what some see as a Middle East problem. "It contributed to the beheading of Daniel Pearl and lynching" of Israeli soldiers.

Taguieff compares the al-Dura incident to the infamous 19th-century Dreyfus Affair in which a Jewish French army officer was wrongly accused of treason.

"The al-Dura affair is one of the major affairs of the beginning of the 21st century," Taguieff told JTA. "It has a symbolic strength that reminds a bit of something from the Dreyfus Affair, even if this is not an innocent man who is wrongly being accused – it is the Israeli army. And it is the Israelis who are being accused in the end of having killed a child in cold blood, almost with pleasure.

"The old anti-Jewish stereotype of the blood libel reappeared with the al-Dura affair, which is why it is extremely significant."

Sarkozy has yet to respond to CRIF's public appeal. Prasquier says he has written letters to the French president in the past on the subject and never received a response. He says the Karsenty trial paved the way for a more public demand, which he hopes will lead to a French committee of independent experts to investigate the subject.

If Sarkozy remains silent, Prasquier does not rule out convening an international "meeting" to address the issue. But he expresses hope it won't come to that.

"I have hope in France," Prasquier told JTA.

Karsenty says that Sarkozy's much-touted battle against the insistent problem of anti-Semitism in France will be put to the test by CRIF's public demand.

"Prasquier wants to put Sarkozy against the wall," Karsenty said. "If Sarkozy continues to cover up this anti-Semitic lie, we can doubt in the sincerity of his love for Israel and his fight against anti-Semitism. You don't fight anti-Semitism just by putting more police in synagogues."

Obstacles stand in the way of creating such a committee. The Israeli government has shown no inclination to launch an investigation into the tape's authenticity, and the Israeli Supreme Court ruled earlier this month against stripping Enderlin of his press credentials.

Both reasons could be used to suggest an investigation is unnecessary, Jewish community leaders say. That argument was raised during last week's news conference when an unidentified journalist asked why it was necessary to delve into the affair when "even the Israeli government had showed no inclination to do so."

Though Enderlin on his blog has favoured an investigation, he also questions it: "Why propose an international investigation all the while knowing that Israel refuses to have one?"

It is also unclear whether France 2 TV would co-operate with any investigation.

On the Jewish radio station RJC, the director of France 2 TV responded to CRIF's proposal last week. Arlette Chabot agreed to an examination of Mohammed al-Dura's father, Jamal, and his purported wounds from the attack.

The cause of the wounds, displayed in a France 2 TV followup to the 2000 incident, were identified by an Israeli surgeon as scars from a procedure he completed on Jamal in 1994 at the Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer.

However, while assenting to Jamal's possible examination, Chabot did not definitively agree to the investigation proposed by CRIF. She said she believed the Jewish group had taken sides with Karsenty.

Chabot later said she would not oppose an investigation organized "without prejudice."

Israel Briefs

Olmert to quit if he loses

Ehud Olmert has agreed to step down as prime minister if he loses a leadership election in the Kadima Party. Under terms of a July 9 deal between Olmert and his biggest Kadima rival, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, the party will hold a leadership election by Sept. 25. Should Olmert be ousted as Kadima chairman, his successor would form, and head, a new government by November, sources said. Olmert is widely expected to run for re-election in Kadima, though he hasn't confirmed this. *Ha'aretz* reported July 9 that he won't run. The early Kadima leadership vote was set during a power struggle last month between Olmert and Defence Minister Ehud Barak, whose Labor Party is Kadima's biggest coalition partner. Barak has conditioned remaining in the government on a shake-up in Kadima and signaled he would agree to stay on under Livni.

More questions for PM

Ehud Olmert faced a third round of questions by police in the Talansky case last week. The police had new queries about the prime minister's ties to Morris Talansky, a U.S. financier who testified to having given Olmert more than $150,000 (US) in cash handouts and unpaid loans. Olmert has denied the contributions were bribes and has vowed to step down if indicted in the case. Talansky was scheduled to make a second appearance in Jerusalem District Court this week, where he was to face cross-examination by Olmert's lawyers.

Facing a water crisis

Israel's water situation is facing "the worst crisis in 80 years," the head of the country's water authority said. Uri Shani, director of the Israel Water Authority, told reporters that Israel's major sources of drinking water, including the Sea of Galilee and the mountain aquifer, are below their "red lines," meaning they're not recommended for use. To alleviate the crisis, the Water Authority has started to pump water from tributaries that empty into the Sea of Galilee – water that wasn't expected to reach the sea or be used until 2010.

Anti-racism meeting held

More than 700 educators from around the world attended an anti-racism conference at Yad Vashem. Titled "Teaching the Shoah: Fighting Racism and Prejudice," it aimed to promote dialogue among educators dealing with the challenges of Holocaust education in countries with large multi-ethnic populations. Some of the 164 workshops dealt with teaching the Rwanda genocide, the challenge of Holocaust education for students with a Muslim background, and using the Anne Frank diary to combat prejudice in the classroom. The conference attracted participants from 52 countries.

Peres to join Olympians

Israeli President Shimon Peres will represent Israel at the opening of the Beijing Olympics. Peres will fly with Israel's Olympic delegation to the Aug. 8 launch of the Games in the Chinese capital, his office said July 10. According to Israel Radio, Chinese authorities have arranged hotel accommodation for Peres within the Olympics compound – an unusual move that will allow him to walk to the ceremonies, which take place on Shabbat. More than 40 athletes will compete for Israel in the Games, the Jewish state's largest-ever delegation.

Gates to get award

The American Friends of the Hebrew University, the school's U.S. fundraising arm, has convinced Microsoft founder Bill Gates to accept the inaugural Einstein Award, the group said last week. The award, to be presented to Gates in December at a gala dinner in New York, is named for Albert Einstein, who helped found the university. It will be given only rarely to those who have made a significant impact on humanity, according to the group's executive director, Peter Willner. Friends officials say this is the first time Gates is accepting an award from a Jewish or Israeli organization. Willner said Gates decided to attach his name to the university because of its vast work and research in sustainable agriculture.

– with files from JTA

Israel & the Jewish World

Olmert won't be able to recover from this interrogation

By AMIR OREN

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Analysis

At noon last Friday, when the white cars with the blue flashing lights sailed on, Ehud Olmert ceased to be Israel's prime minister. Officially, certain procedures will still be required for an orderly transfer of power, but for all practical purposes, Olmert's tenure ended last Friday morning. A jaded public is no longer moved by the police interrogations of him: the shots of police arriving at the prime minister's residence have become boring.

But make no mistake: Olmert will not be able to recover from this latest interrogation in the corruption investigations against him and from the public response to its contents, once they are revealed. Reports of Olmert's interrogation will mean expediting the pace of his ouster from weeks to hours.

Two years ago, on the eve of Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser's abduction on the Lebanese border, Olmert visited Israel Defence Forces headquarters and heard reports that filled him with satisfaction. But one of the generals, planning division head Yitzhak Harel, warned him that processes over previous years had created "a hollow army." Last Friday, as police Brig.-Gen. Shlomi Ayalon and his team prepared to interrogate Olmert, it must be said that in the Olmert case, the police have proved not to be hollow. Their conduct over the past two months has made up for earlier embarrassments and mishaps. In their handling of the Olmert case, the Israel Police has succeeded in demonstrating itself to be a professional organization that does not show favouritism, even when the suspect holds the country's top job.

Preparations by Ayalon's team of investigators were shrouded in secrecy, as if they were safeguarding strategic surprises – affairs yet unknown – and not just tactical surprises from the realm of envelopes. It's very possible that Olmert prepared well for the last war, utterly blind to the real threat impending in another sector.

If this turns out to be the case, the investigators and State Prosecutor's Office will be able to notch up an immense achievement. Last week, Olmert, his lawyers and spokespeople exhausted their energy on U.S. businessman Morris Talansky's cross-examination, on the legal inquiries in the United States, and on scandalous verbal sparring, without breaching the security wall of the police and prosecution.

As on the eve of his first interrogation two months ago, Olmert would have failed to know what questions were about to hit him and generate credible answers to them. The interrogators possess a fundamentally incriminating version of events, and Olmert will have to work hard to contradict it. He is a step away from an indictment on offences of fraud, aggravated breach of trust, and maybe also bribe-taking.

The corruption case against Olmert has been compared to a table with three legs. Even if each leg is slightly weakened, the others would still remain solid enough together to support the case.

So it will be useless to Olmert if the cross-examination finds that Talansky gave him only four envelopes in three places and not eight envelopes in five places. His problem last Friday morning was that he might discover that the investigators are bringing into his official residence another table, or tables – that in this battle, the Talansky affair is not the only aspect of Olmert's corruption troubles.

The moment of truth has arrived for Olmert, for Israeli society and for the political system that unthinkingly raised him up to the prime ministership and is about to bring him down.

Jewish refugees brief European Parliament

BRUSSELS — The European Parliament recently held hearings for the first time on the plight of Jews who were forced to flee their homes in Arab countries.

One witness, Prof. Carole Basri, an American whose family came from Baghdad, called the forceable displacement an act of "ethnic cleansing."

Basri said the political measures put in place by Arab countries were designed to displace their Jewish populations.

Iraqi-born Edwin Shuker told the hearing "we lost everything we had, we could not even take our family photos."

Shuker, president of the group Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC), gave a detailed account of the "black period" his family suffered under the nationalist Baathist regime in Iraq.

"Two refugee populations emerged from the Arab-Israeli conflict, both suffered, both were victims and justice requires equal consideration and redress," he said.

Late last year, researchers for JJAC uncovered documents dating to 1947 that showed that the Arab League counselled its members in ways of removing Jews and confiscating their properties. The Arab League's proposed law was approved by Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iraq and implemented by other nations.

JJAC "found a paper trail that showed the displacement of up to one million Jews in Arab countries did not occur by happenstance," said JJAC executive-director Stanley Urman. "It was state-organized, state collusion led by the Arab League as a weapon in their struggle against the State of Israel."

The hearing was organized by Paulo Casaca, a member of the European Parliament. He said the rights of all ethnic and religious minorities in the Middle East should be protected, and he deplored the fact that the rights of Jewish and Christian refugees are virtually unrecognized by Europeans.

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1948...They Were There

From Manitoba to Machal: Winnipeger recalls Israel's birth

'I felt a strong commitment to the future State of Israel, and these were desperate times'

By JENNY HAZAN
Special to The CJN

Three years ago, Alec Chapnick of Winnipeg, Man., had some shrapnel removed from above his eye.

Some 30 years prior, he had some taken out of his knee. Chapnick says there's plenty more where that came from, but not all of it can be safely removed with surgery.

"It's amazing how these things are still with me, 60 years later," said the 79-year-old Canadian veteran for Israel, who was injured by a landmine during his volunteer military service for the fledgling State of Israel during the War of Independence in 1948. "I guess they always will be."

When the United Nations declared its partition plan in November 1947 and Arabs from all six nations surrounding Israel began to show signs of imminent attack, Chapnick, then just 18 years old, was moved to act.

He became one of 3,500 people from 46 countries – including 1,250 from Canada and the United States – who rushed to serve as volunteers, Machalniks, in all branches of the emerging Israel Defence Forces. The volunteers also helped with Aliyah Bet, a movement of 10 clandestine ships that altogether shuttled 31,000 so-called illegal immigrants, Holocaust survivors from Europe, to Palestine.

Chapnick had just graduated from high school when he packed a bag and told his parents he was off to look for work in Toronto. Instead, he hopped on a train to New York City, where he had an appointment with representatives from the Haganah, the pre-state Jewish militia in Palestine.

"It was very difficult to get to New York then," Chapnick recalled. "The American authorities were stopping Jewish youngsters of military age from Toronto and Montreal at the border."

Chapnick was stopped in Niagara Falls, and after customs officials found a tallit in his backpack, they refused him entry into the United States. Eventually, after a few tries and a few more train rides, he made it across the border.

"I was determined to get there," he said. "So I did."

For Chapnick, volunteering for Israel was important because of his own family history. A Polish-born Jew, he moved to Winnipeg in 1930 with his immediate family when he was less than a year old. "The whole country [Poland] was full of anti-Semitism, and Jews that could get out, got out," he explains.

They left most of his family behind, and all but two of his cousins ended up perishing in the Holocaust.

"I felt a strong commitment to the future State of Israel, and these were desperate times," Chapnick said. "I felt it was my duty to volunteer."

When he finally arrived in New York, he made his meeting as planned, and in three days, he was on a ship, the SS Marine Shark, along with 30 other young Canadians, bound for France. Once in France, the Haganah confiscated their passports and issued each volunteer false displaced person papers. In France, the Canadians joined other volunteers from around the world in a DP camp, where they conducted basic training for a month before their next ship came in.

Then, late one night, their ship, a three-mast fishing sailboat, arrived to pick them up. "It was terrible," Chapnick recalled. "It was a four-man boat, and they piled 154 of us onto it. The place stunk of fish. There were no toilets or lifejackets. We had a fire on the boat, and the motor quit. There was only biscuits and orange juice."

After more than two weeks at sea, the little boat finally landed off the coast of Tel Aviv. Immediately, they were detained at a British army base north of Caesarea. The morning after they arrived, Chapnick, along with three other Canadians, escaped to Kibbutz Ramat Yohanan, and finally, in mid-June 1948, they made it to the Tzrifin artillery base south of Tel Aviv.

All four of them were assigned to the 72nd Infantry Battalion. "There was only one weapon for four guys, and I was the fourth guy on my rotation, which means that three men had to die in order for me to get a rifle," Chapnick said.

"For the first six months, we didn't get uniforms. We fought in civilian clothes."

Chapnick's first mission was to Mishmar Haemek in the Jezreel Valley. There, he decided to switch units and join the anti-tank forces. "In those days, you could do that," he explained, adding that at the time, soldiers didn't have numbers or dog tags, and everyone was learning as they went along.

Chapnick was re-assigned along with five others. On their first mission, they hit a landmine. Everyone but Chappy, as he was affectionately called by his fellow comrades, was rushed to the hospital in Afula.

"I flew up in the air and I had shrapnel in my leg, face, and arms, but the other guys were in much worse shape," he said. He was operated on the following day, but "they couldn't get it all out."

After a week in hospital, Chapnick was sent out to battle again, this time as an officer. He hitchhiked back to his base, was assigned to a new unit, made up of two soldiers from his old crew and three new ones, and headed out to Kfar Giladi, a battlefront on the Lebanese border. They patrolled there for nearly a month.

Alec Chapnick in 1948

Then, on Oct. 21, 1948, his unit was sent to Be'er Sheva to take part in Operation Yoav.

"I remember the night, because it was my 19th birthday," Chapnick said of the six-hour battle that ended in Israel's victory over the Egyptian army. "I told myself I couldn't die that day, and I never fired a shot."

After almost two months patrolling Be'er Sheva, Chapnick was sent to Eilat, via the Scorpion Path. "This was the most boring time of my life," Chapnick said of the six weeks he spent in the southern town. "There was nothing there, save for a hut built by a British archeologist who was exploring the area."

When the war began to wind down with the signing of the various armistice agreements, 1½ years had passed since Chapnick joined up. He, along with 15 other Canadians and South Africans, decided to start a moshav at the northern end of Tel Aviv on the HaYarkon River. They called it Beth Hever.

Alec Chapnick

Chapnick later returned to Winnipeg, intending only to stay for a month to visit his parents before returning to the new moshav, but while he was there, his father fell ill.

"Eventually, I didn't go back," said Chapnick, who recently retired from a 50-year career with the London Life Insurance Company in Winnipeg.

He didn't return to Israel for 28 years. When he finally did go back, he was shocked at what he saw.

"I thought I knew Israel, but things had changed in so many ways," said Chapnick, who was pleased to discover that his moshav, now known as Kfar Daniel, still existed.

While there, he reunited with the remaining six founders and their families. He was also delighted to discover that the British archeologist's hut had been preserved in the courtyard of one of Eilat's large luxury hotels.

Since that initial trip, Chapnick has returned to Israel with his family eight times. His last trip, in 2003, was with a group of Birthright Israel youth from Canada. He was one of six Canadian veterans for Israel who joined groups of Jewish youth on their first 10-day trip to Israel to teach them about the places they had served in 1948.

"I was there at such an important historic time. I was there for the first Yom Ha'atzmaut parade. I voted in the first Israeli election. But for anyone who is 60 or younger today, Israel has always existed for them. They don't remember a time before there was a state," Chapnick said.

"It was quite an interesting experience for them, and quite an emotional one for me."

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And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Jewish actor grows up on screen

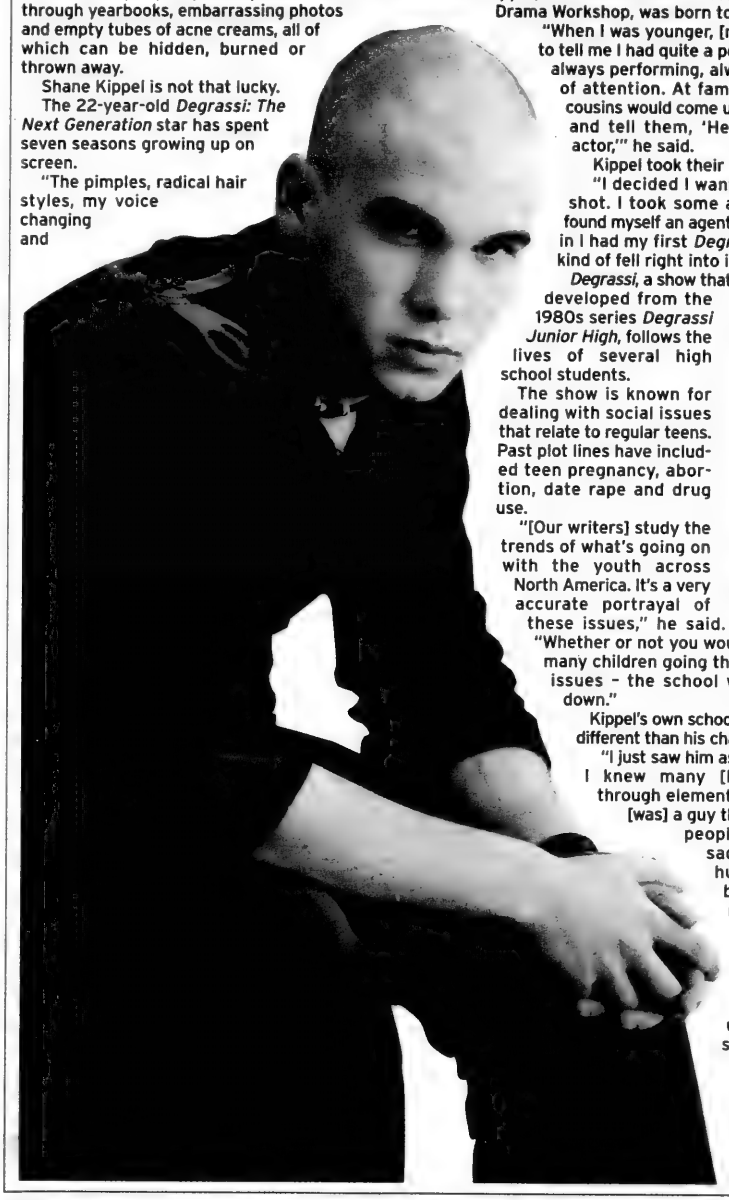
By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

For most people, puberty is documented through yearbooks, embarrassing photos and empty tubes of acne creams, all of which can be hidden, burned or thrown away.

Shane Kippel is not that lucky.

The 22-year-old *Degrassi: The Next Generation* star has spent seven seasons growing up on screen.

"The pimples, radical hair styles, my voice changing and cracking, all this stuff is easily accessible," he said. "When I'm 40, I'll still see how I looked when I was 14 and really want to crawl under a rock."



Kippel, who trained with Second City and the Drama Workshop, was born to act.

"When I was younger, [my family] used to tell me I had quite a personality. I was always performing, always the centre of attention. At family gatherings, cousins would come up to my parents and tell them, 'He should be an actor,'" he said.

Kippel took their advice to heart.

"I decided I wanted to give it a shot. I took some acting classes, found myself an agent and six months in I had my first *Degrassi* audition. I kind of fell right into it."

Degrassi, a show that developed from the 1980s series *Degrassi Junior High*, follows the lives of several high school students.

The show is known for dealing with social issues that relate to regular teens. Past plot lines have included teen pregnancy, abortion, date rape and drug use.

"[Our writers] study the trends of what's going on with the youth across North America. It's a very accurate portrayal of these issues," he said. "Whether or not you would ever find as many children going through as many issues – the school would be shut down."

Kippel's own school life was a little different than his character, Spinner.

"I just saw him as a typical bully. I knew many [bullies] going through elementary school. He [was] a guy that liked to bug people for his own sadistic sense of humour. I got bullied in elementary school, and it was cool to get to play the opposite of what I was used to," he said.

Kippel's high school experience was different than that of his friends. Unlike most teenagers, he had a full-time job.

"I feel I grew up and matured a lot faster than many of my friends. It kind of laid the groundwork to have me be financially secure and to know how to budget properly," he said.

Along with the financial benefits of acting, Kippel also enjoys working with the cast of *Degrassi*.

"What's great about us is we're a cultural mosaic. We have Christians, Catholics, Jews, Muslims, we have every different type of skin colour," he said. "We all formed mutual respect for each other, we watched each other grow."

Kippel is one of several Jewish actors in the cast.

"In my personal life, I find it very important to celebrate holidays," he said.

"I'm very defined as a Jew, but it doesn't define who I hang out with and respect in any way."

Kippel's favourite *Degrassi* episode was when his character dealt with cancer.

"That was just my epitome of hard work and intensity," he said. "I work closely with my acting coach. It's a draining experience. I'm trying to go to very dark places that I didn't even know I had."

> ***Playing a cancer patient forced Kippel to tap into "dark places" within.***

Kippel, who was born in Toronto, admits that his experience as an actor would be very different across the border.

"It would be much more glamorous [in America.] If we were an American drama, we would be making $500,000 to $1 million an episode. We would be on magazine covers, we'd possibly be followed around by paparazzi," he said. "[In Canada] it's a much more humbling experience. You get to focus on the art much more. We're removed from red-carpet events."

As his acting career develops, Kippel would like to get into comedy.

"It's still in the works," he said of his comedic career. "I've taken notes from the best comedians, who say when they notice funny things in everyday life, they write it down. I was doing that for a very long time. I've written half a [standup] routine," he said.

With the help of his friends, Kippel decided to turn his routine into a script, while they were working on a short film at the same time.

"It's more of an artsy piece. The entire point of the short film is just to show what we can do with different camera angles. After we build a portfolio, I'll really get down to forming jokes."

While the young actor is considering attending York University, he would like to continue acting for as long as possible.

"There are so many things you get to experience, so many different people you get to meet," he said. "I want to be a working actor at some level for the rest of my life."

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Jewish actors lighting up Stratford this season

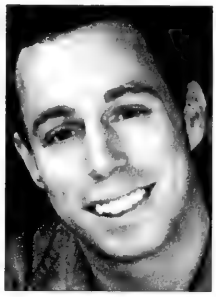
By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

They hail from two different cities and have different skill sets, but Marc Kimelman and Sam Strasfeld are two Jewish actors breathing life into the same play at the Stratford Festival this year.

Strasfeld, 27, and Kimelman, 28, both appear in *Cabaret*, an evocative musical set in the late 1920s and early '30s just as the Nazis were about to tip the scales of German society toward unspeakable evil.

The *Canadian Jewish News* reviewed the play on June 12.

During a break in their hectic schedules last week, Strasfeld, a native Winnipegger, and Kimelman, a Torontonian, spoke to the paper about how *Cabaret* has had an impact on them from a Jewish perspective.



Marc Kimelman

Sam Strasfeld

Strasfeld, now in his third season at Stratford, plays a character named Kalman Ratz and said he felt deeply connected to the play.

"Being in *Cabaret*... feels like my family's history. My grandparents were from Poland and fled the Nazis to find shelter," Strasfeld said. "I'm a first-generation Canadian on my father's side, and this story resonates with me. The last scene of the show... the other day it broke my heart because [the central Jewish character] Herr Schultz, condemns himself to death by choosing to stay in Germany and not go to America. Because he still has hope for Germany, but you know that things are only going to get worse" for the Jews.

For Kimelman, who is debuting this year at the festival as one of the play's "swings" – actors who, when necessary, take over small parts at a moment's notice – the experience has been deeply moving.

"The show I did previous to [*Cabaret*] was *Fiddler on the Roof*. So I've had an interesting year where these two shows have allowed me to connect with my ancestors as I never have before," he said. "With *Cabaret*, I've had the luxury to do research on that time period and reconnect with my people."

At one point, Kimelman had to rehearse dressed in full Nazi garb. The experience reduced him to tears, he said.

"I couldn't look at myself in the mirror. I was just weeping. I was a mess," he recalled. "But I realized it was important to tell this story as genuinely as we can."

Strasfeld said that in April he organized a mass Pesach seder for the cast of *Cabaret*, as a means of creating a familial feel for the production and to help his fellow actors get a sense of what it means to be Jewish.

"*Cabaret* is about inclusion and the seder is one of my favourite activities," Strasfeld said. "I know not everyone will get to experience one, so it was wonderful to do for them. There is such an incredible devotion to our art [in Stratford]... for me that's one of the things I love about it."

Kimelman concurred, saying that the casts and crews in Stratford "push you to do as much as you can [and] they really excel at doing new things with musicals."

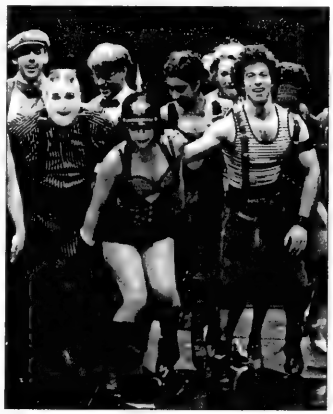
Strasfeld added that Frank Moore, the actor who plays the central, Jewish character in *Cabaret*, Herr Schultz, loved the seder experience.

"Herr Schultz's storyline is tragic. The woman who he's in love with can't see past his religion," he said.

Aside from their work together in Stratford this year, both Kimelman and Strasfeld have worked extensively in Ontario's arts industry and are thoroughly enjoying life in their chosen profession.

Kimelman is an accomplished choreographer, whose work can currently be seen on CTV's *Degrassi: The Next Generation*.

He has also worked with renowned soul singer Chaka Khan and with Canadian folk-rock icon Neil Young.



Sam Strasfeld, far right, performs in a scene from *Cabaret* at this year's Stratford Shakespeare Festival. [David Hou photo]

Google Kimelman's name to view some clips of him in dance rehearsals and public performances. He said his technique was heavily influenced by the dance stylings of Gene Kelly and Michael Jackson.

"When I was a kid, I used to dress up in a leather jacket and do after-dinner shows at home for my parents... and go crazy dancing like Michael Jackson," Kimelman said, laughing.

Strasfeld, a talented dancer and choreographer in his own right – he trained with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet – recently provided tap-dance choreography for the Soulpepper Theatre production of *Time of Your Life* and just finished a turn as Clay Aiken in the Mirvish production *We Will Rock You*.

"That was so much fun. The character was *soooo* far removed from myself," he said, laughing at how acting can sometimes bring you to roles you never thought you'd play.

"But that's the beauty of our profession, getting to play all these parts," he added.

Having started acting and dance early on in life, both men know the importance of approaching the arts world with a solid mixture of drive, humility and self-promotion.

Asked what advice they have for aspiring actors, Kimelman responded, "Branch out to as many teachers as you can. I never stayed at any one acting or dance studio for too long. That really benefited me as a teen. Be a sponge and take in what many teachers have to offer. Don't get too comfortable and get yourself out there. Go to interviews and show your face so people know you."

Strasfeld concurred, adding, "You're not gonna succeed in this industry unless you're passionate about it. And see as much theatre as you can. The more you can immerse yourself in all aspects of this world, the better."

Strasfeld considers himself fortunate to have steady work doing what he loves. And while he would happily branch out and try new venues for acting, such as TV and film, he admits that his theatre schedule leaves little room for other projects. Not that he's complaining.

"The human race loves song and dance. I'd love to see a revival of the old classic, Gene Kelly [dance] films for a new generation," he said.

As for Kimelman, he's excited by the current abundance of reality TV dance shows such as *So You Think You Can Dance*.

"That's now come to Canada, and people will really be able to see the talent we have to offer," he said.

Kimelman added he plans to take some time off soon to travel and perhaps settle down in New York for a time, where there is "an abundance" of dance opportunities on Broadway and TV.

Catch them both in *Cabaret* while you can.

The play runs to Oct. 25. For more information, visit www.stratford-festival.on.ca.

Malta – a small country with a big heart

By MYRIAM SHECHTER
Special to The CJN

VALLETTA, Malta — Every country I have visited had something special to offer.

When we were planning to visit Malta, I knew beforehand what that special thing was going to be: its intense sense of history, spread over 7,000 years, starting with the mysterious, megalithic monuments predating the pyramids by a millennium. Through the centuries, there had been more or less friendly conquests by Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Aragonese, French and finally the British.

I was also counting on being attracted to Malta's charming Mediterranean setting. Straddling the sea between Europe and Africa is a string of three lovely islands: Malta, the main island; Gozo, green and slower paced; and Comino, practically uninhabited but one of the main summer tourist playgrounds with its beaches and beautiful Blue Lagoon.

I was excited to explore Maltese (*Malti*), a fascinating Semitic language originating with the Phoenicians and augmented by the period of Arab domination, sprinkled with many inserts from the nearby Italian speakers.

I was also curious about the British tradition left from 150 years of British presence, a legacy that influenced the way of life of the Maltese in different ways, most noticeably in the fact that all Maltese speak English as well as Maltese and that they drive on the left side of the road.

I got all this, as expected, and much more.

Indeed, Malta's history is unique and quite extraordinary, but what touched me most during our visit to Malta was the people, these friendly, gregarious, generous, exuberant people. We made many friends in Malta – our hosts from the apartment we rented, the bakers next door, taxi drivers and people on the street.

We loved the food, basically Mediterranean, but also with local favourites such as the mouth-watering *pastizzi*, pastries filled with cheese or peas, and the local drink, the flavourful Kinnie, a soft drink made with oranges and herbs.

Due to its small size and efficient transportation system, Malta is easy to explore. We enjoyed the capital city, Valletta, with its gorgeous auberges of the Knights of St. John fame. The auberges were the living quarters of the various groups of knights. We also enjoyed the Co-Cathedral, replete with art; the stately Grand Master's Palace; the steep streets; the many museums, restaurants and shops; and the superb panorama from the Upper Barakka Gardens over one of the best harbours of the Mediterranean.

We travelled all over the islands: from Marsaxlokk, a lovely fishing village with the colourful *luzzu* boats, to stately Mdina, a city where quiet and serenity reigns, and to the historic Citadel of Victoria on Gozo Island.

Continued on page 32

The traditional brightly painted fishing boats *luzzus* owe their design to the Phoenicians. Still in use today the *luzzu* has survived because it tends to be a sturdy and stable boat even in bad weather. [Robert Shechter photo]

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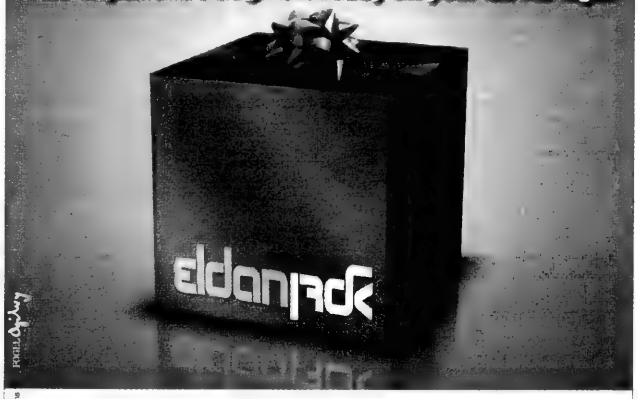

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

SUMMER LITERARY COLUMN: *ADVENTURES OF A YIDDISH LECTURER*

I believe that **Isaac Bashevis Singer**, **Philip Roth**, **Norman Levine** and probably numerous other Jewish writers have penned comical stories and reminiscences about their experiences delivering lectures on various subjects to Jewish audiences. To this list we must add the relatively unknown name of **Abraham Shulman**.

An American essayist and former contributor to the *New York Daily Yiddish Forward*, Shulman published *Adventures of a Yiddish Lecturer*, about 30 years ago, a collection of humourous stories about his cross-country podium experiences. I first read this obscure volume years ago and found it just as funny when I read it again this summer.

Singer, who like Shulman was a longtime writer at the *Forward*, wrote a short introduction commending his colleague's book and noting the difficulties inherent in giving lectures to Jewish audiences, particularly first-generation immigrants that he saw as being full of contradictions and inconsistencies.

"It isn't easy to lecture to such people," Singer observed. "They ask countless questions; they're full of just and imagined claims and grudges. They're disappointed by a world which didn't follow the plans which their leaders had mapped out. They are always pathetic, often tragic, and frequently comical."

Shulman arrived in New York from Europe in the '50s and spoke briefly at the *Forward's* reception in his honour. Afterwards a man from an important Jewish agency told him, "You have the tongue of a speaker. It's a gold mine," and invited him onto the Yiddish lecture circuit. Shulman hit the road to speak on such subjects as Yiddish literature, folklore and Jewish humour.

Once, scheduled to address a Jewish society near New York, Shulman arrived to find the members in the midst of a heated quarrel over whether to allow "strangers" to purchase plots in their cemetery. They couldn't even agree over the proper protocol of introducing their guest speaker, who had been crammed into the evening's agenda. When one member rose to welcome him, another jumped up to object that the first had been out of order. After half an hour the chairman motioned Shulman to the dais, announcing that his topic was Jewish humour and that "he will be as brief as is humanly possible." When Shulman started to tell a joke the chairman raised his hand, saying "Let's stick to brass tacks."

At another lecture on the humour of **Menachem Mendel Seforim**, the chairman demanded strict decorum from the audience, inhibiting their laughter even while Shulman was reading one of Seforim's funniest passages. "Mr. Birenbaum," the chairman berated one man who couldn't control himself, "if you want to laugh, you may go home. There you may roar like a wild donkey. Not here. This is a cultural institution."

Shulman once arrived at an empty hall, wondering if he had made a mistake. Several minutes after he was due to begin, the audience arrived in two buses and filled the room. Someone in their society had died and they had just come from the funeral. His topic was "The Sublimity of Jewish Humour."

On another occasion only a few executive members turned up for his serious lecture on **Fyodor Dostoevsky.** Soon after he began, he was interrupted by the secretary, who had just remembered that another person, **Mrs. Zaydenbaytel**, was in the building. The chairman insisted she be fetched immediately. Mrs. Z. was reading a book by **Sholom Aleichem** in the library and preferred to stay where she was; the chairman, however, was adamant that she "must fulfill her duties as a member and take part in our cultural activities." Mrs. Z. again refused to budge; the secretary and treasurer were sent back to her a third time. "Two minutes later the door opened with a loud bang. Mrs. Zaydenbaytel, a massive woman, was brought in by the secretary and the treasurer, both tightly holding on her elbows."

Defiantly, she kept reading her book, occasionally chuckling very loudly. Finally, the chairman signaled Shulman to stop, and told Mrs. Z. she could read if she wished but absolutely had to stop disrupting the lecture with her laughter. "Impossible," she replied. "You simply can't read Sholom Aleichem and keep your mouth shut."

Once, Shulman was about to begin a lecture on Isaac Bashevis Singer when a middle-aged woman with heavy makeup and large earrings began scrutinizing and flirting with him. Why do "they all come running," she wondered aloud, observing that he didn't seem particularly handsome, virile or muscular? "I'm curious about your power," she told him, adding that she had made a list of all his "conquered fortresses" and wouldn't mind becoming a conquered fortress herself.

Mystified, Shulman sought to extricate himself as he heard the master of ceremonies summon him to the podium; the woman blocked his path. "He's not calling you," she said. "He's calling someone named Shulman." When Shulman explained that his name was, in fact, Shulman, she glared at him in disbelief. "You're not Isaac Bashevis Singer?" she asked. As he began his lecture, she noisily stormed to the door and demanded her money back.

Israeli reality TV show promotes aliyah

By AMY SOBERANO
Special to The CJN

An Israeli reality television show that is similar to *Big Brother* will put the process of making aliyah onto the international screen.

HaOlim (*The New Immigrants*) is set to launch this fall and will introduce the concept of Israeli immigration into the burgeoning synthesis of television and reality.

"We want to share the experience with people who haven't made aliyah and want to know what it means," said Noam Shalev, managing director of Highlight Films, which is producing the show.

HaOlim will follow eight English-speaking Jews as they attempt to begin their lives as Israeli citizens. The contestants, half of them men and half women in their 20s, will share a Tel Aviv home and pool their finances in partial simulation of the kibbutz lifestyle.

Equipped with little or no knowledge of Hebrew, the olim must compete against one another in various tasks that mirror the different challenges olim faced building the State of Israel. As the show progresses, contestants will be eliminated based on votes cast by the Israeli audience, as well as by online viewers in the Diaspora. The process will also include three judges, who interview and evaluate the participants.

"The candidates we're looking for are mostly young and single, and want to start their adult life in Israel," said Shalev. "Younger audiences will be attracted to it, but I think every Jew with some Zionist connection, or who wants to know more about Israel and what it means to live here, will find a lot of interest in the show."

The series will conclude with the crowning of the Ultimate Oleh, a title supplemented by a golden ticket into Israeli society, complete with a luxurious beachfront apartment in Tel Aviv, a new car and a dream job.

Because Highlight Films is still conducting the final stages of the candidate interviews and the show has yet to air, the potential contestants are legally prohibited from offering any insight into the future of the series.

However, *HaOlim* will soon be accessible to people all over the world through online streaming.

According to Shalev, many Jews, although familiar with the idea, do not understand the reality and implications of moving to Israel.

"It's an abstract term," he said. "If you live outside of the country and all you know about Israel comes from the news, then you think it's a place of war and violence on the edge of survival. It's not like that. People do live good lives here, and I think Jews around the world should know that."

Kessia Lurie, 20, who is seriously contemplating making aliyah from Los Angeles, said that *HaOlim* may not portray the harsher realities of the process and therefore may not be consistent with the producers' initial goals.

"Although it will promote aliyah to the broader audiences, it might minimize the difficulties that people face as olim in this country without the constant support of a TV series," she said. "When you're an oleh, you might not have any support to fall back on."

Although somewhat skeptical of the program's ability to encourage people to move to Israel, recent oleh Debbie Katz is hopeful that it will indeed affect positive change in the Jewish community.

"I really hope that the show does fulfil the goal of promoting aliyah because this country needs people to come, along with all of their education, ideas and ideologies, to help the state progress," Katz said.

For more information visit www.haolim.tv

Maltese-Jewish community numbers 90

Continued from page 31

History stares you in the face wherever you visit on the islands: extraordinary megalithic temples can be explored on Malta and Gozo. The Knights of St. John's fortifications, cathedrals and palaces tell not only of centuries of warfare but also of architectural and artistic achievements.

The history of Malta also attests to a continuous Jewish presence on the islands. The small Jewish community goes back 3,500 years, when Israelite mariners from the seafaring tribes of Zebulon and Asher arrived in Malta, together with the Semitic Phoenician settlers. Menorahs carved on the walls of catacombs in Rabat confirm the existence of a community living here during Roman times.

During the Middle Ages, Jews settled here from Sicily, Sardinia, Spain and North Africa, and lived an independent and prosperous life. The majority were shopkeepers and merchants, but some held prestigious posts, such as Abraham Safardi, who was the island's chief physician.

In 1492, the Jews of Malta, like those of Spain, were told to either leave or convert to Catholicism. Many of the names found today in Malta carry the heritage of the conversos: Ellul, Salamone, Azzopardi.

During World War II, Malta rescued thousands of Jews from Nazi Europe, accepting them without a visa.

The current Jewish community, about 90 people, includes longtime residents, as well as more recent arrivals, both Sephardi and Ashkenazi. A very resourceful group of people, they bring in matzah from England and kosher wine from Israel, and a rabbi from Jerusalem officiates during High Holy Days.

A view of the "three cities" from Valletta's Barakka Gardens. The harbour was severely bombed by the Axis in World War Two.

Abraham Ohayon, the synagogue president, keeps an eye on the community activities that include a Hebrew school, Shabbat services and bar and bat mitzvah preparation. The community is in close contact with Israel.

Alas, our two weeks in Malta flew by too fast. On my last day, a quiet sunny day, I returned to my favourite place, the Upper Barraka Gardens. I sat there with the turquoise Mediterranean sparkling below, with a view of the three fortified cities of Cospicua, Vittoriosa and Senglea across the harbour, and my can of Kinnie next to me, revisiting my freshly acquired memories of a great visit, of superb views, incredible history and the nicest people.

For more information, visit www.visitmalta.com

A moderate Arab voice from Jordan speaks out

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Marwan Muasher is a key political figure in Jordan. The chief spokesperson of Jordan's delegation at the 1991 Madrid Middle East peace conference, he was subsequently the first Jordanian ambassador to Israel.

He was then minister of information, ambassador to the United States, foreign minister and deputy prime minister. For about the past year, he has been a senior vice-president of the World Bank.

And now he has written an important and timely book, *The Arab Center: The Promise of Moderation* (Yale University Press), in which he describes his role as a peace envoy and a force for constructive change in the Arab world.

Muasher, a liberal reformer who abhors Islamic radicalism, admits that Jordan's 1994 peace treaty with Israel was "a leap of faith for his country and himself." Although he considered himself "a champion of Arab-Israeli peace," he hesitated before accepting the ambassadorship to Israel, his relatives having encouraged him to turn down the job.

His first impression of Israel was that it was more developed than Jordan, but that it was by no means a superpower. Tel Aviv struck him as a melange of old Beirut and Europe.

He was determined to speak about the Arab-Israeli dispute candidly, but not in a spirit of confrontation. Still, he wanted Israelis "to know that peace with Jordan could not substitute for a permanent agreement with the Palestinians and that all the problems with the Arab world had not been solved."

During his first few weeks in Israel in 1995, he worked out of the Dan Hotel in Tel Aviv, receiving a flood of Israeli Arab visitors. Muasher, a Christian whose mother is a Palestinian from Jaffa, had a special interest in Israel's Arab minority and visited almost every Arab community in his 10 months in Israel.

Among Israeli Jews, he recalls, he was "an instant celebrity," being invited to their homes, functions and events. As a result, he formed lasting friendships with Israeli Jews.

He learned that Israelis live with a deep sense of insecurity and constantly seek reassurance. He also discovered that many Israelis are from Arab countries and appreciate Arab culture, a fact he should have known had he done his homework. In the end, he found Israelis to be "very defensive [and] aggressive."

Muasher has a firm grasp of the issues and states his opinions clearly.

After the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, he notes, Jordan stepped up its efforts to promote "a model of tolerant Islam" and sought "to rally the silent moderate majority" of Muslims into rejecting "radical teachings." Later in his book, he refers to Al Qaeda's "deviant form of Islam" and its "crime against humanity."

Mostly, though, Muasher deals with the dynamics of the Arab-Israeli conflict, whose details he has mastered.

Jordan's policy was to facilitate peace by means of relevant United Nations resolutions, he says. "The old notion of wiping Israel off the map was deemed unrealistic, not only by Jordan but also by Egypt."

He charges that Israel was not really serious in negotiating with the Palestinians until the 1993 Oslo accords, saying that its web of settlements in the West Bank pre-empted the land-for-peace formula, as set out in UN resolutions 242 and 338.

He adds that the Labor party's "Jordanian option" and the Likud's "Jordan is Palestine" mantra was nothing less than a "conspiracy" to establish a Palestinian state outside the Palestinians' historical homeland in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip at Jordan's expense.

Muasher explains that King Hussein severed legal and administrative ties with the West Bank in 1988 to ensure that the effects of the first Palestinian uprising would not spill into Jordan.

In his view, the Palestinians only agreed to participate in the Madrid conference thanks to Jordan's persistence.

"Madrid was a watershed in the history of the Arab-Israeli conflict," he observes. "The conference was the sum of decades of efforts by the moderate Arab countries and the international community to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the conflict."

He believes that Israel's participation was "not genuine," claiming that the Israeli prime minister of the day, Yitzhak Shamir, used it to "buy time to build more settlements in the occupied territories."

The Oslo accords, he writes, took Jordan completely by surprise. Jordan was initially apprehensive, fearing that Israel and the Palestinians had "cooked up something against Jordan's interests." But once the dust settled, he acknowledges, Jordan realized that Oslo could be beneficial for the Palestinians and itself.

According to Muasher, King Hussein and then-Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin laid the basis for the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty at a meeting in London in May 1994.

Rabin assured King Hussein that Jordan's vital interests, particularly concerning Jerusalem and Palestinian refugees, would be taken into consideration. "This set the stage toward resolving other pending issues – borders and water being the most prominent."

Marwan Muasher meets Yitzhak Rabin on April 11, 1995.

As foreign minister, Muasher worked assiduously to ensure that the Oslo process would succeed. One of his first objectives was to convince Yasser Arafat, then president of the Palestinian Authority, "to take serious action against suicide bombings," which, he thinks, hurt the Palestinian cause. "Arafat gave us nothing," he laments.

Muasher takes credit for having convinced U.S. President George W. Bush to adopt the 2003 "road map" peace plan, which eventually fizzled out. He blames Israel and the Palestinians for the failure.

"The Palestinians could and should have done a lot more to deal with the security situation by closing the arms factories, confiscating illegal weapons, freezing funds that were going to illegal organizations, closing the cross-border tunnels through which arms were being smuggled, and implementing a comprehensive security plan."

Israel violated the spirit and letter of the road map, he says, by launching incursions into the West Bank and by refusing to ease measures at checkpoints, release far more Palestinian prisoners and halt targeted assassinations.

In particular, Muasher is critical of Ariel Sharon, the then-prime minister who, he says, was "not interested" in a "permanent solution."

Condemning Israel's separation barrier, he says it has "severely damaged the prospects of a two-state solution and continues to stymie negotiations today." Its true purpose, he says, is to unilaterally establish Israel's new borders.

In the final chapters, Muasher talks about the urgent need of Arab governments to promote such long overdue reforms as good governance, economic well-being and inclusive decision-making. He warns that "radical ideologies" will triumph unless these reforms are implemented.

Arguing that reform has been impeded by the Arab-Israeli dispute, he urges "the Arab and Israeli centres" to defeat the extremists.

For peace to prevail, however, Israelis and Arabs must agree on a solution that meets the needs of both sides.

Easier said than done.

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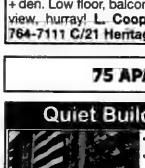

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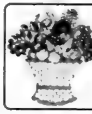

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Montreal wrestler on his way to Beijing

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

David Zilberman is beyond thrilled. On Aug. 21, the 25-year-old Montrealer will be in Beijing, competing in his first match there and hoping to be on his way to a medal as a freestyle wrestler at the Olympic Games.

He is one of only 20 freestylers from around the world in his weight class – 96 kilograms – getting the nod to go to China.

It's select company, and Zilberman, who stands five-foot nine-inches tall and is all lean muscle, knows it and appreciates it.

"It's a dream come true to be able to go to represent my country, something I've wanted to do from the moment I started wrestling," he said in a telephone interview. "The selection was very tough, very tough. Everyone was fighting for those last few spots."

They were fighting at the three-day Swiss Grand Prix Selection Tournament in Martigny in mid-April, the first wrestling selection meet for Beijing, where wrestlers from more than 40 countries competed.

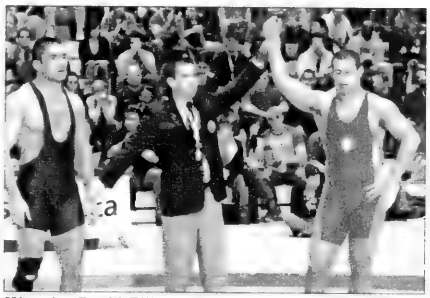
Zilberman came home with a bronze medal, and that was enough, since the top four wrestlers from each weight class in Switzerland were picked for Beijing.

Getting there was worth the wait, he said.

"Everyone is really happy, really excited for me. It's a great thing to have my friends and family behind me, the people that I train with to be so positive and supportive of it all. It's really special, really an emotional thing."

Zilberman will also go as a member of the famed Montreal Wrestling Club based at the YM-YWHA. The club was set up at the Y more than 20 years ago by Zilberman's coach and dad, Victor, who has an established reputation as one of Canada's finest – and toughest – coaches, and who is leading the Canadian team to China.

Victor Zilberman trained Montreal's best wrestlers at the club, as well as at Vanier College and Concordia University. For a number of years, the club left the Y in the late 1980s, before eventually returning in the 1990s and developing a new generation of talent under Zilberman. At least one other Montreal Wrestling Club wrestler, Martine Dugrenier, is a sure thing for Beijing and another, Cleo Ncube, is a definite possibility, David Zilberman said.



Wrestler David Zilberman, right, is named victor of a match against Khetag Pliev of Toronto at the 2008 Canadian Olympic Team Trials last December in Toronto.

"Yeah, he's a good coach, a very good coach," he said with a laugh. But having his own father oversee him makes no difference, Zilberman insisted.

"It's no different with the Olympic Games than it is with the World Championships or World University Championships or the Nationals," he said. "He's my coach, he's my father, but we're past all that now. It doesn't change a thing."

With his selection, David Zilberman joins a not-so-long list of other Jewish Canadians who have also gone for gold at Olympic Games of the past, among them Phil Oberlander (1964), Garry Kallos (1984) and Andy Borodow (1996), the latter two having also trained under Victor Zilberman's wing.

Still, it's all a far cry from where David was about a decade ago, when he finally agreed to take up wrestling at his father's urging, even though he was mostly a baseball and hockey fan.

Zilberman has been hitting the mats ever since, getting huge support from Canadian wrestling figures like Montreal's George Reinitz, a former national champion who has picked up the tab for the Y's modern wrestling facilities and has been a longtime booster.

Zilberman, who majors in leisure sciences at Concordia University, has racked up scores of wrestling medals and titles over the decade, including athlete of the year at Concordia, being named an "all-Canadian" and senior nationals champion several times, and been at or near the top other times at the World University Wrestling Championships and Seniors World Championship. Zilberman started his wrestling career competing at 74 kilos, but moved up little by little until hitting the 96-kilo mark in 1996.

Zilberman said in general he tries not to get nervous prior to the weigh-in, an approach he will no doubt take to Beijing, since "it wastes my energy."

Zilberman also said that the draw will be important. "The draw is always important, but since they're only taking 20 wrestlers from each weight class, it means they're the best wrestlers in the world. So there's no easy draw at the Olympic Games."

Jews make baseball all-star teams

JTA

NEW YORK — At least three players of Jewish descent made the lineups of Major League Baseball's all-star teams.

Boston Red Sox first baseman Kevin Youkilis was named as an American League starter for the game played at Yankee Stadium. Ian Kinsler, the second baseman from the Texas Rangers, was penciled in as a reserve for the American League.

Milwaukee Brewers outfielder Ryan Braun was to start for the National League.

Youkilis, whose nickname is "The Greek God of Walks," openly identifies as Jewish. In explaining his charity work, he once told mlb.com, "In my religion, the Jewish religion, that's one of the biggest things that's taught, is giving a mitzvah, forming a mitzvah."

He also said, "I was always taught as a kid giving to charity. You're supposed to give a good amount of charity each and every year."

Both Braun and Kinsler have Jewish fathers and reportedly identify as half-Jewish.

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Singing in the office

It was a strange clinic day. What made that day strange, in a positive way, was that two of my long-standing patients sang for me.

Over the years, each of them, at times, sang in my office but never both on the same day. One may ask why a patient would sing for the doctor – could it be because I am a medical specialist who focuses on singers with voice problems? However, that's not the case. I am a geriatrician; the majority of my patients are over 80.

The Senior Side of Life

The first patient who visited my office that day is afflicted with Parkinson's disease. He is an accomplished and renowned cantor, and is well-known in the community. He struggles along with his family and his physicians to find ways to improve his functioning.

At one point, he could not vocalize sufficiently to sing. Fortunately, now, during the best of times, he is able to sing a beautiful and sustained cantorial tune. On this particular day, after some time to talk, out it came, a beautiful and lyrical sound – first he sang in my office and then while showing me his gait in the hallway, so all in the vicinity could benefit from the purity of his sound.

My second patient was a woman who is always accompanied by one if not two devoted family members. She suffers from dementia but still lives at home with the help of her supportive family.

Ever since I met her, she has told me how much she loves to sing, and some years ago, during the early part of our interaction, I had told her that my maternal grandmother sang in a Yiddish choir in New York and that not only did I hear lots of Yiddish singing as a child, I also accompanied her on the piano when she practised for performances.

Invariably after our medical visit, the patient would tell me she was going to sing me a Yiddish song. In the earlier days, she would sing one of a number of songs with all the lyrics. As time has gone by and her language skills deteriorated with the progress of the disease, the lyrics have become less robust, but the melody has remained true and her voice clear and lyrical.

This woman's recent visit to me ended with her singing *My Yiddishe Mama*, in which the only lyrics were the title words and the rest was humming and "la la la-ing" – but on beat and in tune. I sat, smiling at her as she sang, and when she was finished, I told her how much I enjoyed her singing for me. When I asked if she would come to see me again for a followup appointment, she replied, "Of course, I always want to see you and sing for you."

Over the years, medical colleagues have asked me how I am able to look after patients who are old, have many illnesses and may be quite demented. "How can you really speak to them with any satisfaction," I am often asked.

I have frequently heard from medical trainees that some of their supervisors paint a rather negative picture of elder-care. I am saddened by this as many of these young medical students and post-graduate trainees have a natural inclination toward the elderly.

I try to counter the negativity of others – sometimes being in a clinic in which two patients sing is a perfect and lyrical antidote.

Dr. Michael Gordon is medical program director of palliative care at Baycrest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents (Dundurn Press).

PEACH CRISP

- 1 c sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1/2 c flour
- 1/2 tsp grated nutmeg
- 1/4 c orange juice
- 1/2 c granola without dried fruit
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter, semi-soft
- 3 lb peaches, peeled, sliced 1/4" thick

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a food processor, process sugar, flour, granola, spices, salt and butter until small clumps are formed.

Spread peaches in a lightly greased 13"x9" baking dish. Toss peaches with juice and top with crumb mixture. Bake in middle of oven until topping is golden and peaches are tender, 35-40 min. Cool slightly and serve warm with ice cream.

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Lessons from a lost culture

Epi on Education

Here I sit in Essaouira, Morocco, on vacation remembering some of the lessons I learned here in the 1980s. I served with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (the Joint) first as an educational consultant and then as country director for most of the time between 1981 and 1988. I came to help a once-great community in its disintegrating years and came away learning more than I taught and getting more than I gave. The lessons I learned have stayed with me ever since, for example:

Seymour Epstein

• Language acquisition is mostly about motivation, not technique. The level of Hebrew in Moroccan Jewish schools was higher than anything I had ever witnessed in North American or European schools, despite poor texts, teachers without training and sad school environments. Synagogue participation and strong family support were the primary motivating factors. And I improved my French without a teacher very quickly, because I had absolutely no choice.

• Computers have destroyed the prodigious memory bank that was once resident in the human brain. Moroccans live mostly in an oral-aural culture and remember facts, names, numbers and texts to an extent that most of us would not believe. How many times did I see Moroccan men pray the full Shabbat morning service, pronouncing each word out loud without ever opening a siddur? And what about women who could sing long verses of Moroccan music without reference to a text? Reading the Torah "cold" without preparation never ceased to amaze me. Knowing texts by heart provides an intimate access that's far superior to an Internet connection.

• Jews' centuries of coexistence with their Muslim neighbours produced a harmony that was truly multicultural. Of course, there were many tense moments, but both Muslims and Jews of a certain age have vivid memories of the kind of mutual respect that allowed for separate lifestyles that interacted in complex ways. There was virtually no intermarriage, and yet the music in mosque and synagogue was similar beyond belief. It all made ethnic street festivals in Toronto look silly in comparison!

There were many more lessons, but as I walk the streets of the medina of Jew-less Essaouira (once Mogador, home to a proud Jewish community), I feel a certain melancholy for a lost world that could still teach us things we never knew.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

An ode to 'headless drivers'

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

I'm lucky, because some people notice when I take time off from writing this column. That is nice. Thank you.

Often when I stop by a convenience store or a small business, or ride a cab, I wonder about the people working "the floor," where there is little hubbub. Do they have the drive to express an idea publicly, one that might be mulled over by others, and are they missed when they take time away from their job?

URBAN WRITER

I am intrigued by the "quiet people." In a short story that I once wrote titled *Goat's Tails and Cow's Feet*, I called them "headless drivers." By that I meant that there are people who drive by me on the street each day who live their own full lives, yet we'll never truly intersect. I see them, but I'll never know them. To me, they may as well be have no heads.

When I engage such people in conversation, the inevitable occurs. We enter into meaningful talk about things such as family, politics, food and religion. I like to test the waters and sometimes toss out a tidbit about Israel. I figure it's my chance to be an emissary, and/or to get a pulse on what's going on in the street in regard to us.

Many of these headless drivers are often not really so quiet. Despite the fact they don't write a column or rage publicly about the ills of society, they have much to say, and they articulate it well.

Most recently, I launched into a discussion with a Christian woman living in northern British Columbia who counsels native Canadians. She's not a trained therapist, but she's been sharing her wisdom for 20 years and has garnered the trust of Aboriginals in that area – not an easy feat. She has no website, and she looked at me strangely when I asked her if she had ever been honoured for her work.

We are gala people, but not everyone else is.

I, like you no doubt, enjoy my taxi rides, not only because I get a chance to be mobile while closing my eyes to think distant thoughts, but because I can talk to a stranger about rare and intimate things with little or no risk. It's part of his or her job, and I sense that these headless drivers are the last great conversationalists in the world.

While in Ottawa recently, an Iranian cabby told me that his first girlfriend was arriving in Toronto for a visit. She wanted to see him. She had never stopped loving him. I advised him against seeing her. He is a family man. I gave him my card and asked him to let me know what he decided. I was curious. He responded, "We'll see. I might." I told him I understood and we parted ways. He was a friend for a moment – as he would be to dozens of people that day – and that was the way it was supposed to be. He was clear about that.

I knew I would never see him again. That was fine, however, because I learned something from this quiet person. He shared with me the intricacies of his familial relationships and the senselessness in testing the genuine spirit of his marital love. He didn't need my advice. The Iranian taxi driver knew a pile more about relationships than I do.

I'm lucky that I write this column, and there are those who notice when I'm not around. But the same can be said about the quiet Filipina woman behind the counter at my favorite coffee joint. I know when she is absent, and many others do as well.

It could be that the quiet people, the headless drivers, might just make their mark while serving another cup of coffee or travelling another quarter mile.

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This Week

National

Zareinu program mixes 'typical' and special needs children. *Page 3*

JNF leaders to help kids of Sderot. *Page 7*

Heebonics

Daniel Warner hopes to change the lives of underprivileged youth. *Page 24*

Arts & Travel

Avenue Q is an adult version of *Sesame Street*. *Page 30*

Middle-aged B.C. man discovers his operatic voice. *Page 32*

Index

National 3
Editorials & Letters 8
Perspectives 9
Opinions 10
The Kirshner File 11
On Campus 12
Jewish Life 14
Just Between Us 16
Family Moments 19
What's New 20
Obituaries and Notices 22
Israel & the Jewish World 25
Books & Authors 29
Arts & Travel 30
Sports 38

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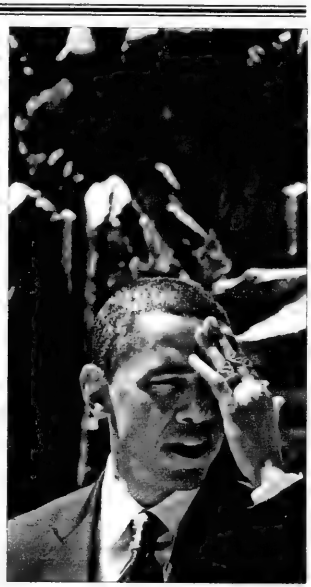

Obama tours the land

U.S. presidential hopeful Barack Obama visited Israel last week as part of a foreign policy tour of Israel, Jordan and Europe. Obama met with key political leaders in Israel as well as with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas in Ramallah. Here he is being briefed by Minister of Defence Ehud Barak and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni while seeing the country from the air in a helicopter. At right, Obama, speaks from in front of the memorial statue to Janush Korczak at Yad Vashem. ***Please see related story on page 25.*** **[*Israel Sun photos*]**

Survivors' service directory published

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The first national directory listing services and programs for Canada's 17,000 Holocaust survivors has just been published.

Five thousand copies of the *Canadian Guide to Programs and Services for Holocaust Survivors* will be dropped off at social service agencies, community and Holocaust memorial centres and synagogues across the country.

The nine-page pamphlet, which is free and can be accessed on the Internet through the Jewish Information Services of Toronto's website, was created to help survivors and their families navigate what can be "a very confusing social service system," said Melanie Simons, national social policy co-ordinator for Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC).

The guide is the initiative of several organizations: CJC, the Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Jewish Information Services of Toronto.

"It will assist survivors and their families link up to services such as home care, emergency assistance for items like hearing aids and dentures, as well as to recreational programs such as the Baycrest's Cafe Europa and Holocaust commemoration activities," Simons said.

In addition, the guide will be helpful to survivors who have not yet applied for services they are entitled to, including restitution programs, she said.

Sidney Zoltak, co-president of Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors, credited Simons with having conceived the guide. "She and the Jewish Information Services of Toronto created it."

Continued on page 19

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The CJN visits a moshav near Gaza – please see page 26

The News in Brief

Canada

Swastika Targets Katz

WINNIPEG — Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz won't ask police to investigate the people who hung a sign with a swastika surrounded by the words "Danger" and "Katz," a spokesperson told the *Winnipeg Free Press*. The paper photographed a man placing the sign in a window of an apartment on a major west end street. A spokesperson for the mayor, who is the son of Holocaust survivors, said that Katz "has very thick skin."

Israeli Drones Win Bid

MONTREAL — Ottawa will spend $100 million to buy at least 12 Israeli-made Heron UAV drone aircraft to use in Afghanistan, Canwest News and strategypage.com reported. The Heron UAV is made by Israeli Air Industries, which beat out a bid by fellow Israeli defence contractor Elbit Systems for its Hermes 450 drone. The Heron spy drones will replace aging, French-made Sperwer aircraft.

Zukerman Feted

OTTAWA — About 60 friends, colleagues and relatives of Pinchas Zukerman gathered July 19 to surprise the National Arts Centre Orchestra's music director on his 60th birthday. The event took place at the NAC Salon. The Tel Aviv-born violinist and conductor has been music director since 1998.

World

Wiesel Attacker Guilty

SAN FRANCISCO — The man accused of trying to kidnap Elie Wiesel was convicted July 21 on lesser charges. A jury found Eric Hunt, 24, guilty of false imprisonment and a hate crime. His trial lasted nine days. In February 2007, Hunt pulled the Nobel Prize-winning writer and Shoah survivor from a San Francisco hotel elevator and tried to force him to deny the Holocaust. Hunt also faced kidnapping and stalking charges. His defence said he had a bipolar disorder.

Survivors To Be Paid

NEW YORK — The Claims Conference has won payment for Jewish survivors of the Nazi siege of Leningrad. It said Germany will make a one-time payment of $4,000 to siege victims now living in Israel or the West. Thousands of Jews are thought to meet the criteria. Some one million Leningrad residents died during the siege, which began in 1941 and lasted 900 days, including 800 Jews who were massacred in Pushkin, a suburb.

Iran Makes Nice?

TEHRAN — An Iranian vice-president made a rare claim that Iran feels friendship toward Israel. "Today Iran is friendly with the peoples of America and Israel," Esfandiyar Rahim Masha'i, who is in charge of tourism and cultural affairs, said July 20. "No people in the world is our enemy, and this is a source of pride," he said at a tourism fair in Tehran. The remarks clashed with Iran's policy against coexistence with Israel. By referring to the "people" of Israel, he may have meant Iran is friend to Jews, not Israel.

Olympian Arrested

ADDIS ABABA — Israel's entrant for the Olympic marathon was arrested while visiting his native Ethiopia. Ayele Seteng, 53, who immigrated to Israel from Ethiopia, returned there for the final stretch of high-altitude training and was arrested in a long-running debt dispute. Israel is worried that Seteng, who is expected to face a trial, could miss the Beijing Games next month. Israeli Sports Minister Raleb Majadele urged the Foreign Ministry to push Ethiopia on the issue. Seteng came 20th in the marathon at the 2004 Athens Games.

President Misses Rally

BUENOS AIRES — Argentina's president skipped the annual protest marking the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish centre. Neither Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner nor her predecessor and husband, Nestor Kirchner, were at the July 18 rally in front of the rebuilt centre, unlike in previous years. The event marked the 14th anniversary of the 1994 terror attack, which killed 85 and wounded hundreds.

Muslim Jailed For Attack On Jewish Teen

CALGARY — A Muslim man who attacked a Jewish girl and her friends in Calgary has been handed a one-year jail sentence from a provincial court.

Mustafa Taj will also serve a year of probation, ruled provincial court Judge Bill Cummings, the *Calgary Sun* and *Calgary Herald* reported.

The judge ruled the assault was a hate crime.

Taj, 21, was convicted in May of attacking four Calgary teenagers in November 2006 as they waited for a commuter train. He slapped and pulled the hair of Nichola Cordato, then 16, who identified herself as Jewish, after saying, "I'm Muslim and hate Jews." When friends attempted to intervene, he punched them in the face and kicked one in the stomach and ribs. He threw another friend onto the train tracks and spat on him.

Taj previously had assaulted a black man after swearing at him for being Sudanese and African.

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Zareinu preschool to offer 'reverse integration'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Zareinu Educational Centre is known for its work with special needs children, including those who have cerebral palsy, Down syndrome and autism spectrum disorder.

This year, the 19-year-old school, which is housed in the basement of Thornhill's Sephardic Kehila Centre, will also welcome "typical" children into its preschool, which can accommodate full-day and half-day students and serves children from age 2½ to 5.

"It's kind of a reverse integration model," said Zareinu's principal, Mitch Parker, who came up with the idea and has seen it used elsewhere.

"It's an unusual model, but it's a really good model," said the school's preschool co-ordinator, Pat Resnick, a native of Johannesburg who has been in Toronto for 23 years and is a professor of early childhood education at Seneca College.

Pat Resnick

Among Parker's reasons for instituting the new model are to provide an opportunity for special needs students to be integrated, to sensitize typical learners, and to offer a perk to staff in the form of on-site preschool for their children during working hours.

The program is also open to non-staff, but spots are limited.

Resnick noted that the preschool is geared to "the whole child. As well as focusing on cognitive development – reading and writing, a little math, Hebrew – we focus as well on social skills."

Every child in the program has an individual education plan, Resnick said. "We look at every child's strengths and work on areas that need working on."

In fact, she said, diagnoses of special needs students are considered "sort of secondary."

Disabilities in young children are "not as clear-cut" as they are in older people, Parker added.

Mitch Parker

While special needs children will continue to receive individual therapies such as physiotherapy and speech therapy, the typical children "will certainly benefit from group activities" such as music and speech, Resnick said.

She noted that some children have attended the preschool in the past "to be monitored" and ended up developing typically. She does not believe that reverse integration will "slow down" the learning of typical students. "Every child [at Zareinu] moves at the rate they should be moving."

As well, she noted, the program teaches respect for others, as well as understanding.

"Some people may talk verbally, some people may communicate with a device – it gives an understanding that people can communicate differently," Resnick said.

"They will just see that [the special needs students] are children. They like the same things. They do the same things – maybe differently. I think it teaches respect for diversity."

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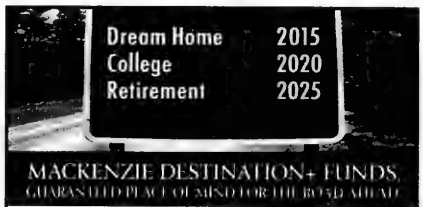

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Greater Toronto Area

A magical Music Man

From the editor's desk

At one point in the playful repartee in *The Music Man*, being performed at the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, the elegant, somewhat standoffish but ever insightful librarian asks: "What makes Shakespeare and Beethoven great?"

With that throw-away question, the audience is forced to confront just one of the many profound, universal issues of life – the elevating power of truth, the debilitating distress of dissembling, human frailty, the nature of beauty, and the restorative quality of love – that are the provocative but matter-of-fact subthemes of the story and the music in the often overlooked but immensely gratifying musical written by Meredith Wilson and Frank Lacey.

The deep relevance of the questions that underpin the musical is one of the reasons the Stratford rendition of play is so wonderful. The other reasons relate, of course, to the outstanding cast of players assembled by director Susan H. Schulman.

For those readers who may not be familiar with the play, it tells the tale of a travelling con artist who targets the unassuming, simple folk of a small, rural, midwestern U.S. town in the early years of the last century. His ruse entails selling musical instruments and marching band uniforms. He must contend with both the trust and the suspicion of the townsfolk, and then unexpectedly, the stirrings of unfamiliar emotions of his own. The townsfolk too, in the end, must contend with new emotional and other forces that are let loose by the flimming and flamming of this smooth talking, elusive and evasive Music Man.

This is Schulman's sixth season at Stratford. She was a superb choice by the festival's artistic director Des McAnuff. Her experience in theatre is at the highest level. Her previous Stratford credits, for example, include *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Man of La Mancha*, *The King and I* and *Hello, Dolly!*

"At first I thought the storyline, the book, was old fashioned," she told *The CJN* recently on the phone. "But the score and the music are enduring.

"My main aspiration for the play was how to make the story not seem old-fashioned and fussy. For when you read the lyrics and the script, they are incredibly moving."

Schulman's production carries her aspiration, like a charge of warm, stimulating electricity, directly to the hearts of the audience. It succeeds in endearing the play and the players to the audience members.

Schulman has assembled an outstanding company of creative, talented actors, singers, dancers, set designers and choreographers.

Skill and energy pour off the stage.

Jonathan Goad deftly portrays the Music Man, Prof. Harold Hill, smooth-talking, confident, brazen, bold yet vulnerable as well.

Lee MacDougall as the mayor is excellent: a pompous blowhard who knows less than he thinks but enough nevertheless to retain the chain of office.

The mayor's wife, played by the iconic Fiona Reid, routinely steals her scenes. She is simply that good. She demonstrates exquisite timing, playful comic exaggeration in the delivery of lines, expression and movement. Her performance proves, yet again, the truth of the theatre adage that there are no small parts.

But the luminous jewel in the diadem of Schulman's production is the performance of Leah Oster as Marian Paroo, the librarian. She conducts herself on stage with near entrancing elegance and dignity of bearing. Her singing is masterful, finely controlled, full-ranged and rich, even in the high register.

"I was very happy to cast Leah Oster for her Stratford debut," Schulman enthused. It was indeed an astute decision.

The interaction among Marian, her troubled young brother Winthrop (Christopher Van Hagen) and their mother (Michelle Fisk) is sweet and, at times, stirringly heart-rending.

The Stratford production of *The Music Man* provides large offerings of theatrical delights: exhilarating ensemble dancing that is typically athletic, high kicking, high stepping and high jumping; top quality singing and harmonics; innovative, modern staging and set design; fine acting; and a classic, timeless story, in whose predictable twists and turns we can find the faint familiarities and small comforts of our lives as well.

Jonathan Goad, the Music Man, spins with Leah Oster, Marian Paroo, the librarian.

Schulman spoke with pride about "the thrill of Stratford."

"People should come and have a wonderful time," she urged. "After seeing *The Music Man*, many in the audience leave the theatre feeling better than when they walked in."

Her observation was not self-promotion. It was statement of fact, for *The Music Man* is a magical theatre experience.

* * *

My colleagues and I at *The CJN* convey our best wishes to our treasured Urban Writer, Avrum Rosensweig, for a full and speedy recovery.

–MBD

SeeJN CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF ISRAEL

ZIONIST VISIONARY

Ze'ev Jabotinsky died on the 29th of Tammuz (Aug. 4), 68 years ago, in 1940. He was one of the Zionist leaders whose vision contributed to the founding of the State of Israel. Born in Odessa on Oct. 18. 1880, Jabotinsky was a soldier, orator, journalist, thinker and leader. Throughout his life, he advocated the importance of Jewish self defence. In World War I, while serving with the British Army, he helped form the Jewish Legion. In 1925, he established the Revisionist Party because he opposed and sought to revise the terms of the British mandate for Palestine, which he believed unjustly denied the Jewish people their patrimony east and west of the Jordan River. He founded the party's youth movement, Betar, and a para-military, self-defence organization called Etzel, the national military organization that was known as the Irgun. The Revisionist Party later evolved into the Herut Party and later into the Likud Party. Jabotinsky died while in the United States on a mission to organize Jewish participation in the Allied war effort. His remains were reinterred in the Mount Herzl Cemetery in Jerusalem in 1965.

[WZPO photo]

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Community helps send terror victims to camp

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

It's a Monday afternoon and around a dozen teens are lounging by the pool, chatting amongst themselves.

Girls in bikinis dry themselves off as groups gather around the barbecue, concentrating on dressing their hot dogs.

These teens have many things in common. They enjoy barbecues, they like to socialize, they're all from Israel and they're all victims of terror.

And they were all going to camp in a few days.

For the past four years, the One Family Fund, a group that helps victims of terror in Israel, has been sending Israeli youths, aged 12 to 14, who have been affected by terror to Canadian camps.

This year, for the first time, they will be partnering with other organizations to reach more children.

One of these is Yaldeinu, a charity that helps Jewish communities worldwide. With the help of the International Christian Embassy Jerusalem, Yaldeinu is sending five children to Camp Gesher.

Another group of Israeli kids will be hosted by a number of Bel Ewart cottagers in an initiative organized by Ari Belzberg and Emanuel Greenberg.

Volunteers from organizations such as One Family and Yaldeinu are sending terror victims to camp in Ontario this summer. Pictured from left are campers Sean Kuchnik, Yuval Dadon, Shir Benshimol and Shalom Katar (seated), along with organizers and volunteers Karen Breslin, Bernie Little, Pam Albert, Rhonda Wolf, Michael Ettedgui and Jack Benaim.

Pam Albert, executive director of One Family's Canadian branch, emphasized the sense of community that has developed through this project.

"This is a wonderful model. It shows how [different] organizations can work together. It's a program where there's no boundaries in terms of who can help," she said.

Albert said the organizations' motives were simple.

"I think we feel that our hands are tied here," she said. "We're sitting with an incredible life in Canada. We look at the lives affected by terror. It's such a tangible way to give a real kid a hug, to help them."

This year, One Family is sending 20 kids to Camp Timberlane, with the help of Bernie Little, head of fundraising and a Timberlane alumnus. Little raised some $70,000 for transportation and living costs.

"Aside from approaching friends, I approached alumni. The response was fantastic," Little said. "People care. It's very frustrating to be here. When you give to other charities, you don't see where the money's going."

For the Israeli campers, the funding means that they can spend a few weeks just being kids, which is one of the reasons Rhonda Wolf volunteered with One Family.

"We want them to take their mind off everything. The majority of the kids are coming from Sderot," Wolf said, referring to the southern Israeli town that faces constant rocket barrages from neighbouring Gaza.

"They can't have a life outdoors in the summer. Israel is so beautiful, and they have to stay inside. That's not fair. We want to show them the great outdoors."

Chaim Avner, 14, has been coming to Camp Timberlane through this program for several years.

Four years ago, Avner's father was killed in a suicide bombing in Jerusalem.

Apart from getting to travel, going to Camp Timberlane gives Avner an opportunity to be a regular kid in a safe environment.

"I love this," he said of the camp. "I like the skate park, tennis, soccer. All the guys, whatever you want, they'll do for you. If I'm upset, they come and help, they joke with me. All the time, you're not alone."

Michael Ettedgui, the founder of Yaldeinu, sees this as an opportunity to connect Israeli and Canadian campers.

"It'll imbue in them a sense of peoplehood. There's no doubt that they will remember the kindness they were shown by children their own age in Toronto. They'll have real friendships with Jewish children in North America."

Before the kids got on the camp buses, they spent a few days in Toronto staying with host families and exploring the city.

This is all thanks to community businesses and volunteers.

Roots gave free merchandise to each child, while Cosmic Bowling donated a night of bowling and a free dinner. Each camper also got a backpack full of camping supplies, which was donated from a bar and a bat mitzvah.

"The Israeli community here is very strong," Wolf said, adding that volunteers don't have to be Israeli, or even Jewish, to help. "Everyone that has children understands."

The One Family Fund is also organizing a Sea to Sea charity hike in Israel. For more information, visit www.onefamilyfund.org, www.seatoseahike.org, or call 416-644-4955.

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Young JNF leaders to go back to camp for Sderot

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

On Aug. 13, hundreds of Jewish twentysomethings and thirtysomethings will return to camp in an effort to help the children of Sderot.

Late last year, JNF Canada's newly formed JNF New Leadership committee, made up of young friends and acquaintances, decided it was time to give back to the community.

To do so, the members, all in their late 20s and early 30s, decided to launch their activities with a chesed-filled night of fun and fundraising with a summer camp theme. The event, called "One Summer Night," will be held at Toronto's C-Lounge club, 465 Wellington St. W.

Proceeds will be used to send hundreds of children from Sderot to Nes Harim, a JNF-run summer camp in the Jerusalem Hills.

"It is an opportunity for the children to finally live as 'kids' without the constant fear of terror," JNF New Leadership said on its event website.

Camp is where many on the committee first met and became friends, and it holds lots of shared, fond memories, said the event co-chairs, Toronto lawyers Sean Werger and Michael Rubinoff.

"I went to all my old camp friends… we were talking about ways to get our [demographic] more involved," Werger, 31, told *The CJN* over coffee recently.

Werger said JNF agents in Israel will choose children from families "in most need" in Sderot to attend the camp.

Parents will also accompany their children to the camp so that they can all get a respite from the almost-daily bombardment of their town by Qassam rockets from Gaza and instead "go on creative excursions, trips and be shown the rest of Israel so they can understand why they're so important to the country," he said.

Werger said that in addition to the primary goal of helping the children of Sderot, he and Rubinoff hope this event launch for JNF New Leadership will spark more interest in JNF and elicit more community participation from their peers, as well as help de-mystify what the organization actually does for Israel.

Pictured, back from left, are JNF executive director Ben Prossin, Alan Friedman, JNF events co-ordinator Sheila Krone, Sari Sadofsky, Michael Rubinoff, Jason Kimelman, Sabina Srubiski and Jamie Grossman; and seated from left, Karen Werger, Sean Werger and Michelle Bloch. [JNF photo]

"Anyone you ask about JNF, they refer to them as 'the tree planting people.' Yes… but we're also involved in creating security roads and we're the leading environmental movement for Israel," Werger stated.

Rubinoff, 31, said he was happy to discover how good it feels to get more involved with the community.

"As you come back later in life, you begin to see the relevance of the JNF and how they're a vital organization," he said.

"There was a connection to the JNF early on in [grade] school as kids, with the little blue boxes and stuff, but we're rediscovering them now as adults. We want to engage people our age for the long term."

Werger added that there are currently 22 people on the New Leadership committee for the event, 21 of whom never had dealings with JNF before.

For now, the "One Summer Night" fundraising party is strictly a Toronto affair, but Werger and Rubinoff haven't written off speaking to people their own age around the continent about combined events later on.

"We decided to launch a modest event to begin with and set ourselves up as successfully as possible," Rubinoff said, indicating that committee members "reached out" to other Jewish youth communities in Canada to assess interest, but in the end, they opted for a local coming-out party.

"Down the road, we may look more international," he added.

So far, "One Summer Night" has managed to bring in dozens of corporate sponsors through the work of committee members, and Werger expects all 350 tickets, priced at $100 apiece, to sell out.

"I'm excited about the party," Werger said. "It's an upscale event where we'll serve s'mores [and] we'll have a raffle where guests can win his and her prizes, such as a set of Calloway golf clubs and jewelry."

The night will also feature the new-folk music of emerging recording artist Jeremy Fisher – who's been described as a cross between Paul Simon and Bob Dylan – as well as DJ Steve Fernandez.

For more information, visit jnf.ca/toronto/onesummernight or call 416-638-7200, ext. 30.

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Lifting stones, marking their graves

There are two fewer names now in the box on this page (*Let Them Go*) that lists the soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces who are missing in action. The names of Sgt.-Maj. (res.) Ehud Goldwasser and Sgt. First Class Eldad Regev have been removed from the list. It was our hope – and the hope, we trust, of the civilized world – that they would be set free to the embrace of their grateful families and thankful nation to resume the lives that their Hezbollah abductors had so viciously interrupted.

Alas, only their remains were released.

Their families mourn still.

The nation still sways in sadness and anger.

Even as the bodies of the two soldiers were being transported by the Red Cross to the chaplains of the IDF, the propriety of the "prisoner" exchange was fiercely debated in Israel. For the sake of the families, some writers conceded, the exchange was necessary. But for the state, they complained, it was a strategic blunder, a dangerous disincentive to the murderous terrorists and their agents from kidnapping and killing again. Indeed, the debate has not subsided.

Joining that debate however is not our purpose. We hope and we trust that Israel will be able to re-assert its deterrent capability against enemies who celebrate as heroism and freedom-fighting the crushing of the skull of a four-year-old child.

Seldom has there been a clearer lens than that of the "prisoner" exchange to shine such true light upon the differences between Israel and those who still strive to deny it a rightful place in the Middle East. The words of the Goldwasser and Regev families themselves are the hands holding that lens secure.

"Over these past two years," said Goldwasser's mother Miki, "we have discovered a different nation, wonderful and distinguished, one that embraces and loves. An untold number of Jewish communities and youths all came to our aid, we are moved to tears by the magnitude of the love this people is capable of."

Regev's brother Ofer echoed the very same theme Goldwasser's parents: "I am proud to belong to [a nation] that loves, and not one that hates."

Shlomo Goldwasser, Ehud's father added: "If [Hezbollah leader Hassan] Nasrallah's great achievement was to conceal the fate of our sons, then I pity him and the Lebanese people. If Hezbollah's great achievement is the release of [convicted terrorist Samir] Kuntar, who is nothing but a repulsive murderer, then I pity them."

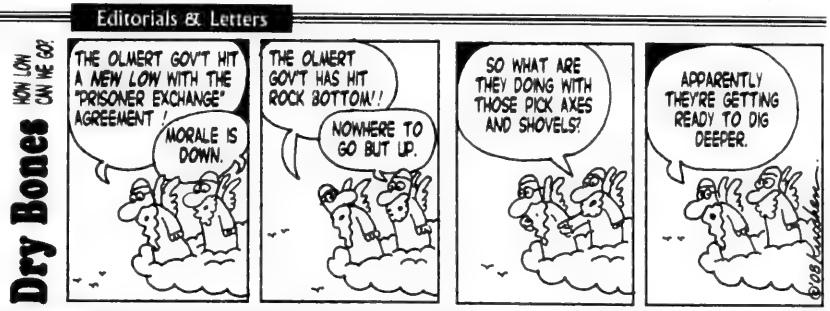
The return of the two soldiers' remains means the Goldwasser and Regev families can move on with their lives no longer burdened by the icy stones of uncertain fate and desperate possibility that weighed for two years upon their hopeful hearts.

Now lifted, those cold, dark stones will mark the graves of the men they loved but are no more.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Israel stood firm on its decision to redeploy its forces in Lebanon to a more defensible position. In response to U.S. fears the action would lead to a divided Lebanon and continued violence there, Israel said it was committed to withdrawing behind the internationally recognized border between the two countries.

Editorials & Letters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Israel, Hezbollah prisoner swap (1)

I find the prisoner exchange with Hezbollah shocking and appalling ("Israel, Hezbollah reach prisoner swap," *CJN*, July 3). It's very nice for the government to claim a higher moral standard with its conduct, but at the same time, it exposes soldiers to unprecedented dangers, because to capture a soldier alive is now obsolete, since kidnapping him dead or alive will bring the same price. Logistically speaking, that simplifies the task of the terrorists and makes the life of a soldier very cheap. Furthermore, immediate medical attention for injured soldiers will now be obsolete, as there is much less incentive to keep them alive. And the price for abducted soldier Gilad Schalit will go up into the stratosphere.

I have to admit that if the dead was my son, I, too, would give the terrorists anything they want. But would it be right? Would it be fair to all the soldiers, their parents and the country itself? Can a country become totally paralyzed by extortion and blackmail? It's vital for Israel to pass a law stating that there will be no negotiations with kidnappers unless proof of life is given.

Max Kon
Montreal

* * *

Israel, Hezbollah prisoner swap (2)

I disagree with everyone who believes that the Israeli government made the wrong choice to return the two missing soldiers ("Israel, Hezbollah reach prisoner swap," *CJN*, July 3). What most people do not realize when they insult Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and state how he should not be in office is that he did a huge mitzvah. As I learned in my Jewish studies last year in school, when a fellow Jew is in captivity, it is an obligation to do everything we can to set him free. There is no "if" or "unless" in this law. It must be fulfilled no matter the cost. That is why Olmert and the Israeli government made the right decision regarding the recent prisoner swap. That is why they need to do everything they can to free abducted soldier Gilad Schalit.

Sammy Hudes
Toronto

* * *

Palestinians not held to account

Bernard Katz certainly has a right to his opinion, and I am happy that he has a chance to express it so loudly and so often in *The CJN* – that is his right and privilege in a free press ("How Israel defends itself," *CJN* letters, July 17).

This time, however, he touched a nerve, and he really needs to re-think his views on Israel.

Israel does not "frequently commit acts of terror against non-combatant civilians," as he contends. The terrorists live in close proximity to population centres and purposely shoot and then hide among their families and inside their mosques and schools. Does this fact make retaliation and apprehension of killers unnecessary and immoral? No.

He also lambastes many other aspects of Israeli defence, including the successful security fence. His positions are no different than those expressed by Arabs and Palestinians in terms of wanting the right to attack Israel without acknowledging its right to a vigorous and effective defence.

If I read him correctly, he is saying that Palestinians need not account for their violence and terror, and Israel must never retaliate or hold any of them responsible by fighting back. Katz's views, if taken to their logical conclusion, would mean the end of the State of Israel.

Gary Gerofsky
Dundas, Ont.

* * *

Open discussion about 'Israel-Palestine'

The meeting *CJN* columnist Lawrence Hart wrote about, which was to have taken place at Hamilton's Temple Anshe Shalom on June 25, did in fact take place – at the nearby Westdale Library ("We're our own worst enemy," July 10).

The meeting consisted of two group discussions. Participants (about 20) viewed a part of a TVO program on Israel, which provided the starting point for the discussions.

Rabbi Jordan Cohen of Anshe Shalom and several of his congregants attended the meeting. Contrary to Hart, there were no "speakers." Two members of the Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians (ACJC) made brief presentations, outlining the organization's aims and principles.

Open discussion about Israel-Palestine among Jewish Hamiltonians without fear of recrimination was what the meeting was about. ACJC Hamilton feels this is an important value to establish in the Jewish community.

David Cohen
Hamilton, Ont.

* * *

Seeking photos, videos of Rabbi Price

The board of the Rabbi Price Foundation is preparing a DVD about the life and times of the late Rabbi Abraham Price. We are asking readers who may have photographs, films or audio or video tapes of Rabbi Price to lend them to us, so that we can complete this project.

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Perspectives

"Who is a Jew?" debate returns

By RABBI DAVID GOLINKIN

In May, Rabbi Avraham Sherman and two other judges of the High Rabbinical Court of the Chief Rabbinate ruled that all of the conversions performed by Rabbi Chaim Druckman and Israel's National Conversion Court since 1999 are retroactively annulled, and that Rabbi Druckman and his fellow judges are disqualified as judges.

On May 30, Jonathan Rosenblum defended that decision in the *Jerusalem Post*, as if it affected only one convert in Ashdod and as if "Rabbi Sherman was stating the overwhelming consensus of halachic opinion." We shall demonstrate below that this ruling and that article have presented this complex issue in a totally one-sided and inaccurate fashion.

This decision has severe national implications for the State of Israel. As a result of it, some 300,000 Russian immigrants who have made aliyah under the Law of Return since 1990 are not halachically Jewish. Through great effort, the Joint Institute of Jewish Studies set up after the Ne'eman Commission in 1998 and the National Conversion Authority have converted many thousands of Russian immigrants who studied for one to three years in very serious courses. Rabbi Sherman's ruling retroactively annuls all of these conversions.

Furthermore, this ruling will deter all future conversions. If a conversion can be annulled many years after it is performed, it means that all conversions are conditional, so why bother converting at all?

This ruling is a desecration of God's name, and it makes a mockery of thousands of converts and hundreds of teachers and rabbis who have worked so hard to convert them.

This episode shows once again that the Chief Rabbinate of Israel, which was founded by religious Zionists, is now a haredi institution opposed to all lenient approaches within Jewish law.

Finally, the haredi position has already led to an absurd situation: he who is strict regarding conversion is lenient regarding intermarriage. In the past, this was a Diaspora phenomenon, but now, with the mass aliyah from the former Soviet Union, if we do not convert Russian immigrants, they will marry our children and grandchildren!

Rabbi Sherman's ruling is based primarily on one major premise: a convert must accept all of the mitzvot before converting and observe all the mitzvot after converting. If not, he is not Jewish and his conversion can be retroactively annulled. Furthermore, judges who performed conversions without this requirement are ipso facto disqualified from serving as judges.

He relies on rabbis Feinstein, Grodzinsky, Sternbuch, Auerbach, Kook, Schmelkes, Yosef, Kanievsky, Shach and Elyashiv. Almost all are haredi rabbis who are opposed to modernity, Zionism and the State of Israel.

Rabbi David Golinkin

Their strict approach to *kabbalat mitzvot* (the acceptance of mitzvot) stems from two sources.

Rabbi Yitzhak Schmelkes penned this revolutionary responsum in 1876: "A person who converts and accepts the yoke of the mitzvot, but does not intend in his heart to observe them, God desires the heart, and he is not a convert." This approach has no precedent in 2,000 years of halachic discussions about conversion. Indeed, Rabbi Schmelkes was aware that his ruling contradicted the well-known halachic principal that "*dvarim shebalev einam dvarim*" (things of the heart are not things).

The second source for the haredi position is a passage in the Talmud, Bechorot 30b: "Our Sages taught:... if an idol worshipper came to accept [*lekabel*] the Torah except for one thing, we do not accept him. Rabbi Yossi bar Yehudah says: even if the exception be one of the minutiae of the scribes [i.e., the sages]." The major medieval codes of Jewish law such as Maimonides, the Tur and the *Shulchan Aruch* ignored this passage. It was revived by 19th and 20th-century rabbis who wanted to reject most converts.

Thus, for example, Rabbi Moshe Feinstein repeatedly states in his responsa that a convert must accept all of the mitzvot, "and without accepting mitzvot, even one detail, behold it is written in Bechorot 30 that we do not accept him."

The normative position, however, is found in another passage in the Talmud, Yevamot 47a-b. If a person comes to convert, you ask him if he knows that the Jewish people is "persecuted and oppressed. If he replies 'I know and yet am unworthy' he is accepted forthwith, and is given instruction in some of the minor and some of the major commandments... He is also told of the punishment for the transgression of the commandments... And... he is informed of the reward granted for their fulfilment... He is not, however, to be persuaded or dissuaded too much. *Kibel* [if he accepted/consented], he is circumcised forthwith... [Afterward, when he is immersed] two learned men must stand by his side and instruct him in some of the minor commandments and in some of the major ones. When he comes up after his immersion, he is deemed to be an Israelite in all respects."

This *braita*, from the second century or earlier, was quoted or paraphrased by Maimonides, the Tur and the *Shulchan Aruch*.

The key phrase is "*kibel*" – if he accepted/consented. This obviously does not refer to acceptance of all the mitzvot, because he has only been instructed in some of the minor and some of the major mitzvot. So what does it mean?

Rabbi Ben-Zion Meir Hai Uziel (1880-1953), first Sephardi Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel, explained as follows: "It is clear from [Yevamot 47a-b] that we do not demand of him to observe the mitzvot, and it is also not necessary that the Bet Din knows that he will observe them, for if not, no converts will be accepted in Israel, for who will guarantee that this gentile will be loyal to all the mitzvot in the Torah? Rather, they instruct him in some of the mitzvot so that if he wants, he should go away and so that he cannot say later 'If I had known I would not have converted.' And this is before the fact, but after the fact, if they did not instruct him, it is not indispensable... [It] is permissible and a mitzvah to accept converts, even though we know that they will not observe all the mitzvot, because in the end they will observe them."

Other prominent Orthodox rabbis who have taken lenient approaches toward *kabbalat mitzvot* include Chief Rabbi Unterman and Rabbis Kluger, Mashash, Moshe Hacohen, Berkowitz and Angel.

Thus the entire "house of cards" built by Rabbi Sherman rests on just one card: that all poskim agree that all converts must accept all mitzvot. Indeed, this has been the position of most Ashkenazi haredi rabbis since 1876. But it is not normative Jewish law. Normative Jewish law for 2,000 years has followed Yevamot that a convert accepts the halachic system and its rewards and punishments, not all of the mitzvot, which he has yet to learn. To say that a rabbi who rules differently is unfit to judge is the equivalent to saying that a person who waits three hours instead of six hours between meat and milk does not keep kosher. Different halachic rulings are based on different sources and they are equally legitimate.

I hope and pray that the Supreme Court of Israel will overturn this mistaken and destructive ruling.

I hope and pray that the State of Israel will start to appoint modern Orthodox and other qualified rabbis as *dayanim*. If not, the Chief Rabbinate will have to be abolished, because it will have cut itself off from most of the Jewish people.

Finally, I hope and pray that the State of Israel will make every effort to welcome converts, for it is written that "a convert is more beloved by God than the multitudes who stood at Mount Sinai" and "a convert who comes to convert, one reaches out a hand in order to bring him under the wings of Heaven."

Rabbi David Golinkin is president of the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem.

Diaspora presses Olmert on conversion issue

By JACOB BERKMAN
JTA

NEW YORK — Diaspora Jews are stepping up pressure on Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to intervene in a dispute in Israel over conversions to Judaism.

Leaders of the United Jewish Communities federation umbrella organization sent a sharply worded letter to Olmert on July 9 urging him to assign his cabinet secretary "to oversee conversion."

At issue in this case is a dispute over who can perform conversions and which conversions should be considered valid by Israeli religious authorities.

The petition followed a Jewish Agency resolution, adopted at its mid-June board of governors meetings, "to act immediately to advance the conversion issue."

"As leaders of the American Jewish community, we are writing to you to express our deep concern regarding the untenable instability that has characterized the conversion system in Israel over the past few months and ask for your personal involvement," the UJC's chairman, Joe Kanfer, and its CEO and president, Howard Rieger, said in their letter.

(A UJC spokesperson told *The CJN* that the letter was also sent on behalf of the Canadian Jewish community.)

Calling out Olmert publicly is an unusual step for the UJC, which generally attempts to avoid placing public pressure on the Israeli prime minister.

Conversion long has been a flashpoint in Diaspora-Israel relations and within Israel itself, as the Orthodox-dominated Israeli rabbinate has squared off with non-Orthodox denominations over the "Who is a Jew" debate. The rabbinate consistently has refused to recognize Reform or Conservative conversions, and as it continues to adopt increasingly stringent conversion standards, a growing number of Orthodox voices are voicing alarm as well.

The most recent flare-up in this religious struggle came in the spring, when Israel's Rabbinical High Court dismissed Rabbi Chaim Druckman, the head of the Conversion Committee, which was set up to facilitate the conversion process.

In dismissing Rabbi Druckman, who was considered relatively lenient on conversion, the court said it would annul thousands of conversions of immigrants from the former Soviet Union that he had approved.

The move rankled modern Orthodox rabbis, the Conservative and Reform movements, and the UJC, which holds that the conversion issue is central to its effort to create a sense of "Jewish peoplehood" between Diaspora and Israeli Jews.

A group known as the co-ordinating committee, comprising officials of the UJC, Jewish Agency and the agency's international fundraising arm, Keren Hayesod, meets with Israel's prime minister three times a year, and conversion is always brought up, Nachman Shai, the director general of UJC-Israel told JTA.

While the conversion issue has been framed as a question of respecting the identity and practices of Diaspora Jews, critics of the Chief Rabbinate are stressing the predicament of some 300,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union who are not recognized as Jewish.

These people were eligible to immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return, which requires only that a prospective immigrant have at least one Jewish grandparent. But they're not recognized by Israel's religious authorities because they don't have a Jewish mother or have not undergone an Orthodox conversion.

The result is a host of social problems, starting with their inability to wed Jewish Israelis, since marriage is controlled by the Chief Rabbinate.

The recent letter from UJC comes at a time when many see Olmert as a lame duck because of political scandals that ultimately may force him from office. But Shai said it's an open letter to the Prime Minister's Office, not necessarily Olmert.

"If it is not Olmert, it will be someone else," he said.

In a letter dated July 16, Olmert responded to the UJC, thanking Kanfer and Rieger for their concern and stating recognition that "conversion in Israel is a national priority. I am determined resolve the current conversion crisis and improve the process of conversion in Israel."

Olmert added that the issue of conversion "remains a central part of my agenda as prime minister."

With files from Andy Levy-Ajzenkopf

Opinions

Compassion before justice

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

The armchair politician that I am is incensed at the recent prisoner exchange between Israel and Hezbollah. To free Samir Kuntar so that his fellow terrorists can gloat and claim victory while he resumes his murderous activities, in exchange for no more than two Israelis in coffins looks like bad politics. Only a weak prime minister fighting for his political survival and surrounded by an inane bunch of cabinet ministers could have agreed to it.

It's one thing to bring back live prisoners to reassure the soldiers that they will always be looked after by their government, but to suffer so much anguish for this seems unwarranted. Indeed, no price is too high to free Gilad Schalit from the clutches of Hamas, but the situation of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, of blessed memory, may have required a tougher response.

However, as a Jew, and in spite of the sadness we all feel, I am immensely grateful for what Israel did. For our tradition bids us not only to redeem captives, but also to make sacrifices for the sake of a dignified burial of the fallen in order to honour the dead and provide closure to the families.

Herb Keinon of the *Jerusalem Post* has offered an added perspective. He wrote that, apart from the commitment to bring home every soldier, even if in a coffin, Israel is also acting out of a "communal obligation following the Holocaust – a feeling that whenever Jews are in danger, everything, but everything, must be done to try to save them, if only because so little was done back then."

He may have a point. As hard as we may try move on, the trauma of the Holocaust has become part of our collective consciousness. Though the survivors are dying out and the second generation is aging, the effect will stay forever. The very existence of Israel testifies to it.

Israel is strong enough to ignore the taunts of its enemies as they dance around Kuntar and proclaim themselves as victors. For all their glaring human limitations, the members of Israel's government have shown prudence, even wisdom, in putting compassion before justice. Even Kuntar is reported to have said that he envies the Israelis for the way they care.

They let go a despicable criminal and others of his ilk in order to bring some comfort to two families, as well as to the whole country. Even if those in charge did it out of weakness, or for reasons of crass expediency, or as a residue of irrational Holocaust trauma, their actions must nevertheless be applauded.

I'm proud that my Jewish sensibilities are infinitely stronger than my political instincts.

Force can be a tool to fight evil

Mark Masters in Ottawa

The world needs to change.

No doubt this sentiment has been felt in generation after generation, but I can't help but believe that now – in this generation – a line in the sand must be drawn.

Who should draw the line? Young people not just in our community, but across all communities – must be part of this transition from ignorance and apathy to moral steadfastness.

The problem facing the world is an inability to decide how to deal with the ills facing it.

We see evil in Robert Mugabe, the dictator in Zimbabwe who has once again been assured continued control of the beleaguered nation through a fraudulent election.

We see evil in Sudan, where genocide is taking place.

We see evil in Iran, where a president denies the Holocaust while plotting to gain a nuclear weapon so as to turn the venom he spews into reality.

And for the most part, there is an agreement – to varying degrees – that these are evils the world must confront. But again, there is no strategy to do so.

The United Nations is impotent and bogged down in bureaucracy. Its main problem is that it gives the same value to the voice of the worst human-rights offenders as it does to democracies that value the rule of law.

The veto of Communist China stands in the way of action in Sudan. The African Union stands in the way of real change in Zimbabwe. Regarding Iran, it's hard to know where to place all the blame for years of inaction.

So what's the answer?

U.S. Senator John McCain has proposed a new League of Democracies, which would be an organization similar to NATO that would help bypass the United Nations and start doing true good in the world. As far as ideas go, this is one of the better ones out there.

The current consensus seems to be that either the status quo is fine or anything beyond it is too risky.

Some believe that military force can never achieve good. This is definitely the pervading sense among those at post-secondary institutions in our country.

On university campuses, you often see rallies against war, the United States and Israel. But make no mistake, the United States, whether under a President McCain or President Barack Obama, is the best chance the world has for a better future.

Sure, we all want a more peaceful existence, but I think it's clear that a policy of appeasement will never lead to the prosperous times we all desire.

Economic sanctions backed up by military force is the best way to combat dictators who mock the world's democratic nations while sitting ensconced in their palaces, funded by well meaning United Nations donations.

How to push our leaders toward such action is hard to figure out, but it has to start with the ballot box. We need to reach a point where all our political leaders in Canada, at least those in the mainstream, support real reform to the United Nations and accept military action as an important tool in helping end genocides and ensure a more peaceful world.

It will be tough for this charge to come from our community. After all, if a Jewish group pushes for military action, the likely reaction is for critics to characterize us as a bunch of warmongers.

They'll say, "Sure they like war. Look a how they treat the Palestinians."

Of course, the critics don't have to worry about a bomb going off when they ride the bus, or about rogue groups on their border.

The time is now for our community – and especially the youth – to stand up for a new direction, to stand up for something that will actually make a difference in the world.

Our community produces world leaders in many important fields, and foreign policy is perhaps the most important issue facing us right now.

These days, we often talk about tipping points – moments when an idea becomes part of the mainstream and takes off. I hope a new hard-line approach to the evil in this world reaches a tipping point soon, and I think it may have to start with our community.

Kilometres apart, worlds away

Jesse Mintz in Halifax

It's trite to say that one man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist. But after the recent Israeli-Hezbollah prisoner exchange, I understood with unprecedented clarity the troubled relationship that underlies this cliché.

The celebrations in Lebanon and the mourning ceremonies in Israel that marked the day occurred mere kilometres apart, and while both nations' media reported on the same events, going back and forth between the two felt more like switching worlds than surfing websites.

The abyss separating the two worlds, which has never seemed so daunting or so wide as it has in light of the exchange, is further reinforced by the bridge between them – Samir Kuntar, or "the murderer Kuntar," as he is known in Israel, and "the hero Samir," as he is known in Lebanon.

Despicable as it may seem to some, it would serve Israel well to understand both the psyche of a society that welcomed Kuntar back with open arms and a national celebration, as well as the aftermath of a diplomatic decision that has been heralded as a victory for Hezbollah chief Hassan Nasrallah specifically and Lebanon more generally.

The exchange marked a historic day for Nasrallah. Before the war between Israel and Lebanon, Hezbollah was merely a rogue entity vying for legitimacy within the panoply of nationalist and religious groups in Lebanon. The power struggle between Sunnis, Shiites, Christians and Druze ensured that the political spectrum remained fragmented and no one group had succeeded in uniting the people.

Kuntar's return to Beirut, though, was marked by national celebrations. Not only did Nasrallah and Hezbollah greet him, so, too, did the prime minister, president, cabinet ministers and, notably, representatives from the Druze, Sunni and Christian communities.

Nasrallah succeeded in weaving together nationalist and otherwise fragmented political blocs as he refrained from his usual alienating religious rhetoric. Rather, he described Kuntar's return as a military and political – and, notably, not ideological – victory. He bestowed national legitimacy on the cross-border raid that sparked the war between Lebanon and Israel, and by so doing, he has given legitimacy to Hezbollah's preeminent place in Lebanese politics.

Calls from within Lebanon to dismantle Hezbollah have vanished as the political spectrum has – albeit begrudgingly – acquiesced to the cult of personality surrounding Nasrallah and has unified behind him. Likewise, Nasrallah has united Lebanon in the demand for the repatriation of the Shebaa Farms, the small patch of land that Israel also claims.

If the blogosphere is any testament to the psyche of a people, questions of whether Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert made the right decision are pre-occupying Israelis and westerners alike. All of this seems, however, to be merely an extension of a simpler question that Israel has struggled with before: should it privilege what Olmert called its "moral duty" to return fallen soldiers, or should it emphasize the hypothetical danger posed by the return of a known terrorist.

This question is up for debate, but now that the deal is done, it's necessary to recognize how it will likely affect future diplomacy. The most immediate result will likely be seen in Israel's relationship with Hamas, which is currently holding the captured soldier Gilad Schalit. Hamas is demanding the release of hundreds of prisoners from Israeli jails and will likely be emboldened by Hezbollah's success. Using Schalit as a bargaining chip is tragic and makes his return all the more uncertain.

In the same week that the prisoner exchange heralded the prospect of future instability, Syrian President Bashar Assad gained international attention at a diplomatic conference in Paris. The new climate in the region harbours definite hazards, but it may also provide new opportunities.

One of the largest impediments to peace between Israel and Lebanon, as well as to peace between Israel and the Palestinians or Syria, has always been the schisms in Arab societies. Without popularly accepted and united centralized governments, no single national will can emerge in these nations. Nasrallah's new position atop Lebanese politics gives him the ability to legitimately speak for his people – and for peace, if he so chooses.

It also provides him with new obligations and, hopefully, new prudence and responsibility. Likewise, a strong Assad may prove to be a more able partner for peace. And talks with Hamas may unite the Palestinians. Only though dealing with a genuine national spokesperson, as the Hamas government may prove to be, can Israel hope to achieve any semblance of peace.

The Kirshner File

A new historical account of the Lodz ghetto

On Aug. 1, 1944, Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, the Eldest of the Jews in the Lodz ghetto, was officially told that it would be closed and that its 70,000 Jewish inhabitants would be deported at a rate of 5,000 per day starting two days later. The brusque announcement signalled the end of the last remaining ghetto in Nazi-occupied Poland, which had survived due to its status as a productive labour camp.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Sixty four years on, a new, gracefully written historical account of the ghetto, *Ghettostadt: Lodz and the Making of a Nazi City* (Harvard University Press), has been published. The author, Gordon J. Horwitz, is a Illinois Wesleyan University historian. The title is an allusion to German plans to transform Lodz, the centre of Poland's textile industry, into a modern, clean and orderly city inhabited solely by ethnic Germans.

By the outbreak of World War II, Lodz had a population of 670,000, of whom 59 per cent were Polish, 32 per cent were Jewish and nine per cent were Germans. With Lodz in Nazi hands, the overcrowded city was to be remade on the basis of the latest principles of urban planning. Neither Poles nor Jews were included in its "Aryan" future. The Poles would be expelled and resettled, while the Jews would be permanently removed.

When the Wehrmacht marched into Lodz on Sept. 8, 1939, a week after Germany's invasion of Poland, the conquerors were warmly welcomed by residents of German ancestry. Adolf Hitler, the German fuhrer, visited Lodz on Sept. 13, and his motorcade was rapturously received. Germany's victory ushered in a dark period of anti-Semitic restrictions, humiliations and violence, Horwitz notes. The strong, well-organized Jewish community – which had produced figures such as the cotton magnate Izrael Poznanski, the poet Julian Tuwim, the painter Arthur Szyk, the actor Szymon Dzigan and the pianist Arthur Rubinstein – had reason to be nervous. Within a month of Rumkowski's appointment as head of the Jewish Council – the Judenrat – on Oct. 13, the first of four major synagogues were set ablaze and Jews were forbidden to set foot on Piotrkowska Street, the most elegant thoroughfare, and subjected to severe curfews.

By this juncture, thousands of Jews had managed to escape, some to eastern Poland and much of the rest to the Soviet Union. The remaining 164,000 Jewish residents were subjected to ghettoization. As Horwitz points out, the Nazis regarded the ghetto as a temporary expedient and the Jews as a "pestilent boil" that would be "burned off," leaving no trace. On May 1, 1940, a month after Lodz was renamed Litzmannstadt in honour of a World War I German general, the ghetto, an area of only four square kilometres, was sealed off.

As these events unfolded, ethnic Germans from as close as Galicia and as far away as Latvia and Estonia were encouraged to settle in Lodz, which had already been annexed by Germany. The new settlers were granted immediate citizenship and housing and promised jobs, farms and businesses. Meanwhile, the city's streets were given German names.

Realizing that the ghetto's days were numbered, Rumkowski, a businessman who had been an insurance agent, a summer camp director and a manager of Jewish orphanages, devised a plan to extend its life. He suggested that its contingent of 8,000 to 10,000 skilled workers, ranging from tailors and shoemakers to carpenters and plumbers, could be made available to the German economy.

If Germany supplied the necessary raw materials, Jewish craftsmen, working in ghetto factories at meagre wages determined by the authorities, could turn them into essential finished goods from army uniforms and shoes to metal articles and gloves. The Germans, having accepted his proposal, regarding the ghetto as a revenue-generating enterprise. The workers and their families would receive a bare minimum of rations, just enough to keep the workshops humming in 12-hour shifts. As long as the ghetto was not a drain on the resources of the city, it would be kept going. The ghetto's administrator, Hans Biebow, a coffee importer from Bremen who personally profited from the arrangement, was an ardent exponent of exploiting cheap Jewish labour.

Rumkowski was pleased, too, but as he amassed power and assumed the trappings of an autocrat, his self-confidence clouded his judgment. In May 1941, at the peak of his powers, he paid a "state visit" to the Warsaw ghetto, presenting himself as a man who could lead in difficult times. Adam Czerniakow, his Warsaw counterpart, was not impressed. In his diary, he described Rumkowski as "conceited and witless." Returning from Warsaw, whose ghetto would be levelled in 1943, Rumkowski made light of the abysmal conditions in Lodz. "Go to Warsaw and you'll see what starvation means," he said. "With me, you have the Garden of Eden."

Not exactly.

Disease, mainly in the form of dysentery, was taking its toll, as was malnutrition. According to Horwitz,11,437 ghetto dwellers died in 1941. In the following year, 43,500 succumbed to hunger and disease. Amid the appalling deprivation, German delegations visited the ghetto On June 12, 1941, the most important visitor, SS chieftain Heinrich Himmler, arrived in a green BMW convertible bearing the license plate SS-1. Rumkowski, attired in a white Panama hat and white gloves, met him. Himmler asked how things were going, and Rumkowski replied, "Everything is in the best of order, herr minister." When Himmler inquired whether there was sufficient food, he said, "The workers have enough to eat."

Mordechai Chaim Rumkowski, left, white hair, meets SS chieftain Heinrich Himmler as he sits in his car.

Horwitz says that both sides were satisfied with the visit, but within six months, the Nazis began to deport thousands of Jews to Chelmno. Among the deportees were newly arrived Jews from Germany, Austria and Luxemburg. All told, 55,000 Jews, including many children, were deported in 1942, leaving only the fit. By January 1943, he adds, slightly more than half of the ghetto's original inhabitants had been deported to their deaths. With one notable exception, the ghetto was spared deportations in that year.

But 1944 would be different. The SS, eager to incorporate the ghetto into its economic and administrative domain, launched a campaign to wrest control of the ghetto from Biebow and his associates. Biebow resisted, going to great lengths to ward off SS encroachments. Addressing 400 Jewish officials, he spoke of the need to create a "good impression" and eliminate signs of disorder in public settings.

Biebow, however, fought a losing battle. In June, Himmler ordered the ghetto to be liquidated. Biebow flew into a rage after one of his colleagues bypassed him and instructed Rumkowski to set aside workers to clear rubble in German cities bombed by the Allies. Venting his anger on Rumkowski, Biebow badly beat him. Rumkowski required hospitalization for facial wounds.

Deportations commenced in June as the first Jews were shipped to Chelmno. By July 15, some 7,000 Jews had been deported with the assistance of ghetto policemen. Amid the chaos, Biebow sweetly assured Jews – whom he referred to as "my Jews" – that they had nothing to fear and were being relocated to work camps. In fact, he played an active role in the deportations. Rumkowski's turn came on Aug. 28, when he and his relatives were deported to Auschwitz. Horwitz brands Rumkowski as an egotist, but does not condemn him, saying that he "did not hasten to do the Germans' bidding" and was powerless to influence their genocidal policy. By all accounts, only 5,000 Lodz Jews, including my mother and father, survived. Biebow, convicted of murder, was hanged in Lodz in April 1947. Call it, if you will, poetic justice.

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On Campus

U of T president visits three Israeli universities

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Over the past few years, University of Toronto president David Naylor has had to contend with expressions of frustration from the Jewish community about his reluctance to ban Israeli Apartheid Week events from his school, but this past spring he showed his ongoing support for Israeli universities with a week-long visit to the Jewish state.

In May, Naylor travelled to Israel to take part in meetings with university leaders, government officials and private sector leaders in an effort to learn from Israelis how to better commercialize academic research.

David Naylor

He visited Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, and the Weizmann Institute of Science.

"The main goal of the visit was to understand how Israel in general, and its academic institutions in particular, has been so successful at commercializing research done at universities and in research hospitals," Naylor said, adding that he took the time to meet with the rector and president of Hebrew U, with which U of T has an inter-university memorandum of agreement, and he tried to create stronger bonds with Technion and Weizmann.

Naylor's visit came a year after he wrote a letter to Britain's University and College Union to urge that country's largest professors' union not to recommend that its members boycott Israeli academic institutions.

"The University of Toronto is firmly opposed to an academic boycott of Israeli institutions. Last year, in criticizing the misguided call by the British Universities and Colleges Union for a boycott debate and vote, I indicated that we are not only fundamentally opposed to cutting ties, but were very likely to increase our interactions not only with Israeli universities, but with a wide range of sister universities all over the world," Naylor said in an e-mail to *The CJN* last week.

"This [trip] was a chance to put those words into action, and I was, therefore, proud to visit three outstanding Israeli universities."

Naylor also referred to Israeli Apartheid Week, a week-long anti-Israel event that originated at U of T and has spread to many more campuses worldwide.

"This trip underscored something I've suspected for a while, namely, that Israeli Apartheid Week is ultimately irrelevant to the politics of the Middle East. The future of Israel and its neighbours will not be decided by a small group of activists who talk mostly to themselves on a few North American university campuses," he said.

He added that it's best for the Jewish community to ignore the event rather that generate free publicity for it, and instead support Jewish students at U of T who present Israel in a different light.

During his visit to Israel, Naylor, along with representatives from other Canadian institutions – including University of British Columbia president Stephen Toope and Eliot Phillipson, president of the Canada Foundation for Innovation – sat in on more than 20 meetings in Jerusalem, Rehovot, Haifa and Tel Aviv to understand more about the commercialization of academic research in Israel.

"The science I saw and heard about was world class, and the commercialization environment is better developed than ours here in Canada... We're looking at how we can adapt some of the commercialization models in Israeli universities, and more generally, whether Canada might borrow from Israel's experience in building a high-tech economy," he said.

"We got exactly what I hoped we'd get – lots of open exchanges with smart colleagues, so that we could better understand the transformation of the Israeli economy. Remember, just a few decades ago, Israeli's exports were overwhelmingly agricultural. Now Israel and Canada go back and forth in taking second place for the number of companies listed on NASDAQ, and the country has a booming high-tech sector with massive exports."

Naylor said he was impressed with the progress Israel has made in such a short time, but he said he also really liked the people he met.

"They were direct and warm. There was a palpable seriousness of purpose – not surprising given the history of the region – but the colleagues in general didn't take themselves seriously. That was refreshing, because academics in North America can be pretty earnest."

Naylor said that he isn't worried about protests that may arise from a "tiny, but vocal minority" about his decision to partner with Israeli universities, because the vast majority of the U of T campus community understands the importance of academic exchange.

"They may or may not agree with all the domestic and foreign policies of government A or B or C. But that doesn't stop people at U of T from building institutional bridges and positive personal relationships with their colleagues in other countries."

On Campus

Canadian university presidents visit Jewish state

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The presidents of six Canadian universities visited Israel recently.

Their one-week tour took place last month and culminated in a Canada Day reception at the Canadian ambassador's residence in Herzliya, a Tel Aviv suburb. It was the fourth mission of its kind since 1993. The mission was co-hosted by two Canadian academics, University of Toronto law professor Ed Morgan and York University historian Irving Abella, both of whom have led previous missions.

Participating on the trip were David Johnston, Sheldon Levy, Luc Vinet, Peter MacKinnon, Allan Rock and William Barker, the respective presidents of the University of Waterloo, Ryerson University, Université de Montréal, the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Ottawa and University of King's College in Halifax.

The president of McGill University, Heather Monroe-Blum, joined them for one day.

"The purpose of the trip was to increase the familiarity of Canadian academics with the breadth and depth of the Israeli university scene, with a view to fostering faculty and student exchanges, graduate student fellowship opportunities, joint research projects and collaborative teaching and scholarships," explained Morgan, a former national president of Canadian Jewish Congress.

Abella, who is also a former CJC national president, said the objective was three-fold: to introduce the Canadians to their Israeli counterparts, to allow them to see first hand the quality of education and research at Israeli universities, and to encourage the creation of joint research and exchange programs.

The visitors met the presidents and senior administrators of Tel Aviv University, Hebrew University, Bar-Ilan University, Haifa University, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, the Weizmann Institute, the Technion and the Herzliya Interdisciplinary Center.

In addition, they conferred with officials of Al-Quds, a Palestinian university in eastern Jerusalem.

Abella hoped that the presidents would be able to visit Palestinian universities in the West Bank, but the idea was scotched when the Canadian Embassy expressed concerns about their safety.

Morgan said the trip generally focused on education, culture, arts, science and technology rather than politics.

"Canada and Israel share much in terms of education policy, struggles with public funding of universities, the balance between broad access to higher education and academic excellence, a focus on fostering culture and cultural industries, and an open minded and liberal educational environment," he explained.

He added, "In a shrinking world, there is much more to be gained on both sides from increased exchanges."

The trip yielded immediate results, Abella disclosed.

Tel Aviv University and the Université de Montréal signed a student exchange accord in the sciences, while Haifa University and the University of Ottawa agreed to launch an exchange program in law.

In the past, Canadian and Israeli universities have signed agreements establishing joint research programs.

Speaking generally, Abella said such trips are effective because they expose influential Canadians who have never visited Israel to the fact that life goes on and flourishes in a country that is under constant threat.

Visitors are also amazed by the level of sophisticated research conducted at Israeli universities and struck by the perception that universities in both countries face similar problems.

Levy, not a first-time visitor to Israel, said he was able to "talk through" common issues with his Israeli and Palestinian counterparts and explore opportunities for relations with the Technion.

He seemed particularly bowled over by the Weizmann Institute. "Impressed would be an understatement," he observed.

Johnston, who has also visited Israel before, described last month's trip as "a very interesting followup," saying he expected to build on previous exchanges.

The trip was partially financed by the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) and private donors, but participants contributed toward their own travel expenses, Morgan said.

Susan Davis, CIJA's executive vice-president responsible for campus advocacy, said these trips build relationships between Canadian and Israeli universities.

"That's the primary outcome we strive for. We also want [participants] to understand Israel beyond the Arab-Israeli conflict."

First visit, first impressions

William Barker, the president of University of King's College in Halifax, joined the study tour that took several Canadian university presidents to Israel last month. CJN reporter Sheldon Kirshner asked him for his impressions.

Canadian Jewish News: *Was this your first trip to Israel?*
William Barker: This was my first visit to Israel. I was struck by the way the new and the old were layered, by the mixture in the city of so much history and energized modern life, by the sudden silence on Shabbat, by the extraordinary development of the land and the cities, by the stillness of the desert, by the small size of a country which has figured so largely in history and in our daily news, by the number of young men and women in uniform comfortably carrying their weapons in public places.

I was surprised at the remarkable number of other people visiting the country, either on the Birthright [Israel] trip or some other organized tour. We ran into a very large deputation of African university presidents, and we heard of another deputation of university presidents from the United States. Israel is clearly very interested in being known.

We did a lot in six or so days, visiting all of the publicly supported universities (Tel Aviv, Bar-Ilan, Weizmann Institute, Hebrew University, Technion, Haifa, Ben Gurion) and one private school (Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya). We went to the Dead Sea and Galilee, met with President Shimon Peres and with Dorit Beinisch, president of the Supreme Court.

One of several high points was hearing Daniel Zajfman, president of the Weizmann Institute, talk about the way he and his colleagues do research:

- curiosity-driven, with secure long-term funding commitments. And also extraordinary from such a high-level institution.
- A commitment to high school education, to bring along the next generation.

I am an English professor by training, have little understanding of the scientific research, but I was inspired by the vision of education and research that Dr Zajfman presented. This is a model that can be followed in every discipline.

I was also astonished to see how Hebrew has become a first language after only a century or so of use as a working language of day-to-day interactions. And I was impressed by the support the universities and public institutions have received from international donors. An amusing moment was standing in the Nancy Reagan Plaza in front of the Frank Sinatra Student Center at Hebrew University.

CJN: *Do you already have exchanges with Israeli universities? Did you sign new ones?*
Barker: We have no exchanges, though a number of our students have gone to the Rothberg School at Hebrew University. We wish to increase the flow because we have a number of students who, because of heritage or academic interest, wish to attend. There is faculty interest as well. The main challenge for the students is the cost, and we're trying to find ways to help with the expenses.

CJN: *Is there anything you would like to add?*
Barker: This was an extraordinary chance to have a first look at an amazing nation and to reflect on the way education can be made an effective instrument as part of a larger political project. It was clear, from the many shades on the political spectrum and the abundant range of opinions, that Israeli education has had a major role in generating debate and thought in the country, as well as material success. We were also exposed to the funding problems, so all was not perfect. We heard about the way the system favoured some groups over others. I appreciated the honesty and being allowed to listen in to some of the debate.

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Max Zuchter ז"ל

We wish to express condolences to the family, Anne Zuchter, Lorraine & David Berk, Barbara and Martin Greenglass, Gloria and Ken Hershenfield and all the grandchildren and great grandchildren that gave him much love, joy and support during his almost 88 years.

He will also be sadly missed by those he mentored at the catering company that he founded over 55 years ago. Many customers and organizations looked to him for guidance and direction in planning important life cycle events and Simchas. He brought integrity and professionalism to kosher catering industry and earned respect from the entire Jewish community.

May the memories he left us serve as inspiration to his family, friends and those he touched.

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Jewish Life

It's summer, but not vacation

Class Act
By Daniel Held

Having transitioned directly from being a student to a teacher, I have never known a year without a summer break. I feel a sense of loss for my friends who left school and entered the "real" world of work with monotonous summers of commutes to the office, days staring at computer screens and the mundane pace of a never-ending year.

To me, however, July and August have never been summer vacation. To view them as such would trivialize their importance. Summer is a time of exploration and growth, a time when youth are challenged to learn about themselves and the world around them.

As a child, I spent my summers at camp. In my younger years at day camps, I learned about computers and mechanics. I played sports and learned to canoe. When I reached the age of overnight camp, I discovered friendships that can only be made while camping in Algonquin Park or singing in the dining hall on Shabbat.

During high school, I spent part of each summer working and part of it traveling with my family. Each summer, we embarked on a new adventure, bringing us closer as a family and teaching my sister and me about history, geography and independence. Wherever we travelled, my parents made sure that we visited the local Jewish community – finding kosher food, the synagogue and speaking with the local Jews. Meeting Jews from around the world taught us not only about other communities, but it also taught us much about our own Jewish identities.

One of my most meaningful experiences was the summer after Grade 11. I spent it travelling with 27 other teens. We spent 10 days in Poland learning about the vibrancy of Jewish life before the Holocaust and the horrors that ensued. Next, we travelled to Ukraine where we ran a summer camp for local youth, sharing with them our passion and creativity. Finally, after more than a month in eastern Europe, we arrived in Israel to tour, relax and experience the country.

All these years later, I continue to return to my experiences on that trip, recalling the stories, the people I encountered and the lessons I learned. Throughout the trip, I was challenged to stretch myself and to grow toward a more complex understanding of my place in the Jewish world. I continue to deconstruct the experiences, and I know that the challenges of the entire experience have deeply affected my life.

It's this element of challenge that I believe is the most critical part of summer experiences, and of experiential education in general. By challenging our youth, they are forced to develop skills in critical thinking while applying new experiences to their own lives. Rather than simply participating in an experience such as camp, when challenged, teens stretch themselves farther and explore the meaning of these experiences.

As an educator, I want to shape experiences that challenge teens in this way. Recently, I have spent my summers working at Genesis at Brandeis University, a program that compels teens to think about the place of Judaism in their lives. Genesis brings together a group of teens spanning the religious, geographic and socio-economic spectrums of Judaism. By encountering people who are different than themselves – by talking with them, living with them and planning Shabbat with them – participants are challenged to learn both about others and about themselves. Each summer, I have seen teens leave the experience with an enriched sense of themselves and their relationship with Judaism.

If we view the summer as a vacation from the learning of the school year, we sacrifice some of the most educational, memorable and challenging experiences of a child's education. Summers must be cherish and nurtured, planned and savoured as times of growth in ways we often don't get during the school year.

After all, not everyone can be as fortunate as educators, who have a new summer every year.

Summer reading

Books
Bernard Baskin

Suddenly, we are in the midst of summer. There is more time for reading. But what books?

"The trick is finding which [novel], among the millions now accessible, fits that bill. For you, that is. And that, as Virginia Woolf told us, is something no one can tell you. Or, if they do, ignore them," writes John Sutherland, a professor of modern English literature at University College in London, England.

What is meat for one is poison for another. We must discover our own books and make our own spiritual friendships.

However, I feel comfortable in suggesting some older books that have attained the patina of widespread popularity and acceptance. If you haven't read them, they remain new.

Perhaps in the dim past you have read some of the familiar volumes I suggest. But they cry out for rereading. Now, older and wiser, you can bring to them mature insights, keener understanding and enhanced appreciation.

What follows is a list of 10 well-known titles of Jewish interest.

1. *The Adventures of Augie March*, Saul Bellow

An account of a complex character who becomes embroiled in a series of exotic escapades. This is a brilliant, penetrating narrative of an entire era and its major concerns and foibles. (Also: *Mr. Sammler's Planet*).

2. *Catch-22*, Joseph Heller

War is presented as a form of institutional madness in this funny, but often deadly serious novel. After flying 48 missions in World War II, the protagonist wants to go home. But first, caught in the twisted logic of the war machine, he must prove he is insane. This frenetic satire on the excesses of bureaucracy has been canonized as a cult classic.

3. *The Plot Against America*, Philip Roth

This suspenseful and alarming narrative answers the question – what might have happened if aviator Charles Lindbergh had been elected president of the United States in 1940? The author renders his premise plausible with a masterly interweaving of personal detail and public events. (Also: *Patrimony* and *The Human Stain*)

4. *The Assistant*, Bernard Malamud

In a small, grocery store in Brooklyn, N.Y., a Jewish family struggles to eke out a modest living. Ultimately, their gentile assistant makes a startling decision that transforms him and those around him. (Also: *The Magic Barrel and Other Stories*).

5. *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis*, G. Bassani

Set in the Italian Fascist era of the 1920s and '30s, a wealthy, cultured Jewish family sees their world shrink to the size of a small beloved garden.

6. *Solomon Gursky Was Here*, Mordecai Richler

This is a thinly disguised take off on the early years of the Bronfman family. It includes Jewish characters exploring 19th-century Arctic regions and confronting anti-Semitism in Quebec. (Also: *St. Urbain's Horseman* and *Joshua Then and Now*).

7. *Collected Stories*, I.B. Singer

The best known and most successful Yiddish writer of our day combined the occult and erotic with a narrative style that disguises a complex and disturbing vision. (Also: *Satan in Goray* and *Gimpel the Fool*).

8. *Badenheim 1939*, Aharon Applefield

Translated from the Hebrew, this haunting story chronicles the final season in an Austrian summer resort where worldly acculturated Jews "pooh-pooh" the notion that Hitler is a threat.

9. *Red Cavalry*, Isaac Babel

Before he was murdered by Stalin, Babel served in the ranks of Marshall Budyonny's anti-Semitic Cossack division in the Russo-Polish war of 1921-22. This book is a series of unforgettable vignettes – an early form of war reportage – by a writer of singular power.

10. *The Second Scroll*, A.M. Klein

Klein was one of Canada's outstanding poets. In this, his only novel, he describes a fellow poet who is sent to Israel to fashion an anthology of modern Hebrew verse. His task is intertwined with the search for a heroic relative who epitomizes the historic spirit of the Jewish people.

Highlighting a double standard

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Perhaps no other nation other than Nazi Germany has sufficiently recognized the power of propaganda. The Nazis even went so far as to elevate it to a ministry and appoint Joseph Goebbels as its minister. We Jews could take a few lessons in this art of propaganda.

The world, and in particular the media, love to condemn the State of Israel for its treatment of the Palestinians, specifically for the "ethnic cleansing" of the Palestinians after the establishment of the state.

The reality is that during the time of the British mandate in 1947, there were some 750,000 Arabs in Palestine. Today, there are more than five million Palestinians. This does not include another four million people worldwide who claim to be of Palestinian descent. The question is how can a people claim to have been cleansed when they have such a robust rate of population growth that it's double the rate of their immediate geographic neighbours?

The situation is quite the reverse when looking at the population of Jews in Arab lands. Jews had lived in some countries for more than 2,000 years – predating, in fact, the Arabs and making them more indigenous than the Arab population. Despite this, Jews found themselves in a situation where the official policies were against them.

In 1951, for instance, the government of Iraq outlawed Zionism. Jews were forced to sign declarations against Zionism. Egyptian Jews in 1967 were persecuted and tortured, and their property was confiscated. In that same year, Libya "temporarily" expelled its Jewish population. Each individual was allowed one suitcase and a total of $50. This was followed in 1970 with new laws confiscating all Jewish assets.

In Syria and Iran, the government systematically and summarily nationalized Jewish-owned companies, causing the immediate flight of families, often mid-supper while watching in horror the fate of their companies on the evening news. Even in such places as politically moderate as Morocco, the sentiment on the street was such that Jews felt threatened there, too.

These virtual expulsions of Jews from Arab lands and the confiscation of their assets are only now gaining recognition.

On April 1, the United States Congress recognized Jewish refugees from Arab countries for the first time, and this month, a two-day conference took place in London that highlighted the situation of Jews who were either forced to flee or left due to persecution.

The conference was organized by a group called Justice for Jews from Arab Countries (JJAC), a coalition of 77 Jewish communities and organizations in 20 countries. The highlight of the conference was the opportunity to formally address the British House of Lords.

This was one more important step in bringing to light the sad reality of historic communities that have vanished, and the human rights violations of individuals at the hands of their Arab hosts.

Jews and the Olympics, Pt. 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Thousands of athletes will soon be arriving in Beijing to compete in the 29th Summer Olympics. Although Jewish athletes have shared in Olympic glory, for Jews, the memory of the Olympics also includes racism, violence and death. Today, a look at that history.

The Jews in Sports website has created biographies for 99 Jewish athletes who have competed in the modern games, everybody from Argentina's Juan Alberto Espil (men's basketball, Atlanta 1996) to Uzbekistan's Oleg Veretelnikov (decathlon, Sydney 2000.) **[tinyurl.com/6xmtn2]**

One of the stars of the first modern Games was Alfred Flatow of Germany, who brought home three gold and a silver for excellence in gymnastics in 1896. Those four medals tied Flatow for the second-most in Athens. The International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame lists the medal count for every Jewish Olympian from Athens 1896 to Athens 2004. **[tinyurl.com/3keu8h]**

Two of the best-known Jewish Olympians competed almost half a century apart. Britain's Harold Abrahams won gold in the 100-metre final at the 1924 Paris Olympics. Abrahams' story is well-known thanks to the 1981 film *Chariots of Fire*. **[tinyurl.com/5oag9]** The United States' Mark Spitz was the first athlete to win seven gold medals in a single Olympic Games. **[tinyurl.com/2cmvf2]** You can watch a short documentary about Spitz's Munich golds at the Olympic Games website. **[tinyurl.com/6h4crg]**

Unfortunately, for Jews the memory of the Olympics is not always pleasant. One of the greatest blots on the history of the Games is the Nazi Germany's hosting of the 1936 Summer Olympics. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum has a comprehensive site detailing the Games starting in 1931 with the International Olympic Committee's awarding of the 11th Olympiad to Berlin. Although Hitler was elated with the Games and German athletes captured the most medals overall, the site notes that 13 Jewish athletes and 10 African-American competitors (including Jesse Owens) were medalists at the Games. **[tinyurl.com/6jqstk]**

And of course, there was the tragedy of the 1972 Munich Olympics, when Palestinian terrorists murdered 11 members of the Israeli Olympic delegation. The Olympics maintains a very large website, but I couldn't find a memorial to the slain athletes on it. There is one paragraph titled "The Games Must Go On!" that mentions the murders, the temporary suspension of the Games and the resolve of then-IOC president Avery Brundage that the Olympics continue. **[tinyurl.com/3jp98]** Fortunately, the Olympic Committee of Israel maintains an online memorial. **[tinyurl.com/43lxfh]** To learn more about the massacre, I recommend a comprehensive section put together by *Sports Illustrated* to mark the 30th anniversary of the killings. **[tinyurl.com/356mrs]**

Israel first sent a delegation to the Helsinki Olympics in 1952, but it wasn't until Barcelona in 1992 that Yael Arad and Oren Samdja took home the country's first medals – both in judo. **[tinyurl.com/4fl6zs]** Israel's medal count now stands at six, with windsurfer Gal Fridman winning the country's first gold in 2004. Nothing beats the pride on Fridman's face as the first notes of *Hatikvah* were played in Athens. **[tinyurl.com/26te35]** And in a lovely article, *Time*'s Jeff Chu called the gold medal win – three decades after the Munich murders – "Israel's Olympic Healing." **[tinyurl.com/5k772j]**

If you're not a high performance sailor or cut out to compete in the 100-metre dash, there may still is a sport for you. A couple of sites have suggested events in which Jews could perform swifter, higher, stronger. Ohr Somayach proposes:

- kippah frisbee;
- the 18-blessing lip-sprint;
- the clean-and-jerk Torah lift,
- and underwater shofar blowing. **[tinyurl.com/4rx62l]**

And if Stuart Spector had his way, Jewish events would include: **[tinyurl.com/2cvrn]**

- Balance beam: The accountant or bookkeeper that balances my mother's chequebook in the shortest time wins.
- Oyga vault: A sound-enhanced pole vault competition, in which the vaulter gains extra points for exclaiming, "Oy, such tsuris this is causing me!"

My favourite – it must be a truly gruelling competition – is the naches shlep, in which proud bubbies and zaides have two minutes to boast about their grandchildren.

* * *

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Greater Toronto Area

Charity needs help to keep on helping

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

As the only staff member of United Chesed of Toronto (UCT), executive administrator Ruth Rebeck fears that she's not doing enough for those in need.

She needs help to keep up with the demand.

The not-for-profit charity, founded in 2001 by Toronto dentist Brian Price, assists members of the Jewish community who are experiencing financial hardship or living in poverty, but don't meet the requirements of other social service agencies.

"They might own a heavily mortgaged home, work at a low salary, or not be landed immigrants. There are lots of reasons," Rebeck said.

In 2007, she said, she circulated about $500,000 worth of food coupons, furniture, medical items such as wheelchairs, and appliances, with financial support of about $35,000.

But with UCT's only funding coming from one private donor, some "dribs and drabs" from other donors, and with help from Mazon Canada, "we are living close to the wire," Rebeck said.

The only way UCT can hope to keep up with the growing need, she said, is if it gets enough financial support to open a formal office and hire two support staff members.

"Then we would be able to give more time and energy to each person in need."

In a typical day, she said, she receives at least 10 to 15 calls, and one call can result in her making a minimum of three other calls to deal with the issue.

"And that doesn't count the e-mails that pour in from people asking for help or offering donations."

By the time people approach UCT, Rebeck said, they are desperate. "They've tried all other options and they want to talk. Each call takes a long time."

One such call came from a father with a handicapped son whose van had broken down. "E-mails were sent out to see if someone had an old van to donate. This situation has been going on for about six weeks and several negotiations have broken down for various reasons. We are trying to help this man who is desperate because he has no vehicle. So far, this has created about 20 phone calls and hundreds of e-mails to the network."

Another call came in about a family of five who are dealing with the loss of their home and business. "We managed to get them monthly food coupons with the help of an organization on our network, we sent out resumes for the parents, and we organized free family therapy. We had to help them keep their bodies and souls together," Rebeck said.

"I could work around the clock. I'm helping people find jobs, I'm advertising jobs, I'm dealing with furniture donations, and I'm helping them find doctors and obtaining medications. The list goes on."

With the help of an assistant and a clerk, she could get a lot more done, she said. "We need to expand in order to cope with the ever-increasing needs of those living below the poverty line."

For more information, call Rebeck at 905-707-0233 or visit the website at www.unitedchesed.com.

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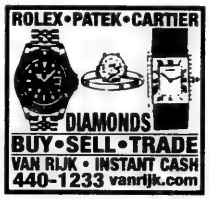

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אהוד ברק: "ישראל לא תהסס לתקוף את איראן".
אהוד אולמרט: "נסראללה מפחד פחד מוות מישראל".
האם זה החום הישראלי הקופת, או נעיף טפשות שעבר במערכת הקידוד של חדר השיבות של הממשלה?
מה מקור היוהרה הזאת? ההצלחה הכבירה במלחמת לבנון השניה?
המנהל היעיל והמצליח של הממשלה?
במה הם שונים מאחמינג'אד שיוצא בהצהרות כאלה כל יומיים וכל העולם לועג לה? האם עד כדי כך השתלט הלֶבֶנט על האנשים האלה?
אם לישראל יש כוח הרתעה אמיתי-לא ההצהרות העלובות האלה ידועו את האיראנים ואת חיזבאללה, אלא מעשים, כגון השמדת הכור הסורי בחיתולו.
דיבורים ליצנים כאלה של ברק, מופז ואולמרט משינים לדעתי את ההיפך: מנהיגים ערבים מצהירים הצהרות כוב כל חייהם, ועכשיו הם מחייכים ואומרים לעצמם: ואללה, גם הישראלים תצרוש כמונו.
ברוך הבא למזרח התיכון. אבל שישאר בינינו.

כלבים בתפריט

לפני שנתיים היינו בשנחאי וגילינו לתמהוננו שאחד הדליקטסים האהובים על הסינים הוא בשר כלב, והוא מתנוסס לראווה בתפריט שמוצג בכניסה למסעדות יקרות.
ארקיי, אוקיי, מה אני עושה מזה עניין-צרפתים אוכלים צפרדעים, וכשהייתי בהולנד בגיל ארבע עשרה עם תזמורת סימפתית גדל'ע כמעט אימדתי את ההכרה כשגילתי ששמו לנו בשר סוס על הצלחת. אז למה אני מספר לכם על זה דווקא עכשיו?
כי אם תסעו לאולימפיאדה בבייגין-לא תמצאו בשר כלב במסעדות, כי הסינים הסירו אותו מן התפריטים. הם גם סילקו את העניים מהרחובות, הפסיקו זמנית מפעלים שמכסים את העיר בעשן, וקרוב לודאי שסין תיראה כמו דנמרק-ידידותית, אוהבת אדם, ממש בתבונידה. וזה אחד המקומות הכי יוזעתיים בכדור הארץ בכל מה שנוגע לזכויות האזרח.
לפחות לכלבים יהיו שלושה שבועות של חופש.

מה שלמדתי מאלן מינץ

לפני מספר שבועות, בנסיעי לעבודה, שמעתי ברדיו על שלושה צעירים שמכתימים הוגדסקה לתוך נתל והם נהרגו. אלה הן הודעות של יום ביומו, ובעקבותיהן באה תמיד רשימת שמות שלא אומרת בדרך כלל דבר. אלא שהפעם היהיתי שם שם אחד: קוֹדי מינץ, ילד מלא חיים ששיחק עם בְּנֵי הוקי במשך שמונה שנים.
מקי יומיים-בבית ההלוויות על סיטלס, קהל רב אבל צער על החיים הצעירים האלה שנגדעו. ואז עלה להספיד אביו של קוֹדי, אלן מינץ, וכל כלי התכונתי לרע מכל, למזעזע מכל. ואז קרה נס: בעשר הדקות הבאות צחק הקהל הגדול מכל לב, כשאלן משתף אותנו בדקות המצחיקות והנפלאות שהיו לו עם קוֹדי. אינני יודע מאיפה לקח אלן את הכוח הפלאי הזה, אבל הוא הראה לי בעוצמה רבה את מהות המושג to celebrate his life
אני מעלם לא נכחתי באזירה שכזאת, והיא גרמה לי להתפעמות אמיתית ולתובנה חדשה איך יכול אדם לנַשֵּׁך ולהשלים עם אובדן איום שכזה. אלן לא ניסה ליפות את הדברים. הוא גם אמר בגילוי לב שמבחינות רבות מותו של בנו האהוב מסיים את חייו שלו. עם זאת מצא דרך לחגוג את חייו של הילד בדרך שעזרה לכולנו, ודרך התגובה שלנו לעזור גם לו עצמו. תודה לך מקרב לב, אלן.

מילה חדשה בעברית:

תודה לשמתה ומר על החדשה הבאה מהאקדמיה ללשון עברית:
מעתה ואילך אל תאמר שוחד, אלא אמור **דמי קדימה**.
אבל שישאר בינינו.

Kvutza reunion will recall 'much-loved camp'

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

Some 70 years ago, the Canadian Labour Zionist Youth movement set up a chain of summer camps with the intention of teaching its values to young Jews across the country.

This September, alumni of Ontario's Camp Kvutza will gather in Toronto to share memories and rekindle old friendships as they remember their summer experiences of yore.

In keeping with its founders' philosophy, Camp Kvutza – which was located on the northeastern shores of Lake Erie in Lowbanks, Ont., before it closed in 1965 – was unlike other summer camps.

A spartan, kibbutz-like affair, Kvutza campers were taught to appreciate the values of hard work, love for Israel (with an eye on encouraging aliyah) and on finding creative ways to entertain themselves.

Despite their less-than-glamourous surroundings, Kvutza campers were some of the happiest around. This, according to Tobi "Pidgy" Gordon, 62, who is on the organizing committee for this year's reunion.

Gordon's grandfather was a member of the Farband and helped organize the camp in the 1940s, and she was a camper there from 1950 to 1963.

She said her camping experiences helped shape the woman she is today.

"A lot of my lingering feeling [from Camp Kvutza] is the memory of Jewish cultural influence… love of folk-dancing, singing," she told *The CJN* in a recent interview.

Another important lesson learned at Kvutza was to value people over objects.

"The camp wasn't about things, it was about friendships and people," Gordon added. "I was lucky I was there during its heyday."

Today, Gordon writes in depth about her experiences and memories of camp on her blog, Kvutza Memories (kvutzamemories.blogspot.com).

Invitations to the reunion went out via e-mail earlier this year, and Gordon said the organizing committee expects anywhere from 200 to 300 people to attend.

So far, nearly 160 "Kvutzaniks" from around the United States and Canada have responded to the online invitation.

But there is no cap to the number of attendees, Gordon said.

According to Naomi Fromstein (neé Talesnick), another member of the reunion's organizing committee and an ex-camper, Kvutza helped kids "develop individual talent, leadership capabilities, confidence and self-reliance."

Fromstein said she made a promise to herself that she would organize a Kvutza reunion one day. Now that she's helped bring it to fruition, the anticipation of seeing old friends has made her giddy with excitement.

"Kvutza's programming… was marvellous, creative and crazy!" she wrote in an e-mail. "The staff would wake the campers up during the night, drag us half asleep to the waterfront, orchard or baseball field… to launch whatever the Maccabiah-like program was that they had planned for that year. We were divided into teams, competed, lost our voices from cheering like maniacs, and had an absolute blast. Even now, as I write over 40 years later, I feel a gush of the thrill that we experienced during those times."

The camp also turned out some high-profile, creative people.

One such product of the camp is Teme Kernerman, a renowned instructor of Israeli folk-dance both in Canada and abroad.

Kernerman, who joined Kvutza as a counsellor in the mid-1950s, will attend the reunion and is also on its planning committee. She credits the camp with paving the way to her future.

"Kvutza was the place that initiated my journey into dance," she said, recalling how the camp's focus on cultural dance events forced her to learn the art that would later become her passion.

"I went in as an arts and crafts teacher and came out as a dance instructor," she said. "At Kvutza, we had nothing but our creativity. This made everyone more involved."

In addition, one of the camp's earliest directors, Michel Herzog, now a nonagenarian living in New York, is rumoured to be attending the reunion, Gordon said.

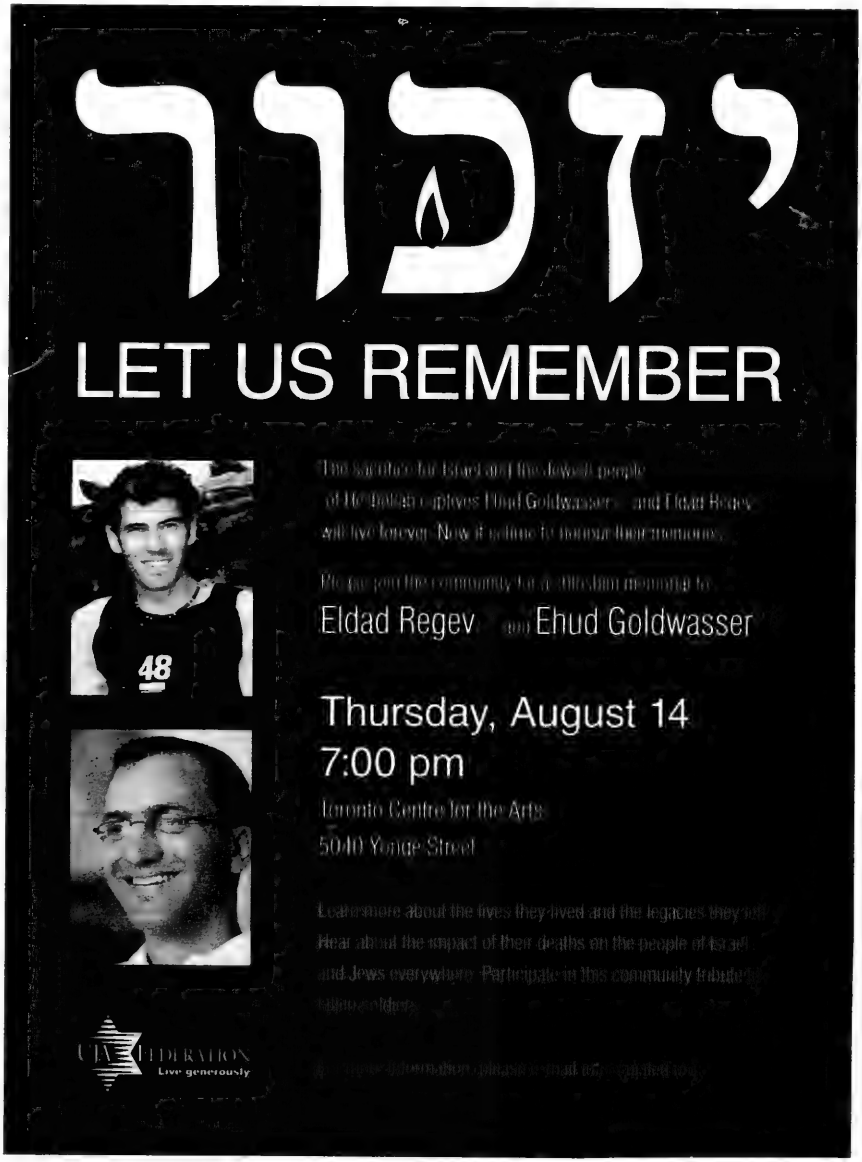
The Camp Kvutza reunion will take place at Bialik Hebrew Day School 2760 Bathurst St., on Sunday, Sept. 21 at 1 p.m.

The Kvutza organizing committee chose the school because that's where the original Habonim Labour Zionist offices were housed, and because "every summer the campers gathered in the Viewmount parking lot to board the buses that took us to re-congregate with our friends at our much-loved camp," Fromstein said.

Camp Kvutza's dining hall or "chadar", where campers gathered to eat their meals, quaff down "bug juice" and assemble for various cultural events. [Lori (Lewis) Singer photo]

The reunion also coincides with Israel's 60th birthday year and seemed a fitting time to hold it, she added.

For more information or to RSVP, e-mail campkvutza@gmail.com.



Prisoner exchange exposes media blindspot

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Media analysts have long observed that Israel tends to receive more positive coverage when it's seen to be a victim. However, while the media's focus on the recent prisoner exchange between Israel and Hezbollah was both extensive and intense – for instance, CBC ran it as the lead item on *The National* on July 16 – it went far beyond the usual "good versus evil" storyline.

The difference in coverage was due to an unusual factor: sheer incomprehension. Journalists in Israel, along with their editors back in Canada, kept asking: Why would Israel trade five Lebanese prisoners, including the notorious Samir Kuntar, along with 199 bodies of Lebanese and Palestinians, for the remains of two of its soldiers?

Many journalists reporting on the exchange made special note of Kuntar's heinous act. He brutally killed a four-year-old Israeli girl and her father while her mother, the sole survivor of the attack, accidentally smothered her two-year-old daughter in an attempt to stifle her cries while Kuntar was in the house.

To be sure, correspondents reported on how controversial this lopsided exchange was within Israeli society, and how it sparked an intense, heart-rending debate. Yet the puzzle remained: why hand Hezbollah a propaganda victory?

Journalists probed for an answer, which finally emerged as the exchange was about to proceed and it was confirmed that the two Israeli soldiers, Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, were dead: the Jewish state is committed to do everything in its power to bring its soldiers home from the battlefield, if only to give them a proper burial and even if it requires a painful sacrifice.

Other countries, especially other democratic countries, will go to considerable lengths to secure the release of their citizens and soldiers held by a foreign power. But in this case, Israel was viewed by western media as unique in the extent to which it was willing to go in order to obtain what it knew to be the remains of Goldwasser and Regev.

As the BBC's Wyre Davis noted in his July 17 report from Jerusalem: "It is at times like this that many Israelis feel more isolated and different in a world that doesn't really 'get' why so much effort has gone into securing the return of two dead soldiers."

Benny Regev, the brother of Eldad, told the CBC's Peter Armstrong (July 16): "I feel pain for the loss of my brother, but I [also] feel proud the people of Israel have made this day come true."

This pride – and ethos – of Israeli society was explained by Israel Defence Forces spokesperson Col. Miri Eisen to the BBC's Davis: "It is an essential part of our moral fibre, of our soul. It is a promise we make to every Israeli mother that, when we send her son or daughter away to fight, we will bring them home, whatever happens to them."

Davis noted that Eisen acknowledged his "suggestion that what Israelis see as their 'soul' is regarded by their many enemies as a 'flaw,' a 'weakness.'" To which Eisen replied: "That's just the way it is. We won't change the way we are."

In contrast to the somber mood in Israel, Lebanon's president and prime minister treated a returning child murderer as a national hero. This gave many in the West a rare (if brief) glimpse into the heart of what makes Israelis "the way [they] are."

Jim Lederman, senior Israel analyst for Oxford Analytica, who's working on a book about how Israelis govern themselves, said in conversation: "The very fact that so many reporters were so surprised by the Israeli decision indicates that they have never learned or never internalized the foundation stone of Jewish community life for the past two millennia: the sense and belief by Jews in a shared fate."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian & Relief Committee

We are not obligated to complete the work, but we also are not free to desist from it

– 2:21 Pirke Avot

On the evening of Friday, July 18, 2008 the Founding Director of Ve'ahavta, Avrum Rosensweig suffered a heart attack. An angioplasty was performed and Avrum is now on the road to recovery. While he will take some time to rest and recuperate, he has every intention of returning to the office in the near future.

Ve'ahavta's Board of Directors and senior staff would like to remind our donors, clients, partners, volunteers and other stakeholders that we remain committed to our mission. As the Canadian humanitarian and relief organization, Ve'ahavta is motivated by the Jewish values of Tzedakah/Justice, and will continue to assist the needy at home and abroad, through volunteerism, education, and acts of kindness, while building bridges between Jews and other peoples.

We are committed to a long-term development plan that insures the sustainability of our projects, and benefits our clients, partners and volunteers. In Avrum's absence and upon his return, we will continue to encourage all people to play a significant role in Tikun Olam (repairing the world) both in Canada and around the world.

To send best wishes to Avrum, please visit our website:
www.veahavta.org

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Remembering Ehud and Eldad

The following is an open letter by Liberal MPs Marlene Jennings (Notre-Dame-de-Grâce–Lachine) and Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre).

The road of statesmanship is paved with bitter choices. But few are more difficult and soul-searching than the recent decision of the government of Israel to release five Lebanese prisoners and return 199 bodies of Lebanese fighters in exchange for the bodies of Ehud Goldwasser and Eldad Regev, the two Israeli soldiers who were kidnapped from Israel by the terrorist group Hezbollah in 2006.

How does one weigh the grief of two victimized families and of all Israelis, who had clung to hope that there was hope? How does one weigh that pain against the release of Samir Kuntar, a hateful murderer who smashed the head of an innocent four-year-old girl? How can Israel's pledge to return every lost soldier, dead or alive, be weighed against the cost of commuting a sentence of 500 years to 19 years of incarceration already served?

This was not an easy choice. It was the kind of choice that keeps you awake in the wee hours of the morning. But the decision by the government of Israel to choose compassion and spare the two families continued torment about the fate of their sons shows leadership, because it takes leadership to choose. Clearly, this was not a one-sided decision, and the cost was high. But isn't it better to err on the side of humanity?

Israel's decision stands in stark contrast to the unspeakable spectacle of jubilation and triumph that we saw in Lebanon. When Israelis are willing to go to extraordinary lengths to recover their fallen, they reaffirm, in a powerful way, Israel's commitment to, and love of, life. When Palestinians celebrate the return of a man like Kuntar, they showcase, in a damning way, a culture that glorifies death and murder.

Now is the time to grieve and to remember Ehud and Eldad, to come together in solidarity with their families and with the Israeli public as they seek closure to this protracted and painful ordeal.

We, along with other members of Liberal Parliamentarians for Israel, have had the privilege of meeting with the families of the abducted soldiers when they visited Parliament Hill in the past. We met them to convey our solidarity and our concern for the well-being of their sons. We saw their hopes, but could only guess at their pain. Now, we offer our heartfelt condolences to them and to all those aggrieved by the cowardly abduction and murder of these two promising young men.

If you want to convey your condolences to Ehud's and Eldad's families, you can add your names to the electronic book of condolences set up by the Canada-Israel Committee at www.cicweb.ca/condolences/index.cfm.

We cannot take away the loss, but we can let them know that they are not alone and that we will remember.

The Executive and Board of Directors of the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue extend heartfelt condolences on behalf of the entire congregational family, to Anne Zuchter and family on the passing of

Max Zuchter ז"ל

Acknowledging Max's many years of catering service to the Synagogue and the Jewish Community.
May Max's memory be for a blessing and may the Zuchter family find comfort with all mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, 300 Elder Street, Toronto, M4H 3G7 • 416-633-3888

Greater Toronto Area

New JNF schaliach is an Israeli journalist

By RHONDA SPIVAK
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Erez Rotem, an Israeli journalist and former interviewer for the Channel 2 television station in Israel, is the new Jewish National Fund (JNF) shaliach for Western Canada.

The 42-year-old Rotem, a journalist for more than 15 years, began his career writing for Israeli newspapers, including *Ma'ariv* and *Yediyot Achronot*. "I have written for every major newspaper in Israel, and for the last 10 years, I have been the correspondent for police/criminal affairs for Channel 2," he says.

"For the last 15 years, I have been a personal witness to all of the major events in Israel. I covered the Second Lebanon War, the disengagement, the terrorist acts, the bus explosions, and now I want to do something constructive for JNF... I want people to join me in understanding and feeling Israel.

"The story of Israel isn't just a story of war, but the story of a nation that has developed great industry and sophisticated technology. I believe Israel is the home for every Jew, even if he or she isn't living there," Rotem says.

He hopes that since he has been in the field of communications for all of his adult life, he is well prepared in his task as the new shaliach to "communicate a love for Israel."

He says, "I feel that after 15 years of looking into the area of crime in Israel, it is time for me to do something that is constructive, and is part of building [support for Israel]. I call Israel a great adventure and hope that I can motivate young people to be more committed and devoted to Israel."

In his work with Channel 2, Rotem was involved in a number of high-profile cases. "I was the first journalist to interview then-president Moshe Katzav at his home in Kiryat Malachi about the allegations [of sexual harassment] against him," Rotem says. "It was the first time that he admitted he would accept some kind of plea bargain [which he no longer will accept]."

Rotem, who has a law degree, was responsible for disclosing the fact that in the sexual harassment charges against Kadima member of Knesset Haim Ramon, the state had "conducted illegal wiretaps." Rotem says that he was able to uncover this because he has an informant, "a deep throat," who tipped him off.

Rotem was raised "in a house where Israel meant everything," he says.

"My father served the state for 35 years. When he retired, he was the head of security in the Shabak [Israeli Secret Service]... He was the personal bodyguard of prime ministers David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir, Yitzhak Rabin, and also used to work with [defence minister] Moshe Dayan. He was also the bodyguard for prime minister Menachem Begin and also for Egyptian president Anwar Sadat, when he came to Israel in 1977."

Rotem remembers visiting the farm of Ariel Sharon with his father in the midst of the first war in Lebanon in 1982. "Later on, I also covered the trial of Omri Sharon [Ariel Sharon's son and former member of Knesset] for corruption charges."

Rotem, who has a home in Ramat Hasharon, says that his parents imbued him with a sense of Zionism and commitment to the State of Israel that is deep-seated. He looks forward to his new position with the JNF, which he will officially begin in August. Prior to beginning his new work, he will be travelling with his family to Thailand and Vietnam.

Rotem and his wife, Dalit, have two children, Tom, 8, and Yali, 3. Dalit is an interior designer and is part-owner of a sushi restaurant, Akiko, in Ramat Hasharon.

Rotem has already made two trips to Winnipeg to meet members of the community and make preparations for his assuming his new position.

He'll be based in Winnipeg, but will travel often to Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver. Rotem replaces Rami Kleinmann, who was the JNF shaliach for the past eight years and left to become the executive director of the Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University.

'The guide will be helpful'

Continued from page 1

He added: "Nate Leipciger and myself, as co-presidents of Canadian Jewish Holocaust Survivors, supported the project from Day 1 and approved it. We all agreed that this was not only a good idea, but also a very important information tool that will assist the aging survivor community in learning about some of the services and activities available to them."

Zoltak, a survivor from Poland who was hidden by a Catholic family and was liberated in 1944 along with his parents, realized there was a need for such a guide after he was appointed to the board of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, which is based in New York City.

"We found that one of the most important things missing was information and communication. The guide will be very helpful."

The guide lists programs and services in Alberta, Atlantic Canada, British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec that are available to what Zoltak believes is the third-largest Holocaust survivor community in the world.

An additional print run of the guide will be seriously considered should there be further demand, Simons said.

FAMILY MOMENTS

Mazel Tov

The Canadian Jewish news

Berall / Pasternack - Melissa and Murray welcome with love the arrival of Dylan Chase on Thursday June 26th, 2008 at 2:03am at Mt Sinai Hospital. This 8lb 6oz bundle of happiness is lovingly welcomed by older brothers Cole and Carson and big sister Kaia. Excited grandparents are Rhoda and Sam Pasternack and Neysa and Harry Berall. Dylan is also thrilled to meet his cool older sibs, Jason and Laura. Lots of aunts, uncles and cousins are looking forward to spending time with Dylan. A special thank you to Auntie Tash for her delivery-room love, support and fabulous videography!

Mazel tov to Issie Fogel on your 90th birthday. Wishing you many, many more happy birthdays! With all our love, your children and grandchildren.

It's a Boy!

GOTTDENKER Adam & Sheryl (Ross) are thrilled to announce the birth of their son LOGAN SETH. Tuesday July 15th 11:33pm 7lbs 11ozs. at York Central Hospital. Proud Grandparents, Pam & Art Ross, Joseph Gottdenker & Fiancee Lori Tafuro, Patricia & Neil Whittaker. Excited Aunts and Uncles, Marla & Mike, Jeff, Debbie, David & Anie, Tonya & Ian, Christian, Nicholas. Cousins, Talia, Marissa, Liam and Cassie can't wait to spoil their new cousin. Logan Seth is named in loving memory of his Great Grandfathers, Ben Gottdenker and Sydney Goodman.

Ben, son of Ellaine Feferman & Leo Turkel, and Norm Feferman & Fara Heidary, grandson of Bernice Caplan is engaged to Kara, daughter of Renee Stock.

Linda & Barry Flooder announce the engagement of Jennifer to Judd, son of Benita & Jerry Koenig. Happy grandmothers, Frances Flodder and Merna Panzer.

Elizabeth (Weller) & Darren Abrams welcomed Evan on March 12. Grandparents, Marilyn & Ivan Abrams, Breena Weller. Aunty Stacey & Uncle Allan are thrilled.

Esty Fisher was called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah at Temple Kol Ami in Thornhill, on May 17.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!
Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return.
Mail to: **The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.**
or email: cblackman@cjnews.com

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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PLEASE NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES for What's New: Thursday, July 31, is the deadline for the Aug. 14 issue and Monday, Aug. 11, is the deadline for the Aug. 21 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, July 31

ON JERUSALEM

Yeshiva University Summer Kollel presents **Shani Taragin** speaking on "Yerushalayim: City of Two Tales," at the home of **John** and **Lori Ulmer**, 99 Prue Ave, 8:30 p.m. RSVP and information at canada@yu.edu or 416-783-6960.

Monday, Aug. 4

BRIDGE CLUB

The Rosemount Bridge Club hosts a get acquainted luncheon for duplicate and rubber bridge, Mondays at noon at the Rosemount Community Centre. $2. Information and reservations, 905-764-9901.

Tuesday, Aug. 5

SUMMER CLOSET SALE

National Council of Jewish Woman of Canada, Toronto section, hold a Summer Closet Sale, 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. every Tuesday through Aug. 26. 4700 Bathurst St. 416-633-5100

Wednesday, Aug. 6

DROP-IN EVENING

DANI, developing and nurturing independence in Jewish children with special needs, holds a drop-in evening for young adults with or without challenges. Enjoy supper, basketball, movie, music, ping pong and games. 6-9 p.m. 12 McAllister Rd. $12. RSVP at 416 638-8457.

Other News

YU SUMMER KOLLEL

Yeshiva University Summer Kollel offers a free study program Monday through Thursday throughout the summer, beginning with *Minchah* at 7:30 p.m. **Rabbi Shmuel Marcus** gives a shiur at 7:45 p.m. followed at 8:30 p.m. by a half-hour "Torah buffet," workshops on a variety of topics from Jewish law, thought, the weekly portion and more. *Ma'ariv* is at 9 p.m. followed by refreshments and questions and answers. Program takes place Mondays at Adas Israel of Hamilton, Tuesdays at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Wednesdays at Congregation Bnai Torah, Thursdays at BAYT and Sunday mornings at 9 a.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Synagogue. The kollel will run a Shabbaton program in Sparrow Lake, Aug. 2-3, Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Aug. 9-10, Adas Israel of Hamilton, Aug. 15-16. It will host visiting scholars, **Rabbi Reuven** and **Shani Taragin** July 31-Aug. 3. Information at 416-783-6960 or canada@yu.edu.

YARCHEI KALLAH

The 14th Annual Nishmat Yarchei Kallah takes place Aug. 5-7, at Yeshivat Or Chaim. **Simi Peters** will discuss "Exploring the Midrashic Mind," "The First Murder: Parables on the Kayin-Hevel Story," "An Egyptian Prince Becomes Moshe Rabbeinu: Midrashic Stories on the Life of Moshe," and "From One End of the World to the Other: A Midrashic Sermon on the Miracle of Conception, Birth and the Life Cycle." Register, cfnishmat@gmail.com.

KOLEL SUMMER ULPAN

Kolel's summer ulpan teaches basic conversational Hebrew in eight classes. Tuesdays and Thursdays, Aug. 5-28, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at the Bathurst JCC. Pre-registration required, 416-636-1880, ext. 235.

TISHA B'AV PROGRAMS

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham will have **Rabbi Isser Weisberg** speak on "From Haman to Ahmadinejad: Persia/Iran in Biblical Prophecies," following *Eicha*

Continued on page 21

"Important, accurate (...) long overdue."
– Michael Coren, The National Post

DEADLY MEDICINE CREATING THE MASTER RACE

A powerful exhibition on Nazi eugenic practices

June 13 – November 11, 2008

This exhibition is organized and circulated by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Canada

Beth Torah Congregation
קהילת בית תורה

Beth Torah Congregation

Construction has begun!
Our membership is open, but not for long!

Our founding members dreamed of a family Shul in which to congregate, celebrate, educate, and grow. They wanted a haimish environment where families knew one another from generation to generation.

Today, Beth Torah Congregation continues to be a vibrant, traditional and growing Shul with dedicated and warm clergy, Rabbi Yossi Sapirman and Cantor David Young.

Construction has now begun on our new sanctuary and the renovation of our facility. This is **your** chance to be a part of *Completing the Dream.*

There are a limited number of membership opportunities still available. Once we have achieved our goal of 500 families, we will no longer be accepting new member applications.

Check us out at www.bethtorah.ca.

COMPLETING THE DREAM

To apply, please call or e-mail:
Nicole Toledano, Executive Director
416-782-4495 ex. 24
director@bethtorah.ca

What's New

Continued from page 20

service. Saturday, Aug. 9. All welcome. 905-886-0420.

Torah in Motion offers *Shacharit* services and *kinnot* explanations led by **Rabbi Jay Kelman** and members of the Yeshiva University Summer Kollel at Yeshivat Or Chaim, and an afternoon program at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation with a Chafetz Chaim film featuring **Rabbis Mordechai Becher** and **Zev Leff** followed by *Minchah* at 2 p.m. Afternoon speakers include **Marty Lockshin, Rabbi Michael Skoback, Rabbi Chaim Strauchler, Jim Diamond** and **Elliott Malamet**. Sunday, Aug. 10. www.torahinmotion.org.

YIDDISH ARTS CAMP

The Koffler Centre for the Arts offers a week of art, dance, music and Yiddish culture for kids ages 6-12 with guest artists from the Ashkenaz festival, Aug. 25-29, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Also, a free counsellor-in-training, program for ages 13-15. Registration and information, 416-636-1880, ext. 269 or info@kofflerarts.org.

2008 ASHKENAZ FESTIVAL

The seventh Ashkenaz Festival is Aug. 26-Sept. 1 at Harbourfront Centre and various satellite locations throughout Toronto. The festival celebrates Yiddish and Jewish culture with artists from around the world working in music, film, theatre, dance, literature, craft and visual arts. Most events are free. Information at 416-979-9901 or www.ashkenazfestival.com.

CHABAD HEBREW SCHOOL

Chabad Lubavitch of Markham Hebrew School is accepting applications for 2008-09. For information and forms, contact **Carole**, 905-886-0420, ext. 221.

MISSIONS TO ISRAEL

Magen David Adom hosts a Health and Wellness Mission to Israel Oct. 27-Nov. 7. The mission visits Jerusalem, the Galilee, Tel Aviv and surrounding areas, the Dead Sea, Massada, Eilat and Petra. Information, 416-780-0034.

Join **OneFamily** Nov. 2-6, on a journey through the Upper Galilee on the Sea-to-Sea OneFamily Hike. Walk 61 km over 5 days through northern Israel. $750 registration fee covers all costs. Each participant is required to raise a minimum of $2,500 in donations. Information, www.seatoseahike.org.

FALL LECTURE SERIES

Temple Emanu-El offers its fall general interest lecture series Mondays 2-4 p.m. Begins Nov. 3 with "The American Presidential Election" with **Hugh Innes**, professor of media studies, Ryerson University; Nov.10, "Art in Nazi Germany" with **Ken Carpenter**, professor of art history, York University; Nov.17, "Fighting the Great Patriotic War: The Soviet Union and World War II" with **Arne Kislenko**, associate professor of history, York University; Nov. 24, "Five Great Recordings" with **Rick Phillips**, former host of CBC Radio's *Sound Advice*. $30 for the series. $10 for lectures. Registration and information, 416-449-3880.

HIGH HOLIDAY TICKETS

Join **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and Kolel for a traditional egalitarian High Holiday service with interactive family programming and services at the Bathurst JCC. The deadline for discount prices is July 31. For tickets and information, call 416-636-1880, ext. 255.

LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Beth Emeth Congregation offers a leadership development program that includes seminars and interactive participation for personal and professional growth and the development of leadership skills that can be applied to any life scenario. Topics include The How-tos and Theory of Leadership, Conflict Resolution, Foundation of Negotiation, Mentoring, Holding Court and Public Presentations and Humour. Maximum 25 students. Classes begin Oct. 2 and meet monthly Thursdays, 7-9 p.m. To apply, call **Rosalie Shadlyn**, 416-633-3838.

ROSH HASHANAH CARDS

Canadian Friends of Boys Town Jerusalem and some Israeli photographers have produced Rosh Hashanah greeting cards that feature Israel's wildflowers. They will personalize, sign and send cards. For information, **Debbie**, 416-789-7241 or by e-mail, btjcan@rogers.com.

FOR SENIORS

55+ Forward for Seniors at the Miles Nadal JCC hosts "Ontario Jewish Archives: Over 30 Years, Preserving the Past," a behind-the-scenes overview highlighting key artifacts and old photographs with archive director **Ellen Scheinberg**. Thursday, Aug. 7, 1:30 p.m. Information **Phyllis Fien** at 416-924-6211, ext. 155, or phyllisf@mnjcc.org.

Beth Emeth's Chai Shalom Social Club presents **Yitzhak Argaman**, Wednesday, Aug. 13, 7:30 p.m. $6, guests $10. 416-633-3838.

The Association of Jewish Seniors holds its 36th anniversary gala luncheon celebrating Israel @60 with entertainment by **Aetal**. Thursday, Aug. 21, at noon at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Members $20, guests $25. Reserve by Aug. 11, **Tammy**, 416-635-2860, ext. 458.

Garnet A. Williams Bridge Club, 501 Clark Ave., summer hours for duplicate bridge games are Mondays and Tuesdays, 12.30-3:30 p.m. $1.50. Novice games and lessons, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 7 p.m. $2. Free drop-in Mah Jong game Thursdays, 7 p.m. Information, **Linda** or **Mike**, 905-731-3432.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Earl Bales Seniors Club in the Park. Casino Rama, Wednesday, Aug. 6; seniors walking group, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9-10 a.m.; conversational Hebrew, Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. Information about club activities, Tuesday-Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. 416-395-7881.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Anne Balaban discusses "Celebrating Human Behaviours at Every Stage of Life," Thursday, Aug. 14, 2 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

The Community Care Access Centres present "Helping Seniors Live Longer in Their Homes." Wednesday, Aug. 6, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Free.

Hearing screening, Friday, Aug. 8, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free.

For information, call **Amanda**, ext. 126.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www. mnjcc.org.

"Voices from the Holocaust and Rwandan Genocide: Listening to the Past and Sharing the Legacy," a reading and discussion. Wednesday, Aug. 13, 7-9 p.m. Free. Information, ext. 133 or harrietw@mnjcc.org.

"Sizzling South American Samba," the launch of Café Atid, the MNJCC's new program for young adults 25-35. The evening will include a brief Spanish lesson, Flamenco dancing and a South American barbecue. Thursday, Aug. 14, on the rooftop, weather permitting. $18. Kashrut observed. **Randi**, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

Summer ulpanim: "Hebrew Through Songs" – learn Hebrew and Israeli culture through modern Israeli songs. Aug. 18-21, 4-6 p.m. $90, non members $110. "Modern Hebrew Ulpan for Beginners: Level Bet," Aug. 18-21, 7-9 p.m. $90, non members $110. Information and registration, ext. 154 or randis@mnjcc.org.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Thursday evenings join Conversation Café, a joint program with JIAS, offering newcomers to Canada a chance to practise their English in a social environment. Information, 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

Registration is continuing for September 2008 for BJCC morning school for Tic Tac Two, nursery and junior kindergarten. Call ext. 248 for information and to book a tour of the school.

Volunteers Wanted

BAYCREST LIBRARY

Volunteers needed Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m and/or 12:30-3 p.m. in the Baycrest Wellness Library. Volunteers should be interested in health and wellness, enjoy helping people. Word processing skills an asset. Training provided. Information, **Annette**, 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

BIKE RIDE HELPS TERROR VICTIMS: More than 100 riders recently participated in OneFamily Canada's 4th Annual Bike Ride to raise funds for Israel's victims of terror. On hand for the race was Orly Vaknin, a survivor of the Hebrew University bombing in July 2002, who spoke to the bikers and the volunteers about the tragedy she experienced and how OneFamily helped her face her fears and rebuild her life.

SINGLES EVENTS WILL RETURN

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Dayan, Reina	July 8/08	3636 Bathurst St
Carson, Annette	July 9/08	310 Rosemary Rd
Ehrlich, Stanley Charles	July 9/08	130 Dunn Ave
Gerstl, Goldene	July 9/08	Private
Cooper, Rochelle	July 9/08	176 Steeles Ave. W
Belzberg, Bluma Ides	July 9/08	206 Cummer Ave
Unea, Sally	July 10/08	137 MacArthur Dr
Sivkin, Max	July 10/08	3560 Bathurst St
Aaron, Mary	July 11/08	44 Macauley Dr
Pincus, Charles	July 11/08	15B Elgin St
Rotblott, Meyer	July 11/08	4001 Bayview Ave
Steuermann, Rae Marcia	July 12/08	18 Gilmore Cres
Szabo, Abraham Ervin	July 13/08	7 Townsgate Dr
Sklar, Abie	July 13/08	3560 Bathurst St
Gershkovitz, Rachel	July 13/08	Private
Feldberg, Rose	July 13/08	718 Sheppard Ave. W
Kiwak, Leon	July 13/08	Private

HEBREW BASIC

Annie Jacobson	Jul 19/08	57 Roberta Drive

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Harry Karnovsky	Jul 11/08	7601 Bathurst St
Samuel Culder	Jul 14/08	400 Walmer Rd
Moshe Levy	Jul 14/08	129 Redondo Dr
Penny East	Jul 14/08	110 The Esplanade
Gary Kirshenbaum	Jul 12/08	75 Carl Tennen St
Ilene Yess	Jul 13/08	542 Castlefield Ave
Anne Rosenthal	Jul 14/08	645 Castlefield Ave
Pnina Miller	Jul 15/08	10 Tangreen Crt
Rose Weinstock	Jul 13/08	3560 Bathurst St
Faye Gold	Jul 13/08	306 Finch Ave E
Alex Starkman	Jul 16/08	139 Viewmount Ave
Penny Sopman	Jul 11/08	272 Durham Crt
Ida Rubinoff	Jul 17/08	10 Senlac Rd

The unveiling of a monument honouring the memory of the late

MILDRED KIDECKEL ז"ל

will take place

Monday, Aug. 4TH
12:00 noon

Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Section

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

BELFER, JACK - On Saturday, June 21, 2008, peacefully in his 91st year. Jack, devoted husband of the late Estelle (2000) - Loving father and father-in-law of Carolyn and Stan Wagman and Beverley Belfer. Proud grandfather of Sean and Wendy Wagman, Kellie and Rob Campol, Kevin Wagman and John MacLeod, Darren Wagman and Marni Brooks. His great-grandchildren were his joy; Nina Texeira, Joshua and Sarah Wagman, Carlie and Corrie Campol, Jake and Cydney Wagman. Funeral took place on Tuesday June 25, 2008 at Bathurst Lawn Cemetery. Memorial Donations to the Canadian Cancer Society.

To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling

The unveiling of a monument to the beloved memory of

ALBERT GOULD ז"ל

will take place

Sunday, August 10th at 1:00 p.m.

Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Dufferin St., North of Major MacKenzie
Adath Israel - New Section - WW

Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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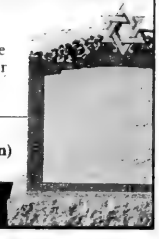

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Obituary

Published, edited Vancouver paper

By RABBI DAVID KAPLAN
Special to The CJN

VANCOUVER — Veteran Canadian journalist Samuel Kaplan, publisher and editor-in-chief of the *Jewish Western Bulletin* for 36 years, died July 15 in Vancouver at age 83.

Born in Winnipeg, Man., on June 30, 1925, Kaplan was the fifth of six children of Rachmiel and Sarah Kaplan, who emigrated to Canada from Kremenchuk, Ukraine. A graduate of St. John's Tech in Winnipeg's North End melting pot of Canadian intellectuals and artists, he sang lead roles in Gilbert and Sullivan in high school.

Kaplan joined the Royal Canadian Navy in World War II and served as a wireless telegrapher on a Corvette (fast attack boat) stationed in Halifax. After the war, Kaplan attended the University of Manitoba, where he met his future wife, Mona Rich.

Samuel Kaplan

They married on May 9, 1948, and saw the headline "State of Israel declared" on their honeymoon. Still reeling from the Holocaust, Sam determined that day to dedicate his life to helping Jews who were in trouble anywhere in the world, his wife recalled.

His five-decade career in journalism began with a summer job in 1946 as an intern at the daily *Winnipeg Free Press*. He later worked for five years as editor of the weekly *Western Jewish News* in Winnipeg and subsequently as editor of the English section of the *Israelite Press*, a Yiddish-English weekly.

In 1960, Kaplan was invited by the Vancouver Jewish Community Council to become editor of its weekly English-language Jewish newspaper. Kaplan and his wife Mona took over the *Jewish Western Bulletin*, and within two years they transformed the paper into an independent weekly able to cover all its expenses and end a decades-old community subsidy.

In 1979, Kaplan received the Smolar Award for Excellence in North American Jewish Journalism for a series of interviews he did in Egypt prior to the Camp David peace treaty. He was twice named runner-up for the same award, and he received a 20th Israel Anniversary Award of Excellence for a full-colour tourism edition in 1968.

In recognition of his efforts as president of the B.C. Ethnic Press Association and the Canadian Ethnic Press Association, Kaplan received the Canada Centennial Medal, which was presented to him by Queen Elizabeth II in Montreal, as well as a Canada 125 Medal.

Over the decades, Kaplan interviewed Jewish and international newsmakers, including David Ben-Gurion, Israel's first prime minister; Moshe Sharett, Israel's second prime minister; and Shimon Peres, Nobel Peace Prize winner and current Israeli president.

Kaplan also worked with historian Martin Gilbert to help free Russian Jews. He reprinted Gilbert's revealing articles on the condition of Jewish prisoners in Siberian prison camps on the *Bulletin*'s front pages. As well, he ran a weekly "Gulag Record" chronicling the imprisonment of key Refuseniks for the crime of wanting to emigrate to Israel, and encouraging his readership to write appeals on their behalf. Gilbert took editions of the paper to Russia to show Refuseniks and reported on the enormous hope it gave them that a Canadian newspaper was fighting for their freedom.

Kaplan is survived by Mona, his wife of 60 years; three sons, Frank Barry in Nanaimo, B.C.; Jonathan and wife Abbe, in Memphis, Tenn., and Rabbi David Kaplan and wife Rochel, in Poughkeepsie, N.Y.; five grandchildren, Zachary, Franny, Ezra, Yaakov and Tully; sisters Esther Finkle and Lily Kaplan, and brother Jack Kaplan, all of Winnipeg.

Kaplan was buried July 17 in Israel. A Vancouver memorial service will be held Aug. 17 at Congregation Schara Tzedeck.

Obituary

Local catering pioneer 'did business on a handshake'

By ANDY LEVY-AJZENKOPF
Staff Reporter

The Toronto Jewish community has lost one of its kosher catering pioneers.

On July 9, surrounded by family and friends, Max Zuchter, beloved husband, father, father-in-law, grandfather, great-grandfather and patriarch of the Zuchter-Berk catering company, passed away from pancreatic cancer at his Toronto home. He was 87.

Right up until the end, Zuchter commanded respect and love from those who rallied around him in his last days, said his son-in-law, David Berk.

Berk, who married Zuchter's eldest daughter, Lorraine, and learned the business from his father-in-law before taking over the firm after Zuchter's retirement in 1986, credited Zuchter with teaching him "everything" about the catering business.

He said Zuchter took great pride in his business and always enjoyed talking shop and looking after the people who helped it succeed.

"You know how some people will say, 'Stop and smell the roses'? Well Max would always tell me to 'Stop and smell the coffee,'" Berk laughed. "He was very well-respected, a wonderful person. People trusted him, to the extent that they would walk into the shop and tell him to do the catering as if he was doing his own daughter's affair and then walk out. He did business on a handshake."

Berk also noted Zuchter's loyalty to the staff at Zuchter-Berk, saying that many employees worked for the company for three or more decades.

The Zuchter family initially founded the business in the early 1930s as an eponymous Toronto Jewish Ashkenazi restaurant shortly after immigrating to Canada from Bendzin, Poland.

Zuchter was 10 when he arrived in Toronto and his mother, Fanny, ran the restaurant until he was old enough to help take over, Lorraine Berk said.

"As a boy, Max would deliver pop in Toronto's garment district," she said.

Though Yiddish was his mother tongue, Zuchter learned English quickly, Gloria Hershenfield, his youngest daughter, said.

Once Zuchter took over the restaurant, the eatery soon became more interested in kashrut. "He was probably the first [restaurateur] in the city to be fully involved with COR, or their equivalent at the time," David Berk said.

In 1952, Zuchter decided to begin changing the family business model, slowly gearing it toward catering after approaching the Beth Sholom Synagogue to use Zuchter's as a kosher food service provider for the shul.

Max Zuchter
[© *Eclipse Photography Inc.*]

Among his many passions, Zuchter was an ardent baseball fan who followed the Toronto Blue Jays with zeal. He also loved to reminisce about his military career.

Zuchter served with distinction in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II as an instrument mechanic for famed English Spitfire ace and air vice-marshall James Edgar "Johnnie" Johnson.

Because he abhorred violence, Zuchter's time in the military had a profound effect on him.

"He was part of the liberation of Bergen-Belsen," Lorraine Berk said. "What he saw there affected him for the rest of his life. He did everything he could to help [the survivors] of the camp... and stay away from violence."

In fact, when Zuchter saw *West Side Story*, he walked out during the play's legendary gang-fight dance scene, she recalled with a laugh.

Congregation Shaarei Tefillah's Rabbi Moshe Stern, an extended member of the family, praised Zuchter as a kind and generous person who was a stalwart of the Jewish community.

"Amongst his contributions to the community, he left numerous children and grandchildren who continue the Jewish tradition," Rabbi Stern said.

Family was Zuchter's foremost priority, and chief among them were his wife, Anne, and their three daughters, Lorraine Berk, Barbara Greenglass and Gloria Hershenfield.

"He was very protective of us. He was strong in stature and presence, but he was soft inside," Lorraine Berk said. "We always felt very looked after and we always knew our parents were there for us."

Barbara Greenglass referred to her father as the sisters' "strength," saying, "He was our stability. As long as he was around, we knew we were OK."

Gloria Hershenfield concurred, and added that her father was also "extremely" proud that all of his children were university graduates, as he only had a Grade 8 education.

"He was also very giving to the community and supported Baycrest [Hospital] and Israel Bonds, among other causes," she added.

Zuchter married Anne in 1948 and would have celebrated his 60th anniversary with her this September.

A deep and abiding love kept them together, the sisters recalled.

"They did everything together after his retirement. He worked so hard for so many years. After he retired, they started going to the symphonies and travelling," Lorraine Berk said. "He liked simple things. My father would come home after catering a gourmet affair and make himself a cheese-and-onion sandwich on rye. And he loved my mother's cooking."

Barbara Greenglass added: "My mother was his best friend and confidante."

And when Zuchter would meet old customers by chance on the street, they would invariably thank him for catering their simchahs years ago, Gloria said.

"He had a great sense of humour and loved to kibbitz with people," Barbara Greenglass said, noting how he took great pleasure in making people smile.

Kevin Greenglass, one of Zuchter's grandchildren, summed up his grandfather this way: "He was an incredibly positive person, a larger-than-life figure for me, and in our community, he made so many people's happiest days happier."

'KOSHER' LABEL IN ADVERTISING

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency Guide to Food Labelling and Advertising reads as follows:

"In the labelling, packaging and advertising of a food, the Food and Drug Regulations prohibits the use of the word kosher or any letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or any other word, expression, depiction, sign, symbol, mark, device or other representation that indicates or that is likely to create an impression that the food is kosher, if the food does not meet the requirements of the Kashruth applicable to it.

The terms "kosher style" and "kind of kosher" are not allowed, unless they meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish-style food" or "Jewish cuisine" are not objected to, although the foods may not necessarily meet the requirements of the Kashruth.

Rationale: "Kosher style" is considered to create the impression that the food is kosher, and therefore the food must meet the requirements of the Kashruth. "Jewish style" food may not necessarily create this impression."

The CJN makes no representation as to the kashruth of food products in advertisements.

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Eldad Regev ז"ל
and to the family of
Ehud Goldwasser ז"ל

We prayed for you as a community for the past two years, now we share your grief.
May you find comfort amongst the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Gabi Weisfeld
National President

Dov Altman
Executive Vice President

And now for something completely different: HEEBONICS

Young entrepreneur organizes anti-poverty fundraiser

By ASHLEY SPEGEL
Special to The CJN

Daniel Warner hopes to change the lives of underprivileged Jewish youth in Toronto and Israel with his summer fundraiser, the Pitch for Israel.

The sporting event, which takes place Aug. 17 at Camp Robin Hood, is a full day dedicated to raising money to send disadvantaged Jewish young people in Toronto and Israel to summer camps, which Warner believes builds important life skills.

Daniel Warner accepts the Ontario Student Entrepreneur Competition Award in 2007

"I went to camp, and it helped me to develop character, leadership skills and strong communication skills, and I know how to work with people and how to get things done," he says.

"By sending kids to camp, we're strengthening children and their families through these experiences. Camp makes you a well-rounded person. It builds confidence and helps you to do what you do on an everyday basis. It gives kids the opportunity to develop important life skills, and it acts as an outlet for developing Jewish identity."

The Pitch for Israel will be made up of 10 men's and four women's softball teams. The tournament format is three-pitch with nine fielders.

In order to meet the goal of raising $25,000, all teams are required to generate a minimum of $2,000 through sponsorships and donations.

"The feedback has been amazing, and people are really behind this cause," the 25-year-old says.

"Anyone can get involved with this cause, whether it's supporting the event through awareness, volunteering to be events staff or finding sponsors for the event. It's the community that's really contributing to the event's growing success," Warner added.

More than 20,000 Jews in the Toronto area are living under the poverty line, according to Jewish Family & Child.

In Eilat, the Israeli city that Warner is focusing his efforts on, 22 per cent of Jewish children live in impoverished conditions.

"This is a cause I want to support, and it's important to get these kids on the right foot, not only in Israel but in Toronto, and give back to the community and inform people [about these statistics]," he says.

"We need to get our youth into camp to funnel their energies, let them grow and give back to society. I've always been about helping others. If you have the time, skill and the know-how, you should make it happen."

In addition to the softball tournaments, there will be a variety of other activities, including volleyball, tennis, swimming, lounging, live entertainment and a kosher barbecue.

Transportation to the event has yet to be determined, although Warner hopes to have a bus to take everyone to and from the camp.

Organizing fundraisers is not something new to Warner, who's been giving back to his community since 2002, when he began his management degree at the University of Western Ontario. There, he was president of Jewish fraternity AEPi and on the executive of Hillel, the main Jewish campus group.

While on these boards, Warner organized campus social events and raised more than $50,000, which earned him the Righteous Hand Scholarship for Jewish Leadership on campus during his last year at Western.

"I've been fortunate to come from a good family and a good environment, and I want to help children in vulnerable situations," he says. "It's not that difficult to get involved in a cause that matters to you."

Presently, Warner has been working on his company, Canadian Student Marketing, which links corporations with students and students with each other through an interactive online community.

In 2007, he was one of two students to win the 2007 Ontario Student Entrepreneur Competition, which was sponsored by Advancing Canadian Entrepreneurship and CIBC Small Business, for his website. The awards are given out annually to full-time Canadian post-secondary students who operate a business.

Warner's business, UP Media Group Inc., was founded in March 2005 to help companies reach Canadian students aged 18 to 25 via Warner's second website, UniversityParty.ca. He says he employs 40 students in 11 Canadian cities and has a membership of 20,000.

Warner has been working with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Jewish Urban Meeting Place (JUMP) and Birthright Israel, and he has also received support from the Toronto Blue Jays in his effort to organize the Pitch for Israel.

Warner hopes the event will grow into a fundraiser much like the federation's Walk For Israel, and he hopes it will gain momentum each year.

"I want to build the Pitch for Israel into one of the largest Jewish youth events of the year. There's an 18-to-34-year-old target for the event, but families and friends are more than welcome to join in and show their support," he says. "What better way to bring people together than through softball and a day back at camp?"

Prizes will be handed out to the tournament participants who excel in athletics and fundraising.

Teams that meet their fundraising goal will get tickets to see the Blue Jays play the Boston Red Sox on Aug. 24, Jewish Heritage Day at Rogers Centre.

Pitch Israel

The top fundraiser on each team will receive a Blue Jays jersey, and the top fundraiser on the winning team will get tickets to a luxury suite at a Jays game in September, as well as a guided batting practice visit and a meet-and-greet with team president Paul Godfrey.

Warner is confident the Pitch for Israel will be a success and make a difference in the lives of those who participate and those who will be helped.

"It's about giving back and raising awareness that there are people out there that need our support. Creating this charitable event will hopefully further empower and entertain the next generations of Jewish leadership in Toronto."

The Pitch for Israel kicks off at 8 a.m. on Sunday, Aug. 24, at Camp Robin Hood with tournament registration and a warm-up. For more information, visit www.thepitchforisrael.com, or call Warner directly at 416-540-7373.

Warner, second from the right in the bottom row, poses for a group shot with his B'nai Brith softball team The Pirates

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Obama sounds hawkish and dovish themes

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

SDEROT, Israel — During his stops in Jordan and Israel, presidential contender Barack Obama stressed both his backing for tough Israeli security measures and his commitment to advancing the peace process.

In meetings with several Israeli leaders last Wednesday, Obama reaffirmed his commitment to Israel's struggle against terrorism and other violent threats, including Iran's suspected pursuit of nuclear weapons.

"I don't think any country would find it acceptable to have missiles raining down on its citizens," Obama said during a stop at the police station in Sderot, the Israeli city that has been deluged by rocket fire from the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip.

"If someone was sending rockets on my house where my daughters were sleeping at night, I would do everything to stop it, and I encourage Israel to do same," added the U.S. senator from Illinois, speaking in front of shelves filled with mangled Qassam rockets fired by Palestinian militants.

Obama's lightning visit to Israel, part of an overseas tour that includes Europe, reflects his campaign's strategy to bolster his credentials as a potential statesman. It's also an effort to reach out to Jewish voters with the message that he will be an unwavering friend to Israel. Obama's single packed day of meetings with Israel's senior leaders included the stop in Sderot – which has become an almost mandatory pilgrimage site for visiting dignitaries to Israel – along with a visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial and a late-night call at the Western Wall.

Last week's trip also presented Palestinian officials and several Israeli politicians who aspire to succeed Ehud Olmert as prime minister with an opportunity to forge a relationship with a possible future U.S. president – not a small thing in a country where voters place a high premium on strong ties with the United States.

In Israel, there has been enthusiasm for Obama's visit and pride that both he and Senator John McCain, the presumptive Republican nominee for president, found it important to stop by even before the November election.

But reaction to Obama has been coloured by nervousness among Israeli officials about the end of the Bush administration, which at times was seen as almost unconditionally supportive of Israel.

Reflecting Israel's nervousness over Obama, *Ha'aretz* columnist Aluf Benn wrote last Wednesday: "Obama represents an exciting option, albeit a more dangerous one. If he manages to rehabilitate America's international stature, reduce its dependence on oil and push through peace between Israel and the Arabs, Israel's strategic situation will improve dramatically. But on the way, he might have to pressure Israel. If he fails, Israel will have to pay the price without reaping any returns."

In Israeli officialdom's campaign to make the challenges the country faces clear, Obama was briefed by Defence Minister Ehud Barak and other defence experts on a Jerusalem tarmac before taking off in a Blackhawk helicopter for a strategic tour of the centre and south of the country and, ultimately, Sderot.

Sderot mayor Eli Moyal presented Barack Obama with an 'I love Sderot' teeshirt when Obama visited the Negev city. [Israel Sun photo]

Barak could be seen outlining to Obama on a series of maps the areas of Israel that had come under attack by Palestinians. Along with Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, they boarded a helicopter and began a near hour-long journey. They started with an aerial tour of Jerusalem before flying along Israel's border with the West Bank and then flying south via the Mediterranean.

In her remarks in Sderot, Livni thanked Obama for making the journey to the town. McCain also made a stop in Sderot during his visit to Israel two months ago.

"There is an Israeli frustration that they suffer without being recognized by the international community," Livni said of Sderot's residents. "In your visit here, you showed that you really care."

Obama also held a brief meeting at the King David Hotel with Abraham Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, who also happened to be in Israel. His organization released a report Wednesday on editorial cartoonists in the Arab world using anti-Semitic imagery to portray the presumptive U.S. presidential candidates as pawns of the Jews.

"In terms of what I've heard from Israelis I've met, they are impressed by the depth of his knowledge and understanding," Foxman said of Obama. "I walk away feeling more comfortable with the words that I hear, that there is a deep understanding and sensitivity to the issues here."

In addition to discussing security issues in his meetings with Israeli leaders, Obama also talked about negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians. Last week in Jordan, Obama said that as president he would begin working on an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal from his first day in office.

"There's a tendency for each side to focus on the faults of the other rather than look in the mirror," Obama told reporters in Amman before heading to Israel and the West Bank. "The Israeli government is unsettled, the Palestinians are divided between Fatah and Hamas, and so it's difficult for either side to make the bold move that would bring about peace.

"My goal is to make sure that we work, starting from the minute I'm sworn into office, to try to find some breakthroughs," he said.

In Jerusalem the next day, Obama met with Barak, President Shimon Peres and opposition leader Benjamin Netanyahu. At Yad Vashem, he donned a white kippah and penned an entry in the visitors' book.

"At a time of great peril and torment, war and strife, we are blessed to have such a powerful reminder of man's potential for great evil, but also our capacity to rise up from tragedy and remake our world," Obama wrote.

The Democratic candidate then went to Ramallah to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. PA officials said Abbas briefed Obama on progress in the peace process. Obama had meetings at the end of the day with Olmert and Jerusalem Mayor Uri Lupoliansky.

Israeli sources said Obama's discussions with Barak turned to the recent launch of Turkish-mediated negotiations between Israel and Syria.

Obama, according to one source, described the efforts to achieve peace as important, but said that as president "he would never put pressure on Israel to take steps that could put its security at risk."

The senator apparently was referring to Syria's demand for a full return of the Golan Heights, the strategic plateau Israel captured from Syria in the 1967 Six Day War and later annexed.

As for Iran, Obama described the Islamic Republic's nuclear program as "the most important challenge facing the international community right now," Israeli sources said, adding that it would top the agenda of Obama's meetings later this week with the leaders of Germany, France and Britain.

JTA staff contributed to this report.

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For further information or to submit your resume, please contact Barbara Klein at Barbara_klein@gallup.com or Melissa Muskat at mmuskat@goodmans.ca.

Israel Briefs

Another bulldozer rampage

Israeli police shot dead a bulldozer driver who rammed into cars and a bus in Jerusalem on July 22, injuring 24 people. In what appeared to be a copy of the July 2 road rampage on Jaffa Road, a bulldozer operator working in the Israeli capital's Yemin Moshe area began crushing cars without warning last week. The bulldozer also crashed into a passenger bus. At least 16 people were hurt, one seriously. The driver was shot dead by paramilitary border police. Jerusalem Police chief Ilan Franco said the driver was an Arab resident of east Jerusalem. In the previous such incident, an Arab bulldozer driver killed three Israelis before being shot dead by an off-duty soldier. While that assailant was assumed to have had political motives, authorities never established clear links to terror groups.

Truce abuse, arms buildup

Hamas is using the Gaza Strip truce to build up its arsenal and fortify against any future Israeli invasion, the Shin Bet chief said. Yuval Diskin told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee that the nearly month-old truce brokered by Egypt has allowed Hamas to continue smuggling in weapons from the Sinai and laying minefields on the border with Israel. At a briefing he said Hamas rockets are now capable of reaching farther than ever into Israel, to Kiryat Gat 12 miles away and Ashdod 14 miles away. Diskin said Israeli forces must establish a presence on the ground in Gaza if the Hamas buildup is to be contained. Such a move is unlikely, as it would constitute an obvious breach of the truce by Israel.

More South African olim

The number of South African immigrants to Israel has nearly doubled in the past year, the Jewish Agency said. According to agency data released this week, 300 South African Jews are expected to have made aliyah by the end of 2008, compared to 178 last year. "This is partially due to the current political situation in South Africa and the rise in crime and violence," said Michael Jankelowitz, a Jewish Agency spokesperson. The Jewish community of South Africa is a close-knit, Zionist community numbering approximately 65,000.

New JNF bike trail

The Jewish National Fund is building a bicycle trail that will connect Jerusalem to Tel Aviv. The 75-mile trail, running from south of the capital to Tel Aviv's northern port and taking in several forests and historical sites en route, is expected to be completed within six months as part of a JNF project in celebration of Israel's 60th anniversary. The estimated cost of the construction is $400,000. According to reports, a Jerusalem-Tel Aviv ride will take approximately five hours, as it will be mostly downhill. Ascending in the other direction will take much longer, but cyclists will be able to avail themselves of rest stops along the way.

— *JTA*

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Ceasefire won't endure say front-line moshav residents

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

NETIV HA'ASARA, Israel — This front-line moshav in the western Negev, the closest Israeli community to the Gaza Strip, has been holding its collective breath since June 19, when Israel's latest ceasefire with Hamas went into effect.

The truce, known as the *tahadiyeh*, was brokered by Egypt, and has been violated about a dozen times by smaller Palestinian factions such as Islamic Jihad and the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade. Hamas, however, has honoured it and arrested Palestinians who have breached it.

Not a single Qassam rocket or mortar shell has smashed into the moshav since June. Yet there is a palpable feeling in Netiv Ha'asara – which is half a kilometre from the border and within sight of the city of Ashkelon – that this ceasefire, like

Pnina Ragolsky in front of her home [Sheldon Kirshner photos]

the ones before it, may well be a transitory phenomenon.

Speaking for many of its residents, Ziv Volk suggested that the truce is merely a phase in the long struggle between Israel and the Palestinians, enabling Hamas to regroup and Israel to press on with negotiations for the release of Gilad Shalit, an abducted Israeli soldier who has been in Palestinian captivity for the past two years.

Volk, 44, never thought that Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza in the summer of 2005 would bring tranquility to Netiv Ha'asara, a community of some 200 families that was established by Israelis forced to leave their homes in the northern Sinai Peninsula in 1982, three years after Israel and Egypt signed a historic peace treaty.

His neighbour, Pnina Ragolsky, 61, whose son's girlfriend was killed by a mortar shell three years ago in Netiv Ha'asara, believed that Israel's disengagement from Gaza would induce the Palestinians to cease bombardments of Israeli communities along the frontier.

As it happened, Volk was right and Ragolsky was wrong.

Qassam rockets and mortar shells began falling on this attractive farming community – which reminds a Canadian visitor of a prosperous neighbourhood in southern California – about six months after the second Palestinian uprising erupted in September 2000.

Shortly afterward, the moshav replaced its Palestinian workers with contract labourers from Thailand.

At first, the Qassams and mortar shells landed in empty fields, but in 2003, a projectile made a direct hit on a house and heavily damaged it. On July 14, 2005, as Israel began evacuating Gaza, a mortar shell killed Dana Galgovich, a 22-year-old woman who was due to marry Ragolsky's son and had lived with him for more than two years.

After thousands of Israeli settlers were removed from Gaza, their homes bulldozed into mounds of rubble, Israel constructed a nine-metre-high cement wall along the border facing Netiv Ha'asara.

In May 2006, a katyusha, the third originating from Gaza since 2001, struck one of Netiv Ha'asara's chicken coops, killing 30 birds. Later that year, a Qassam exploded near the dwellings of the Thai workers.

By Volk's estimation, the moshav, whose infrastructure and security roads were laid out by the Jewish National Fund, has been hit by hundreds of projectiles, injuring four people and damaging 10 homes.

Volk and Ragolsky have no illusions that the *tahadiyeh* will endure. And if it breaks down, they said, Israel should act resolutely.

Volk is of the view that the Israeli army will have to reoccupy Gaza, now administered and controlled by Hamas, should the truce collapse altogether and the western Negev is once again subjected to a reign of terror.

"The United States went to Afghanistan and Iraq to defend its sovereignty. So why can't we defend ourselves from an enemy next door?"

Ragolsky concurs, saying that no self-respecting country can accept brazen bombardments on its civilian population. "When you're attacked, you have to respond. We should hit the terrorists, even if innocent Palestinian civilians are killed. I feel for the poor Palestinians who are caught in the middle of this situation, but the Palestinians have to realize that they'll have to evacuate their cities if the attacks continue."

If necessary, she said, Israel should engage Hamas in direct talks to ensure that the truce lasts. Volk disagrees. "Talking with Hamas would be a sign of weakness. We can't be blackmailed by terrorists."

When Ragolsky and Volk arrived here 26 years ago, they assumed that they would have a quiet life in Netiv Ha'asara, which was the only settlement in Sinai to retain its name in Israel. Back then, Gaza, occupied by Israel since the Six Day

Ziv Volk stands close to the cement wall that separates Israel from the Gaza Strip.

War, was fairly somnolent, and Israelis like Ragolsky were used to shopping and dining there.

Haifa-born Ragolsky and her husband, Amnon, a farmer from Kibbutz Dorot, went to live in the Sinai in 1973, six years after Israel defeated Egypt in the 1967 war. "We wanted to build a farm for ourselves. We grew tomatoes, flowers and mangoes. In those days, Sinai was part of Israel. We were regarded as pioneers. We had a good life. We built a paradise from sand."

It never occurred to her that Israel would give up Sinai, not even after Egyptian President Anwar Sadat broke with the Arab consensus and visited Jerusalem in 1977, touching off a peace process that climaxed with the 1979 peace treaty. "We were sure we would not be moved," she said.

She and her husband and their three children finally left the Sinai, the blow softened by a $300,000 (US) government compensation package. They decided to settle in the sand dunes of the western Negev because the area was in Israel proper and the topography reminded them of Sinai. It was also near the Mediterranean Sea, and the soil was suitable for agriculture.

In common with their neighbours, the Rogolskys lived in temporary housing until 1985. Their cottage, with a garden and patio, was built by a Palestinian contractor from the Gaza town of Beit Hanoun, from where Qassams have been launched. "I never imagined we would be bombed," she said.

Previous bombardments rattled children, frightened Thai workers and curtailed outdoor social events. Today, Volk fears that the hired labourers, upon whom the farmers of Netiv Ha'asara are utterly dependent, will pack up and leave should even one Thai worker be killed in a fresh bombardment. "We'll have to close the moshav if that happens," he said sombrely.

So Netiv Ha'asara waits and watches, hoping that the future will be brighter than the recent past.

Israeli company sued in U.S. for supplying fuel to Gaza

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The spillover of Mideast politics into North American courts continues.

Last week, lawyers for victims of Qassam missile attacks sent a letter to an Israeli energy company with a branch in the United States threatening legal action if it continues to supply Gaza with fuel.

In a letter to Dor Alon Energy Company, lawyers for the Shurat HaDin Israel Law Center (ILC) urged the firm to stop supplying fuel to Hamas or face possible civil and criminal actions in a U.S. court.

"Supplying fuel to the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, it is alleged, is a direct violation of American law, which prohibits aiding, abetting and providing material support to terrorist organizations," the ILC said in a statement.

In addition to possible criminal prosecution, the firm's U.S. branch could face civil actions leading to the awarding of millions of dollars in compensation to missile attack victims, the ILC said.

The Israeli lawyer behind the threatened suit, Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, told *The CJN* that Dor Alon is the sole supplier of gas to Gaza and the fuel is utilized by Hamas to support terrorist activities. The plaintiffs allege Hamas uses the fuel to move terrorists and in the manufacture, transportation and launching of missiles into Israel

"Dor Alon Energy has continually chosen to place its own financial welfare above the security concern of the residents of Sderot and the western Negev, who have to suffer daily attacks launched upon them from Gaza using the fuel supplied by the company," Darshan-Leitner said.

"Dor Alon knows it is aiding and abetting the Hamas organization, especially after it was warned," she said. "This is the only company that supplies gas and gas can be supplied by other countries, absolutely."

Darshan-Leitner acknowledged the company is providing the fuel with the knowledge of the Israeli government. "So what?" she said. "The company can't use the approval of the government of Israel to supply gas to Gaza as a defence."

Darshan-Leitner, who is also one of the lawyers spearheading a Canadian lawsuit against a Lebanese bank that allegedly bankrolls Hezbollah indirectly, said that "once Israel withdrew from Gaza, it should not be supplying anything. It is not responsible for the life of Gaza. We don't want to create a humanitarian crisis in Gaza. We don't want the world to point to Israel and say you are responsible for the people in Gaza, therefore, Israel should not be the ones who supply it in the first place.

"Egypt should take care of them in the same way. Hamas does not hit Egypt, only Israel. It is absurd that Israel supplies these murderers with food and gas," she said.

Egypt shares a border with Gaza and occupied it from 1948 to 1967.

Darshan-Leitner said the threatened suit against Dor Alon is the first against an energy company, but not the first against a corporation accused of aiding terrorists.

Earlier this year, the ILC, which uses courts in democratic states to try to shut down terrorist operations, represented 50 plaintiffs in a U.S. suit launched against Swiss bank UBS for doing business with Iran. The plaintiffs – all terrorism victims or their relatives – claimed in court documents filed in New York that UBS was subject to U.S. sanctions against Iran, but nevertheless provided the country with hundreds of millions of dollars. Iran, the court documents state, supports Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad, which carry out terrorist attacks against Israel.

UBS has filed a motion to dismiss that case, Darshan-Leitner said.

In another legal action launched recently, the four Canadian ILC clients sued the Lebanese-Canadian Bank (LCB). The LCB, which has a Montreal office, is allegedly complicit in terrorism against Israeli civilians by providing financial services to Hezbollah.

And in another example of North American courts being asked to adjudicate events connected to the Middle East, the Palestinian village of Bil'in is suing two Montreal-based construction firms, Green Park International and Green Mount International, and their director for building residential units for Israelis on land claimed by the village. The companies are alleged to be complicit in war crimes.

Dor Alon operates primarily in the retail and energy sectors in Israel and the United States. It operates in the United States through its ownership of Alon USA, which supplies fuel stations in southern, central and southwestern states. Through a subsidiary based in Texas, Alon operates a network of 200 convenience stores under the 7-Eleven brand.

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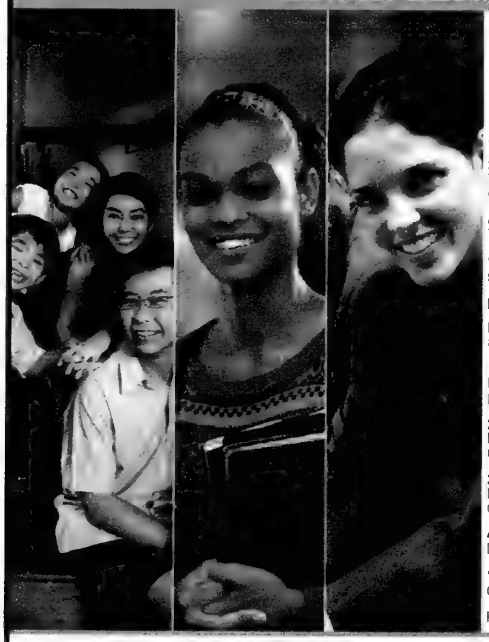

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1948...They Were There

Holocaust survivor had seen war before

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

George Stern was only 17 when he fought and survived the battles in the Negev during Israel's War of Independence, but that wasn't his first encounter with war.

Before Stern made aliyah from Hungary in 1948 to fight in Israel's first war, he lived in a small town outside of Budapest called Ujpest.

Stern was born in 1931 and was just a child when World War Two began and the Jews in eastern Europe were systematically persecuted.

Just a month shy of his bar mitzvah in 1944, Stern left his small town for Budapest soon after the Nazis invaded Hungary and began to ghettoize the Jewish population.

Meanwhile, his sister, who was about four years older, was forced to work and live in a factory – not coming home even to sleep.

His father was forced to join the army to take on the "dirty jobs."

"He was in plain clothes, wearing a Star of David, and they cleaned the kitchen. They gave them the dirty jobs. They dug the trenches."

Based on rumours that were circulating in his community, his mother urged Stern to leave home to stay with an aunt who lived in Budapest, which did not have a Jewish ghetto yet.

"I was a hidden child... I didn't escape from the concentration camp. I just left the town," he said.

Stern was determined to evade the Nazis and their sympathizers.

"I never put on the Star of David. I never wore it, because I knew that if I wore it, they could catch me."

He stayed there for a week until his father arranged for him to stay with a business contact he knew who lived on a farm outside of Budapest.

"My father had connections. He was in the wine business. He was a distributor," he said, adding that a grape farmer agreed to take Stern and his cousin in for four months in the summer to harvest the crop.

"I couldn't say anything. If anyone asked, we were goys, we were Christian, we had papers. I had papers from a Christian school, my birth certificate, etc."

He said he was safe from harm there, but he would have nightmares thinking about his family, having no contact with his mother and sister.

By the fall of 1944, his mother was taken to Auschwitz, where she was killed.

He said it wasn't until the end of April 1945 that he discovered the fate of his mother.

Throughout the war, Stern remained in Budapest, even after ghettos were built there. He continued to lie about his heritage and rely on his fake papers that said he was a gentile.

It wasn't until the war ended that Stern began to contemplate making the move to Israel.

Stern's experience as a Jewish child living in Hungary during the Holocaust prompted his desire to move to Israel. He was determined to fight to establish a Jewish state in the hope that Jews would never suffer another Holocaust.

"After the war, everybody, the youngsters, wanted to go to Israel."

He said he was involved with Zionist youth groups such as Betar and Mizrachi. In fact, Stern met his wife through their connection with Mizrachi.

Stern wanted to go to Israel, but he wanted to avoid the route that many Holocaust survivors took, which was to be transferred to a displaced persons camp in Palestine that was run by the British much like a concentration camp.

Jews were held at the camps by the British, who were under pressure from Arab leaders to limit the number of Jews allowed into Palestine.

In 1947, Stern, who was 16 at the time, decided he would try to get into Israel illegally. Mizrachi said it would take 50 youths to Prague where a plane would be waiting there to take them to Israel.

"But they said we have to go through the border illegally – sneak in in the evening. And we did. And we went to Slovakia from Budapest in the evening and then we waited," Stern said.

The *Sochnut*, the Jewish Agency, met them in Slovakia. They told the group to stay patient, that they would be leaving for Israel shortly, but after six weeks of waiting, Stern got impatient.

He decided that since nothing seemed to be moving forward, he would sneak back into Hungary and complete his high school studies.

A year-and-a-half later, in May 1948, the Hungarian government informed the leaders of the Zionist groups that 500 young Zionist would be permitted to move to Israel.

"They said, 'You can go out legally, and you take whatever you want. We'll give you a passport, but only people between 15 and 25.' I think they wanted to help Israel," Stern said.

Stern's father was on the board of Mizrachi and arranged for him to be one of the 500 youths who could go.

He said many took nothing more than their clothes and travelled by train with *madrichim*, guides, to Yugoslavia.

George Stern today

For 10 days, they travelled by a transport boat with 4,000 Bulgarian Jews, who were also making aliyah, to Haifa.

Upon arrival at the Haifa port, the women and children separated from the men as the men approached military representatives who were waiting at the dock to recruit them for the army.

Stern was desperate to join the Israeli army, but he was told that he couldn't until his 18th birthday. He was still 17.

"I said, 'What do you mean? I came to Israel for the *tzavah*. I came to fight in the war.'

"He said, 'I am sorry, but it is against our regulations. We have a strict regulation.' I told him, 'Listen, I'm proficient in electronic equipment. I learned it in Budapest. I have a diploma.' When I told him this, he was so happy."

Stern said the Israeli army needed people who were tech-savvy because they had a lot of equipment that the British had abandoned that needed to be fixed. The recruiter overlooked Stern's age because of the immediate need, and he was given clearance to join the army.

He was part of a 15-person group – all telephone and communications equipment experts – that established a communications brigade.

Stern and two other soldiers were later dispatched to the Givati Brigade, a fighting squad, to create a laboratory where they could maintain and repair all its equipment.

Stern in the winter of 1948, serving in the Givati brigade.

But since he was part of Givati, he had to receive basic combat training, during which he learned to throw grenades, shoot and take apart and put together his rifle.

After his training, although he was still only 17, he was sent to fight in the Negev.

"That is where I first saw the war and the fighting," he said.

"We arrived there – they planned Operation Yoav. This was the biggest operation in the Negev. The aim was to conquer Be'er Sheva, the surrounding area and the northern Negev."

After conquering two fortified Egyptian hills, Egypt surrendered and one of the war's most important operations was a success.

Stern was released from the army in 1950 and lived in Israel until 1960, when he and his wife moved to Brazil. Ten years later, they made their way to Canada, where he currently resides.

More than 60 years after surviving the Holocaust and fighting in the war that gave the Jewish people a state of their own, Stern's pride in his involvement in the birth of the Jewish state is palpable.

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Recovering Stefan Zweig's great interwar novel

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

Stefan Zweig was one of the major Jewish writers of interwar Europe. Raised in Vienna, his early journalism appeared in Theodor Herzl's *Neue Freie Presse*. In the 1920s and '30s, he published a series of influential biographies of such varied personalities as Casanova, Marie Antoinette, Balzac and Nietzsche. He was the author of novellas, and during Nazi rule, he completed a libretto for one of Richard Strauss' final operas.

Norman Ravvin

With this work, he was arguably the last Jewish artist to maintain a public career in Germany, though by the time of the opera's fated opening night in Dresden, Zweig's books had been banned and burned. Early in Hitler's reign he chose exile in London, where he spent the war years in the company of such English literary luminaries as H.G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw and became a confidant of Sigmund Freud.

In 1942, after having begun a new life in Brazil, he and his wife committed suicide. In his suicide note, he reflected on the difficulties of starting over with the "world of his own language" and his "spiritual home" in Europe destroyed.

Left unpublished at his death was an untitled novel about a "post-office girl," which was unlike anything else in Zweig's oeuvre. The book appeared in German in 1982 and is only now available in English translation as *The Post-Office Girl* (translated by Joel Rotenberg and published by the New York Review of Books).

Offering a satiric portrait of European elites alongside a portrayal of young Christine Hoflehner, who maintains a village post office while nursing her bed-ridden mother, the novel opens as a Cinderella story. Christine, bound to the drudgery of minding a clattering telegraph machine and selling postage to surly farmers, is invited to join an American aunt who is vacationing on the Italian border. The invitation arrives, seemingly miraculously, over the office telegraph: "Christine Hoflehner, Klein-Reifling, Austria, Welcome, come any time, choose your day, wire arrival time in advance. Best, Claire – Anthony."

Written in the 1930s with Zweig already fully aware of the danger of Nazism, his novel is a portrait of the years after World War I, when economic collapse devastated what had been the lands of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

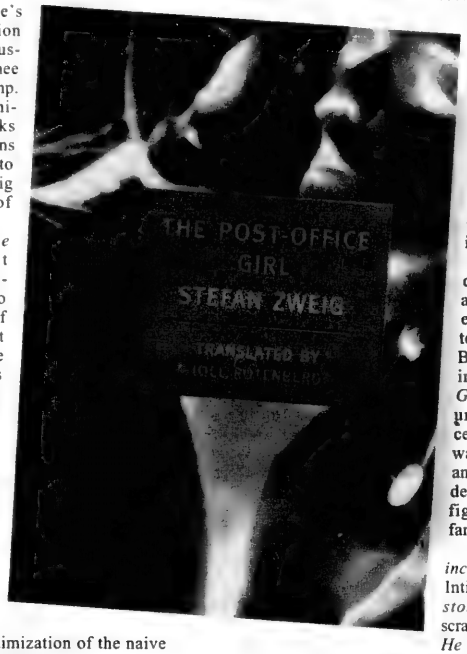
Under the tutelage of her aunt, Christine's stay at a luxurious mountain resort feeds a newfound belief that she could become somebody else. Wearing newly bought clothes, her hair styled for the first time, she hesitates to look at herself in the hotel room mirror: "She holds her breath with sudden courage like someone about to take a leap, then determinedly lifts her eyes… Who is that? Who is that slender, elegant woman, her upper body bent backward, her mouth open, her eyes searching?"

What unfolds is a narrative of abandonment, intrigue and failed romance, which abruptly sends Christine back to her old life in the Austrian hinterland.

The second half of *The Post-Office Girl* traces Christine's mother's death, her isolation from her family, and a frustrated romance with a returnee from a war-time prison camp. Made cynical by opportunities lost, Christine embarks on a series of dark decisions that seem, with hindsight, to mirror those taken by Zweig and his wife at the end of their lives.

The publishers of *The Post-Office Girl* call it "fast-paced and hard-boiled," comparing it to the detective novels of Dashiell Hammett. But one thinks first of the slick, dark narratives of James M. Cain and Raymond Chandler, like *The Big Sleep*. The great literary detective novels, like Zweig's, are built of atmospheric nights, sleek automobiles and trembling young ladies in danger of having their lives ruined by thoughtless strangers.

As in Chandler and Cain's books, fashion, double-crosses and the victimization of the naive by those with social power are central to what Zweig wants to show us. But the second half of *The Post-Office Girl* veers off in a much more serious direction, where it shares an almost Kafkaesque view of the collapse of European culture and order into tawdriness, bureaucratic rule-mongering, and the kind of political paranoia that Zweig encountered in Austria and German before his exile in England.



Readers may feel let down as the edgy energy and sheen of the novel's early chapters give way to a truly dark conclusion. But the pay-off in sticking with *The Post-Office Girl* is a deepening of our understanding of life in central Europe between the wars. As new technologies and ideologies clashed with decrepit traditional orders, figures like Christine fell far and fast.

Norman Ravvin's books include Hidden Canada: An Intimate Travelogue *and the story collection* Sex, Skyscrapers and Standard Yiddish. *He is chair of the Concordia University Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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Avenue Q speaks to 20s and 30s generation

By MARVIN GLASSMAN
Special to The CJN

One would think that the children's television show *Sesame Street*, with its puppet characters such as Big Bird and Kermit, is a light year removed from a sophisticated Broadway musical.

Jeff Marx, who watched the children's TV show while he was growing up, said it was his creative model for writing music and lyrics for the stage show *Avenue Q*.

Avenue Q, presented by Dancap Productions, plays at Toronto's Elgin Theatre until Aug. 31.

"What I wanted to do was not have the traditional Broadway musical with actors breaking into song that has turned off so many people from my generation," said Marx, 37, from his Los Angeles home. "I wanted to create a musical that young people can relate to, with unique issues from my generation."

Avenue Q has attracted an audience in their 20s and 30s who see it as a musical that speaks to their generation in a way that contemporary musical theatre usually does not.

The show is a grown-up version of *Sesame Street* on stage, with live characters and puppets singing about the issues of life following college, such as career disappointment, as well as sexual identity and tolerance among ethnic minorities.

Avenue Q is a contemporary urban neighbourhood made up of young Asians, single women, gay men, Jews, Hispanics, blacks and social outcasts – there's also a character based on the former child star Gary Coleman – all struggling to find their own way. Most of the characters in the show are life-size puppets, operated by actors onstage.

Written by Marx and co-writer Robert Lopez, the show's songs include *Everyone's a Bit Racist*, *Internet Is For Porn*, *If You Were Gay* and *It Sucks To Be Me*.

Avenue Q became such a hit that it won the 2003 Tony Award for best play as well as other Tony categories.

"I love the fame and security that *Avenue Q* gave me, but what I am most proud about is taking out the traditional linear story of one or two main characters and creating equal weight behind all the characters in the show," Marx said.

"The scenes become realistic to those who just left college and are exploring who they are and could become."

Marx said that *Avenue Q* is not an autobiography, but many of the characters in the play reflect conflicts he faced in his college years.

Jeff Marx

Growing up in Hollywood, Fla., Marx, as a teen, had a band that played mostly Barry Manilow music at bar mitzvahs and Jewish weddings. Bearing a striking resemblance to his idol, young Jeff thought of himself as a Barry Manilow wannabe.

"I played Manilow music at the shows and really wanted to have a career in show business and have success like Barry. I wrote to Barry for career advice and met him backstage after his Miami concert in 1987 and he told me, 'Go follow your dreams, but get out of your town and go to New York,'" Marx said.

"So my plan was to have a career as a performer in musical theatre on Broadway, and I enrolled as an undergraduate in theatre at Michigan State University."

But along the way to a career as an actor, Marx became a lawyer instead, specializing in entertainment law.

"In retrospect, it was a good move. I learned all about the money and legal aspects of show business, and how to parody without being sued – which led to *Avenue Q*," he said. "Being a lawyer gave me knowledge, but my ambition was back on the stage, not as an actor anymore, but I had to be creative."

Much of what happens in *Avenue Q* may not be autobiographical, but the struggles Marx faced are addressed in the play. For example, Princeton learns that he is gay after thinking he was in love with a woman. Marx, who is openly gay, also was unsure of his identity in his teens.

The play reflects Marx's core values growing up Jewish. Act 2 talks of the value of being generous to others – by finding a school for Katie Monster, a kindergarten teacher – and also shows the live characters and puppets attending a Jewish wedding ceremony.

"The Jewish concept of tzedakah is there – and everyone relates to the climax in the play, Jewish or not. A man told me that he thought the act of being generous was a very Christian act in the play," Marx said.

Avenue Q played in Las Vegas for nine months before going on a national tour this year. Marx is currently working on a movie version of *Avenue Q* and has also written a musical episode for the TV series *Scrubs*.

For tickets to *Avenue Q*, call 416-872-5555 or visit www.avenueq.com.

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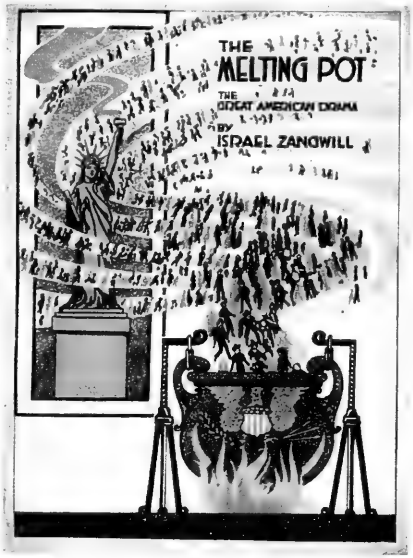
Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

SUMMER LITERARY COLUMN PART 2: ZANGWILL'S *MELTING POT* 100 YEARS LATER

One hundred years ago, in September 1908, British writer **Israel Zangwill**'s influential play *The Melting Pot* premiered in New York, simultaneously winning widespread popular acclaim along with sweeping pans from the critics. When **Theodore Roosevelt** saw it, he leaned over the edge of his presidential box and exclaimed "That's all right!" apparently in great satisfaction. But Roosevelt later invited Zangwill to lunch at the White House and chastised him for his poor depiction of American family values.



Theatre programme for The Melting Pot, 1916

Today, few people have any idea what *The Melting Pot* was about; if it is remembered at all, it is chiefly for popularizing the phrase in its title as a metaphor for American society. Like metal type that is tossed into a pot after use to be melted and recast anew, America in Zangwill's depiction was a giant crucible in which immigrants of every stripe are thrown together, happily losing their ethnicity as they meld into stereotypical American citizens. (It is often observed that Canadians prefer a "cultural mosaic" model of citizenship that seeks to celebrate ethnic diversity rather than obliterate it.)

The Melting Pot was essential a topical recasting of the Romeo and Juliet story. The protagonist, David Quixano, is a Russian Jew who comes to America after losing his family in the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, a fervent believer that the hatreds and animosities of the old world have no place in the new.

"Here you stand in your 50 groups, with your 50 languages and your 50 histories and your 50 blood feuds and rivalries," he says of the crowds of newcomers at Ellis Island. "But you won't be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God you have come to!…

A fig for your feuds and vendettas! Germans and Frenchmen, Irishmen and Englishmen, Jews and Russians – into the crucible with you all! God is making the American!"

Vera Revendal, the Juliet character, turns out to be the Christian daughter of the Kishinev general who annihilated David's family. The general admits his guilt, David forgives him, and wedding bells sound portentously in the distance. All's well that ends well? If this ending seems terribly wrong and misguided, it is only because we've learned, in the post-Holocaust age, not to automatically extend blanket immunity to war criminals upon the cessation of conflict as we would to kindergarten pupils at the end of a schoolyard recess. To use Simon Wiesenthal's pithy phrase, we have a responsibility to see that "justice, not vengeance" is done.

The *New York Times* found *The Melting Pot* to be generally "forced and false – as false as most of Mr. Zangwill's characters, which are stuffed with sawdust and words." As to Roosevelt's apparent initial endorsement of the play, the review goes on to say, "This merely goes to prove that even a president may be mistaken. *The Melting Pot* is… in fact, a very bad play viewed from almost any point of view."

The Melting Pot made a splash because Zangwill, whose first novel *Children of the Ghetto* became a publishing sensation in 1892, was long adept at making splashes in the literary world. He knew how to turn a clever phrase and to appropriate deep philosophical material for lightweight treatment. As a novelist he was as conventional and Victorian as **Charles Dickens**, and as ironic and cynical as **Mordecai Richler** when writing about the Jewish world. In his few plays, he explored intellectual ideas in the fashion of **H. G. Wells** or **George Bernard Shaw**, but was often scolded for his incessant preaching and prophesying. Throughout his career, he often embraced ideas only to cast them off later with great fickleness.

Born in Jewish east London in 1864, the young Zangwill kept notebooks full of the sayings, situations and idiosyncracies of the people he encountered, whose stories became the basis of *Children of the Ghetto* and his other "ghetto" novels. Despite its innate ridicule, the stage version of the book supposedly presented the mainstream stage in England with its first treatment of Jews as more than the demeaning stereotype of hook-nosed peddlers in dirty clothes. Unfortunately, Zangwill seemed to share the derogatory view of some Christians that the Jewish religion was an outmoded form and that the modern Jew, liberated from the medieval ghetto, was "like a mother who clasps her dead child to her breast and will not let it go."

In 1895, when he was at the height of his new-found celebrity, a man approached him and said, "I am **Theodor Herzl**. Help me to rebuild the Jewish state." Zangwill helped Herzl set up his first London address; two years later, he visited Eretz Yisrael and attended the first Zionist Congress in Switzerland. He devoted much of his energies to Zionist activities, lecturing and lobbying for the establishment of a Jewish territory. However, he seemed to have no special feeling for the authentic Jewish homeland in Palestine and felt the Jews could be equally happy in Texas, Saskatchewan, Uganda, South America or Outer Mongolia.

When the Seventh Zionist Congress formally rejected the Uganda option in 1905, Zangwill split with the Zionists and founded an organization of his own, the Jewish Territorialist Organization. Its aim was to create a Jewish homeland wherever a vacant territory might become available. After the Balfour Declaration, he returned briefly to the Zionist fold but again left in disagreement. A man of many quirks and contradictions, he may have been the model for the character in **Philip Roth**'s 1993 novel *Operation Shylock: A Confession*, about a "reverse Zionist" who tries to persuade the Jews to leave Israel and return to the Diaspora.

A sparkling lecturer who was always in demand, Zangwill found this did not always work in his favour. In 1923, he received the reprobation of many for declaring political Zionism dead to a capacity crowd at New York's Carnegie Hall. Before his death in 1926, he must have been disappointed to see all of his efforts to establish a Jewish territory come to naught. Ironically, his very life discredited the ideas he presented in *The Melting Pot*, for he remained tied to Jewish causes to the very end.

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Middle aged man discovers his operatic voice

By RITA POLIAKOV
CJN Intern

For more than 15 years, Howard Kliaman was in the tile business. He had no idea that his voice could make audiences cry.

Kliaman, 46, recently discovered that he has a talent for classical singing. He has just been accepted into Pacific Opera Victoria. He has toured with Tuned Air, a choir in British Columbia, and has performed at various venues in the past few months. His singing is described as breathtaking and his natural talent as unbelievable. Yet up until four years ago, when Kliaman was almost forced into his hometown's production of *Fiddler on the Roof*, he was unaware of his talent.

"I never sang publicly," the former Torontonian said in a phone interview from his home in Salt Spring Island, B.C.. "I was always a dashboard singer. I can remember on all those long [road] trips in Ontario… I used to sing. That's about the only singing I've ever done."

Four years ago, during Sabbath dinner, Kliaman started singing to his daughters. His wife, Annette, who had been asking him to try out for a local production of *Fiddler on the Roof*, called the play's director and held up the phone while her husband was singing.

"I had no desire to be on stage," he said. "I was trying to get a tile company up and running. I didn't want to make a fool of myself. I always had stage fright."

Despite his reservations, Kliaman was finally convinced to audition and got the part of Mordcha, the innkeeper. He was the only performer who didn't need a microphone.

Howard Kliaman doesn't need a microphone.

"I loved the part. What threw me was the sound guy. They had to keep moving me around, because I was drowning out the leads," he said. "That was the first indication I had a big voice."

Six feet two inches tall, with a 48-inch chest, Kliaman's appearance matches his voice.

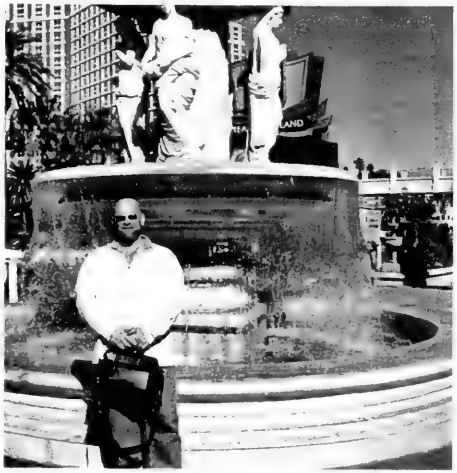
For the past two years, Kliaman has been training with Robyn Cathcart, a renowned vocal coach at the Victoria Conservatory of Music. Cathcart had a two- to three-year waiting list for new students, but Kliaman was accepted almost immediately.

"He fell in love with my voice. When I joined the conservatory, I knew nothing of this stuff. I'm a rock 'n' roll guy," Kliaman said. "

"I don't read music but I follow it very well. Tuned Air gave me a good ear. I'm able to listen to people… and regurgitate it. That's how I train for all my music."

While many singers struggle to project their voices, Kliaman has the opposite problem.

"My voice is so large, I have to learn to control it. My problem is singing the soft notes," he said.



Howard Kliaman only discovered his talent four years ago.

Kliaman's mother, Sandra, who lives in Toronto, was shocked to learn of his talent.

"I didn't know he had this talent. The first time I heard him sing was when I visited him [in British Columbia.] I swear to God, I fell off my seat. I didn't know he had it in him," she said. "He makes people cry."

Kliaman said that sometimes when he sings, he shakes and stutters from the concentration required. "It sends my body into a shock. It's an incredible feeling."

Seven years ago, Kliaman moved from Toronto to a small city in British Columbia. Without the move, he would have had no time to discover his talent.

"When I was working in Toronto, I worked anywhere from 70 to 80 hours a week. I had very little time to do anything. I was sick from stress, I never had a life. I never got to see my kids go to sleep," he said.

When a friend invited his family to Salt Spring Island, B.C. for a holiday, Kliaman fell in love with the place.

"I decided to take a go at it. There's no transportation problems, we're surrounded by green mountains and oceans," he said.

Kliaman still works in the tile business and has his own company. While he loves singing, he doesn't plan to give up his day job any time soon. Unless the offer is tempting enough.

"I don't want to become a starving artist. I have a mortgage, three daughters. The singing that I'm doing is all just for the love of it," he said. "If I can support my family singing full time, I would jump in. I love how it makes you feel."

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Estelle Getty starred in TV's *The Golden Girls*

JTA

Estelle Getty, who gained acclaim as the acerbic Sophia on the *The Golden Girls*, died last week at 84. She had suffered from dementia for many years.

She was born Estelle Scher on July 25, 1923, on Manhattan's Lower East Side to Polish-Jewish immigrants. Her show business career started in the Yiddish theatre, and as a teenager she performed stand-up comedy in the Catskill Mountains.

In the early 1980s, she was appearing as the Jewish mother in Harvey Fierstein's play *Torch Song Trilogy* when she auditioned for the role of the octogenarian mother Sophia on *The Golden Girls*.

Getty won two Emmys for the role on the NBC sitcom, which ran from 1985 to 1992.

"I always told her she should be a stand-up comic. She was so funny in person," Rue McClanahan, her co-star on the show, told Associated Press. "She would always say, 'Why couldn't we make these characters Jewish? Why am I Sicilian?'"

Getty once told tv.com, "I've played mothers to heroes and mothers to zeros. I've played Irish mothers, Jewish mothers, Italian mothers, Southern mothers, mothers in plays by Neil Simon and Arthur Miller and Tennessee Williams. I've played mother to everyone but Attila the Hun."

Correction

"Joan Rivers revels in being politically incorrect" (*CJN*, July 10) was written by Byron Pascoe and Paul Telner. Also, the article included some incorrect information about the shows Rivers has written for; *Just for Laughs Gags* was not one of them. *The CJN* regrets the errors.

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75 APARTMENT FOR RENT
78 SHORT TERM RENTAL AVAILABLE
80 SHORT TERM RENTAL WANTED
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123 TIME SHARE FOR RENT
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199 COMMERCIAL PROPERTY AVAILABLE
200 OFFICE SPACE AVAILABLE
201 OFFICE SPACE WANTED
202 STORAGE SPACE WANTED
203 STORAGE SPACE AVAILABLE
205 LAND/LOTS FOR SALE
210 LAND/LOTS FOR LEASE
220 INVESTMENT PROPERTIES
225 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES
230 BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES
232 BUSINESS FOR SALE
235 BUSINESS WANTED
237 CAREERS-RECRUITMENT
240 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES
245 EMPLOYMENT WANTED
246 VOLUNTEERS
247 DAY CARE AVAILABLE
248 DAY CARE WANTED
250 DOMESTIC HELP AVAILABLE
255 DOMESTIC HELP WANTED
257 HEALTHCARE AVAILABLE
258 HEALTHCARE WANTED
259 SENIORS
260 BUSINESS PERSONALS
265 PEOPLE SEARCH
270 PERSONALS
273 INTRODUCTION SERVICES
275 PERSONAL COMPANIONS WANTED
279 PROFESSIONAL DIRECTORY
280 ANNOUNCEMENTS
290 LOST & FOUND
295 PETS
300 ARTICLES FOR SALE
305 ARTICLES WANTED
313 BOATS
315 CARS
320 CONTENTS SALE
325 GARAGE SALE

SERVICE DIRECTORY

345 ACCOUNTING
350 APPLIANCES
355 AUDIO-VISUAL SALES/REPAIRS
357 AUTOMOTIVE
358 BRIDAL
365 CARPENTRY
368 CARPETS
370 CATERING
372 CHUPPAHS
375 CLEANING/CLEANING SUPPLIES
379 CLOCKS/WATCHES
380 CLOTHING
382 COUNSELLING
385 COMPUTER
386 DANCING
387 DECORATING
390 DRIVING
392 DRY CLEANING/LAUNDRY
394 EDUCATION
395 ELECTRICAL
398 ELECTRONICS
400 ENTERTAINMENT
402 FINANCIAL
404 FITNESS & WEIGHT LOSS
405 FURNITURE
406 GARAGE DOORS
407 GIFTS
410 HEALTH & BEAUTY
412 HEATING/AIR CONDITIONING
415 HOME IMPROVEMENTS
416 HOME INSPECTION
419 INTERNET SERVICE
420 INVITATIONS/PRINTING/CALLIG.
425 JEWELLERY
427 JUDAICA
430 LEASING
431 LANDSCAPING/LAWNCARE
432 LAWYERS
433 LESSONS
434 LIMOUSINE/TAXI
435 LIQUIDATION
438 LOCKSMITH
439 MAKE-UP
440 MISCELLANEOUS
442 MUSICAL SERVICES
443 MORTGAGES
445 MOVING
449 PEST CONTROL
450 PAINTING/WALLPAPERING
452 PARTY SERVICES
455 PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEO
460 PLUMBING
465 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES
470 RENOVATIONS
472 RETIREMENT HOMES
475 ROOFING
476 SATELITE & EQUIPMENT
480 SECURITY SYSTEMS
481 SEWING
485 SNOW REMOVAL
490 TABLE COVERING
493 TAILORING/ALTERATIONS
495 TILING
496 TRAINING
498 TRAVEL & TOURISM
500 TUTORING
510 UPHOLSTERY
512 WAITERING SERVICES
515 WATERPROOFING
520 WINDOW SERVICES
550 WORKSHOPS

REAL ESTATE Section

5 HOUSES FOR SALE

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*Dollar Value Sale Of MLS Listings Sold

#1 in Toronto - Luxury Homes Sales over $2,000,000*

BAYVIEW / YORK MILLS $8,800,000

An absolute gem. Flowing layout, spacious rooms. Dramatic 2-storey foyer w/ circular rotunda & spectacular skylight. 4 + 2 br's , 9 bth's. Entertainment room, wet bar w/ full kitchen, exercise rm & spa

HISTORIC KLEINBURG $4,780,000

Superbly built, custom design ~ 7,000 sq. ft. bungalow w/ loft, 4 + 1 br's, 7 bth's, 12' & 16' ceilings. Finished Lower level entertainment rm, w/o to salt-water pool. 3 acres natural setting.

TIMELESS CLASSIC - OLD YONGE $8,500,000

Gorgeous park-like setting on approx 2 acres with mature trees, manicured lawns & sparkling pool. 7 br's , 5 bth's. Charming breakfast room with domed octagonal cathedral ceiling & expansive bow window.

FOREST HILL $3,770,000

Richard Wengle masterpiece, built by Valentino Homes. 4,550 sq. ft. luxurious details: limestone floors, 4" white oak hardwood. 4 + 1 br's, 6 bth's. Fin. l.l. w/ exercise rm, w/i wine cellar.

THE HAZELTON $7,500,000

Ultra luxury penthouse in the heart of Yorkville. Designed with Old World European flair balanced with small scale exclusivity. Amenities include pool, fitness centre & spa & 24/7 concierege.

THE CHEDINGTON $3,395,000

One-of-a-kind, 2-storey penthouse w/ breathtaking ravine views. Pvt. elevator access to both floors. 5,390 sq.ft. Walnut Floors, cherry paneled library, bow window in dining room & mstr ens. 5 br's, 7 bth's. 4 terraces.

URBAN VILLA - $6,995,000

Urban villa, Parisian art deco style built for Lawren Harris, 1931. 5 br's, 7 bth's. 3rd level loft library, very large family room & nanny's suite Lower level w/ entertainment room, wet bar & exercise rm.

MID-TOWN TORONTO $2,198,000

Custom designed by Poku. 4 + 1 br's, 4 bth's. Dramatic 2-storey foyer showcased by spectacular skylight. Fr. doors open to terrace & patio. Privacy of ravine setting yet close to amenities of Avenue Rd/ Bloor.

FOREST HILL - $5,995,000

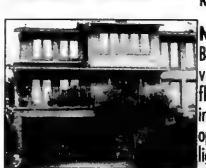
Metron Construction w/Carol MacFarlane interior. Orig. staircase & paneling. 2nd level sound proofed music room w/programmed sound system. Htd stone flrs thru-out 3rd level exercise rm & spa, office. Wine cellar, work shop.

SUMMER HILL $1,595,000

Charming home w/ impeccable details. Open concept & high ceilings. Wall-wall & floor-ceiling windows w/ skylights & Fr.dr. w/o to terrace. 4 + 1 br's. Landscaped gdns by Janet Rosenberg 2 car gar.

ST THOMAS MEETS CHARLES

Powell & Bonell design, Downsview Cabinetry, Viking Professional appliances, Kohler fixtures. Shimmering 10' floor-ceiling expanse of glass on exterior walls. 3 br's, 4 bth's. Breathtaking southwest panoramic views of the U.of T. Campus $5,679,000



N. OF BRIAR HILL – $1,375,000

Beautifully landscaped w/large front veranda & private back garden. Main floor family room w/fireplace, built-in cabinets, wet bar, sliding glass doors open to terrace. Solarium w/tinted skylights. 5 br's, 6 bth's. Lower games rm & sauna.

*Sales Representative **Broker

HARVEY KALLES

416-441-2888 ext. 291

ekalles@trebnet.com

www.elisekalles.com

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5 HOUSES FOR SALE

HARVEY KALLES
REAL ESTATE LTD. BROKERAGE

HOUSES FOR SALE

LOOKING FOR DESIRABLE AREA?
Once you see it you'll want this custom 8000+ SF House; High clgs: 5+ brs; Stunning firs; Gourmet kit; Walkout fin lower; 3 car gar + pool on 3/4 acr lot. $2,699,000. Billy So* Ext 238 Brenda Abramson*

COUNTRY LIVING IN THE CITY
Fabulous family home situated in St. Andrews offers 4 Bedrooms, renovated Kitchen, home office/guest house, 3 car garage. Designers own home! $2,299,000 Corinne Kalles* Ext 555 Elise Kalles** Ext 291

496 OLD ORCHARD GROVE
Prefectly planned 4+1 bedrooms in a perfect spot in the Avenue/Lawrence area. It's gorgeous and all done, just Bring your toothbrush. $1,849,000 Ferne Sherkin-Langer* Ext 649 Nina Castle* Ext 622

BAYVIEW GLEN CUSTOM BUILT BEAUTY
Most sought after street in neighbourhood. Live like A bungalow w/2nd storey. 5+1 bdrms, 7 baths, approx. 1/2 Acre. (pie shaped) South facing lot w/ fabulous landscaping Approx. 48000 + L/L. $1,999,000 Michelle Schipper**Ext 289

131 MUNRO BLVD
In the prestigious and exclusive Bayview/York Mills neighbourhood is this exclusive custom built masterpiece by Aspen Green. 4 + 1 bedrooms and many outstanding custom built features. $1,989,000. Ferne Sherkin-Langer* Ext 649 Nina Castle* Ext 622

2 NEPTUNE DR #402
The Deloraine model, approx. 976 sq feet sunny south facing overlooking courtyard, fabulous amenities and social activities. $239,900 Ferne Sherkin-Langer* Ext 649 Nina Castle* Ext 622

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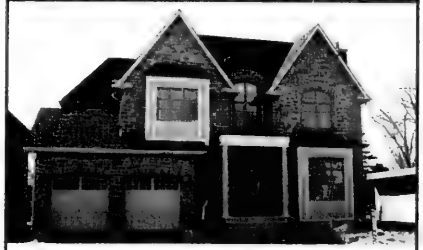
BATHURST & WILSON
CUSTOM BUILT EXECUTIVE HOME



Exceptionally built & specifically designed to incorporate nothing ordinary! All new custom luxury built constn. w/full Tarion warranty! Approx. 4300 sf! Fin. bsmnt. w/nanny ste., natural stone exterior, gourmet kitch. w/granite counters, wrought iron railings, strip hrdwd. flrs. finished on site, sun-drenched flr. plan spread over a 60' lot, 2 car gar., 130+ pot lights! This custom home will leave you breathless!! *No other home like it!*

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CONDOMINIUMS FOR SALE

1700 SQ.FT!! LIKE A BUNGALOW!!
Bathurst/Sheppard 1 Level Condo, Low Rise Boutique Bldg, Large Eat-in Kit w/bright breakfast area. Inviting fam rm. w/fireplace. 2 Brdm, 2 Baths, En-suite Laundry, Locker & Extra Locker, 2 Car Parking, W/out from lr/Dr. to Terrace Garden. A must see!! Motivated Seller!! *Helen Gould

• • •

110/120 PROMENADE CIRCLE
WANTED 2 Br. On High Floor with Balcony. Please Call *Ted Waxman

• • •

2 NEPTUNE – SENIORS BLDG
Over 1000 Sq.ft – 2 Br, 2 Baths, Corner Unit, Locker, & Parking – Appl, A Must see! Asking $249,900 *Ted Waxman

HOUSES FOR SALE

BATHURST/CLARK – 12 YRS OLD
Custom Blt. 5 Br Home-Fin bsmt, w/Nanny Quarters-Walkout-9' Ceilings, Kosher Kitchen-Granite, Hrdwd-Extras!! A Must See!!!! Asking $1,090,000 *Ted Waxman

• • •

THORNHILL WOODS/HWY#7
Detached 3 Br with fam.rm, Hrdwd Cac, Appliances, Extras Galore!! Shows Great!! *Ted Waxman

• • •

LESLIE/STEELES – EXECUTIVE
3 Br. Townhome-Dble Garage, Walkout bsmt, Family Room, Extras Galore! Shows Great! A Must See! Call **Mark Waxman

• • •

* Sales Representative **Broker

905-764-7200

LES AARON
Sales Representative

NEW LISTING - BATHURST & DUPONT
$700,000. Semi-detached property containing 2 separate units in the heart of the annex. W/O to deck & private backyard from main floor. W/O to balcony on 2nd floor. Sought-after location. Can be converted to single family dwelling.

AVENUE RD/LAWRENCE
$949,000. 2 Storey, 3 + 1 bdrm, 4 bath home on 150' deep lot!!! Hardwood on main & 2nd floors, sunken family room w/beamed ceilings, brick fireplace & walkout. Basement has high ceilings, rec room, 4th bdrm, 3 pce & storage. Great value!

CONDO - BATHURST/GLENCAIRN
$379,000. Fabulous 2 bdrm, 2 bath suite w/beautiful south west view. Approx. 1175'. Kitchen has Granite counters, pot lights, & breakfast bar. Master w/5 pce ensuite, His & Hers closets w/organizers. Exercise rm., w/w/pool., sauna & rec rm. Central location.

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$549,900. 3 bedroom with hardwood, 2 bathrooms, large yard, garage, close to shopping, TTC and Synagogues. Renovate to your liking or top it up!

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FEATURE HOME OF THE WEEK

BATHURST / GLEN PARK
Custom designed & built luxury home, approx. 3,000 sq. ft. + fin. basement, 4 bedrooms, 4 baths, hardwood floors on 2 levels, w/o to gorgeous deck, huge rec. room, close to subway. **ACT NOW — ONLY $1,179,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

10 PRUE CONDO — NEW LISTING
Rare opportunity! Spacious 2,500 sq. ft. penthouse unit, 3 bdrms. + fam. room, walk-up to private rooftop terrace, 2 parking. **PRICED FOR IMMEDIATE SALE AT $699,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

• • •

MARLEE / LAWRENCE — NEW LISTING
Spacious 4 + 2 bedroom ranch bungalow, 3 baths, on 50 x 120 ft. lot close to Spadina subway. Loaded with charm, great potential **ONLY $499,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

• • •

BATHURST / GLENGROVE — NEW LISTING
Custom renovation & addition, 4 + 1 bdrms., main floor family room, finished basement. Gourmet family-sized kitchen, luxurious details throughout. **ONLY $999,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

• • •

1 GLEN PARK CONDO
Bright, charming 1 bdrm. unit in boutique building w/all the bells & whistles incl. health spa. Extremely desirable location close to shuls, TTC, shops. **ONLY $199,000.** Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

*BROKER OF RECORD

SOLD

BATHURST / VIEWMOUNT
Spacious, custom designed home, breathtaking park views from rear, exquisite oak spiral staircase, oak floors on main, soaring 20 ft. ceiling in living room, large fam. size kitchen w/ centre island, sauna, 2 jacuzzis, 3 balconies, 2 porches, oversized cedar closet++. Call Akiva Sererbrowski, Sales Representative (416) 787-1712.

PRESTIGIOUS GLEN RUSH BLVD.
Magnificent custom renovation & addition on 50 x129 ft. lot in a most desirable area. Traditional warmth blends seamlessly with state-of-the-art upgrades! 5 + 1 bedrooms, 6 baths, oak hrdwd floors on 2 levels, huge gourmet Kosher kit. with stainless appls., marble, granite & custom cabinetry; Oak-panelled library with built-in bookcases; 2 gas fireplaces; and other features too numerous to list. **REDUCED TO $1,975,000.** Take a virtual tour at **eichornrealty.com** and call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712 for a private viewing.

• • •

FOREST WOOD RAVINE — PRIVATE RETREAT IN THE CITY
Spectacular 5,877 sq. ft. 2 1/2 storey + fin. bsmt. mansion on a 50 x 215 ft. lot. 6 + 1 bedrooms, 5 + 1 baths,10 ft. ceilings on main floor, 9 ft. ceilings on 2nd floor. Gourmet "Cameo" Kosher kitchen, elevator, marble floors, marble & onyx fireplaces, state-of-the art electronics & designer upgrades throughout. Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

• • •

HOMES FOR RENT
- **AVENUE ROAD / WILSON.** Ren. & dec. 2 + 1 bdrm., $2,300/mo.
- **BATHURST / GLENGROVE.** [illegible] + fam. room, $2,500/mo.
- **BATHURST / GLEN** RENTED [illegible]rm., $2,550/mo.

Call David Eichorn* (416) 787-1712.

5 HOUSES FOR SALE

Forest Hill

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Bayview – 416-226-1987 • North – 905-881-7653

CENTRAL PROPERTIES

38 PARK LANE CIRCLE $6,800,000 APPROX 2.5 ACRES
206 x 425 ft lot. Immaculate 17,000 sq ft House, 8 Bdrms, 10 Bths. Triple Heated Garage. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

MAGNIFICENT 6 BDRM FOREST HILL HOME
$4,488,000 Gracious and Exquitsite Rms, Must See! Over 10,000 sq ft. Marilyn Merrick* 416-488-2875

BATHURST/AVENUE/CORTLEIGH $3,199,000 JUST COMPLETE
Fabulous Custom Built Home, 4 Bdrms, 7 Bths, 10' Ceilings on Main, Marble /Granite Thru 50x135ft Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

LYTTON PARK – BRAND NEW CUSTOM BUILT $2,859,000
Approx 4500 sq ft, 4 Bdrms, 5 Bths, 10' Ceilings, Fin Bsmt, Garage, Loads of Granite, 50 x 134 ft Lot. Faithe Sverksy** 416-488-2875

FOREST HILL 50' FT LOT – BEST VALUE $1,489,000
4 Bdrms, Wonderful Principal Rms, Prestigious Location, Private Drive, Near Schools. Marilyn Merrick* 416-488-2875

RAVINE/GEORGIAN/CEDARVALE $1,349,000
5+1 Bdrm, 5 Bth Centre Hall Lo[SOLD]R, DR w/Walk-outs, Main flr Fam + Dr. Gorgeous, Master Ste[SOLD]ar Pkg. Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

CUSTOM BUILT HOME – FAYWOOD/SHEPPARD $1,149,000
50 x 150 ft Top Quality Finishes Throughout, 4 Bdrms, 4 Baths. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

99A YORK DOWNS DRIVE! BATHURST NORTH OF WILSON!
$725,000! Value packed 4+1Br 4Bth! Fab kit/bkr/fam rm combo o/l's park! Nanny ste! Move in! Sandon Schwartzben**416-226-1987

PRIME ARMOUR HEIGHTS IMMACULATE 4BR/4BTH!
$699k! Nicely updated lrg hme! Great kit w/w/out to deck & amazing 55x174' lot! Fully fin'd bsmt+apt. P. Pollock*416-226-1987

1ST AD! 26 WEDGEWOOD DRIVE! YONGE N./FINCH!
$679,000! Incredible find! Custom 4+1Br, 3Bth! Nanny Ste! Fab 50x200' lot! Move right in! Sandon Schwartzben**416-226-1987

PRIME ARMOUR HEIGHTS HOME – REDUCED TO SELL!!!
Beautifully Maintained and Updated Home on Quiet Part of a St w/ a Spacious Yard. Adam Feldman* 416-488-2875

$625k! ARMOUR HEIGHTS-MOVE RIGHT IN!
Spacious +spotless 3br/2stry gleaming hardwood firs, fin'd bsmt w/sep side entrance. Fab 40X125' lot! Patti Pollock* 416-226-1987

$589,000! ARMOUR HEIGHTS-RENO DELIGHTS!
3 Bdrm/3 Bath on Fabulous quaint+quiet street. Magnificent lot. Patti Pollock* 416-226-1987

NORTH PROPERTIES

5 FAIRLEA AVENUE! SENSATIONAL 100X160' LOT!
$1,079,000! Thornhill's upland golf course! Most sought after local! Build your dream home! Sandon Schwartzben**416-226-1987

22 ISRAEL ZILBER DRIVE! BATHURST S/ELGIN MILLS!
$459,000! Spectacular 4b[SOLD]org'us kit/bkr/fam rm combo! Move in cond! Call Sandon Schwartzben**416-226-1987

CONDOS

BEST CONDO VALUE IN CENTRAL TORONTO $999,000
Over 2500 sq ft Total Designer Reno 3 Bdrm + Den Boutique Bldg, 2 Pkg Saul Merrick* 416-488-2875

260 HEATH ST. W. IN THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE
2 Bdrm, 1.5 Bths, 16th Floor Facing S/W, Parking + Locker, Approx, 1100 sq ft $419,000 Allen Tobe** 416-488-2875

1ST AD! 68 GRANGEWAY AVENUE! PENTHOUSE SUITE!
$359,000! McCowan/Ellesmere! New+lux 2br 2bth s/e corner w/priv roof top terrace! Wow! Sandon Schwartzben**416-226-1987

55 HARRISON GARDEN BLVD. - RECENTLY RENOVATED
1 Bdrm Plus Den, 705 sf, [SOLD]m, 1 Prkng, $279,000, Steps to Subway, Parks, Schools. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

RENTAL PROPERTIES

PRIME COMMERCIAL SPACE – BATHURST/EGLINTON $2900/MO.
Approx 1300 sq ft, Ideal for Showroom, Cooking School, Office, Event Venue, etc. 1 Pkg Spce. Faithe Sversky** 416-488-2875

BATHURST/WILSON –EXCELLENT LOCATION!
$2,800/MO! Wonderful 4br family home. Mn flr powder room. Large principal rooms. Fin. Bsmt. Patti Pollock*416-226-1987

ARMOUR HEIGHTS-BEAUTIFULLY RENO'D-OPEN CONCEPT
$2,800/MO! 3br, 2stry. Rec[LEASED]o'd kitchen, walk-out to large deck. Convenient location! Patti Pollock*416-226-1987

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LAKE SIMCOE (French Country stone CHATEAU - 40 mins. to Tor.)
$15,000,000 When you see this 10 acre ESTATE you'll say "ONLY $15,000,000." RATED AMONG THE FINEST IN THE WORLD with some replicas of finer castles in Europe. 5 fp, wine cellar (the finest) theatre, Stone Boat house, guest qtrs , 6 car garage & court yd. Infinity pool & tennis, gated sec DVD available to qualified buyers

LAKE SIMCOE Magft. 10 AC family compound - Newly Blt. Big Bay Point - (45 mins. to Tor.)
$6,880,000 - Nothing spared! So outstanding! Sec'd 5000 s.f. on each level w/multi walkouts to pool, beach-sand-sunsets/. (4 fp, 2 granite kit., screened Florida rm , 3 abutting lakefront lots, add your 2 guest homes includes full designer contents (Elte) Unique home, not to be missed

LAKE SIMCOE STONE MANSION - off Lake Dr., Keswick $4,850,000
Gated 2.5 AC enclave 1200' point of peninsula, newly blt., masterly architecture of finest stone/timber/ glass Grand spaces 6000' PLUS, screened bkft. Rm +++DVD available upon request. Additional large space to finish as guest quarters or additional bedrooms, etc

LAKE SIMCOE MAJOR ESTATE (gorg. Sand Beach - 45 mins.to Tor.)
$2,895,000. Gated 2.75 acre, 175' rare sand beach Outstanding quality & design. 7300 s.f. + gorg. 805 s.f. coach House, 5 fp., 7 bath, pool, dbl boat house.

LAKE SIMCOE 'S PRESTIGIOUS area of KEMPENFELT BAY 2.5 AC 250' lakefront
$2,600,000 South Shore, no cliff! 1 yr old 7300 s.f. + 1300 s.f. unfin'd space The BEST quality features/amenities. (45 min to Tor).

LAKE SIMCOE 6.5 AC Wooded SECLUSION- $1,875,000 (45 mins. to Tor.)
Muskoka feel! 2 great res. + 3rd smaller one. Shows 5 star, full contents incl'd - the best.

LAKE SIMCOE Everything!
$1,589,000. You'll feel like you are on some tropic island, over 5500' upgraded with the finest, large great rm, large granite kitchen, s/s appl., 3 Fp's, 5 bdrms, 4.1 baths, high ceilings, wood floors. Impressive terrace/patios, dockage, sand & boat hs.

LAKE SIMCOE - WOW - everything!
Turnkey and sand beach. $1,359,000. (45 mins. to Tor.)

LAKE SIMCOE - Big Bay Pt.
Gorgeous year round cottage with perfect sand beach $1,295,000. (45 mins. to Tor.)

LAKE SIMCOE - Kempenfelt Bay - ESTATE LOT
8.44 acres. 243 foot lakefront, beutifuylly treed, (2) older res Exst. $995,000. (45 mins. to Tor.)

LAKE SIMCOE Big Bay Point $875,000
Gorgeous 150' south facing lot, gated/hedged/treed. Great Cott. Boat house, possible severance. (45 mins. to Tor.)

REAL ESTATE Section

5 HOUSES FOR SALE

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HOMES

Bathurst/Lawrence – New Price – 4 level sidesplit, 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, finished basement, giant pie shaped lot on prestigious street with custom homes, live in now and build your dream home later. Asking $849,900.

Bathurst/Lawrence – Great Starter Bungalow, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, updated kitchen and bathroom, updated windows, finished basement with potential income, rear deck, large lot, updated, shows well, asking $529,900.

Bathurst/Lawrence – New Listing! Bungalow on 55 x 132 lot! 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, great location, asking $529,900.

Bathurst/Shelborne – East Side, lovely building lot in great location, 50 x 117, Build your dream home! Available immediately, asking $699,900.

CONDOS

Bathurst/Lawrence – "The Encore" at 8 Covington – approx. 1019 sq.ft., 2 bedrooms, 2 baths, master ensuite with shower stall and Roman tub, south exposure, balcony, outdoor pool, 24HR concierge, steps to shopping and buses, asking $299,900.

Bathurst/Lawrence – 3000 Bathurst, 1 bedroom suite, about 860 sq.ft., parking spot, large solarium, patio, great value at $209,900.

COMMERCIAL

Office and Warehouse Space Available! – Great for small user! Lawrence/Caledonia area, month to month tenancy, take an office or rent some warehouse space or combine into one package! Prices start at $400 per month.

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OVERBROOK/WILSON HTS.
1st time offered! New custom bit. legal triplex, 1-3 bdrm., + 2 bdrm. apts., balcs., sep. htng., a/c & hydro meters, 2 dble. 4-car gar., plus outside pkg., priv. entr. to each apt., many extras, steps to everything.

BATHURST/CLARK
4 bdrm. plus studio or 5th bdrm., liv and din. comb., gourmet kit., built-in stainless steel appls., granite countertops, w/o to deck, fam. rm., fireplace, mstr. bdrm. with sitting rm. and 5-pce. ens., walk-in clothes closet, quiet Cr. A-1 loc.

BATHURST/SHEPPARD
3 bdrms., 3 bths., all good size rms., updated kit., appls., lrge lot, steps to all.

416-633-7373

SALLY ROSEN
905-764-7111

BATHURST & STEELES CONDO
"Primrose" 2 br., balc., fantastic loc., immed. poss. 1450 sq. ft. Move in cond.

BATHURST & CENTRE
Great 4 bdrm home, 2,800 sq. ft., 4 baths, 2 bdrm bsmnt apt, huge lot, 34' x 170'. Hardwood floors, huge deck, 2 car garage.
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Teen represents Canada at world beach volleyball event

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A lot of 18-year-olds who stand six-four-and-a-half and weigh 185 pounds are, shall we say, somewhat gangly and more apt to bump into a wall while taking a walk than perform finesse moves on a field of play.

But Sam Schachter is no ordinary teenage string bean.

In fact, he's got all the attributes of a champion beach volleyball player: he's quick, he's co-ordinated, he's good on offence and just as talented on defence. He can spike and he can dig (go low to save opponents' hard shots), and his overall game is such that after only three years in the sport, he's on Canada's 19-and-under national team that's travelling to the Netherlands for the World Under-19 Championships, which began this week.

The Richmond Hill teen, it seems, is the real deal, a volleyballer who's good on the court, but excellent in the wildly popular beach variety of the sport.

The beach game suits his talents to a tee, he said prior to heading to The Hague. In the hardcourt game, players tend to be specialists, whether servers, spikers or set-up men. In beach, with only two players per side, you've got to be more flexible.

"I think beach requires more overall skills," he said. "I have good ball control and do everything generally well."

George Shermer would agree. A former coach of the Maccabi Canada volleyball team and co-owner of Beach Blast, a beach volleyball training and recreational facility with locations in Downsview and at the Docks, Shermer has seen Schachter develop into one of the country's best young players.

He's effusive in his description of Schachter's talents.

"He's got the right size, tremendous athletic abilities and he comes from a very good family background," Shermer said. "He's got all the tools to succeed."

At Volleyball Canada's June tryouts for the national team, held at Beach Blast in Downsview, Schachter and his partner Rex Fenton of Ottawa, were pushed to the limit. In the final, they faced the Manitoba duo of Chris Voth and Dane Pischke and were almost eliminated in Game 2 of the best of three championship. Already down after losing the first set 12-21, they trailed the westerners 20-19 in the second game and faced three match points. Barely staving off elimination, they went on to win 26-24, forcing a Game 3. That one they won 15-10, sending them to Holland.

Sam Schachter, right, will represent Canada in The Hague.

Schachter knows he and Fenton will have their work cut out for them in Europe. Canada is a middling power on the international scene. Our best-ever finish in a youth competition was fourth. Brazil, Poland, Australia and Germany are world powers, with European countries relying on players who honed their skill playing in a professional court league.

Schachter's dream is to compete at the world's at the senior level, and considering how far he's come in a short time, that goal appears well within reach.

A graduate of Westmount Collegiate in Thornhill, Schachter played court volleyball in high school before making the move to the sand.

"I like beach a little more," he explained. "I experimented with it the first time. Now I'm known as a beach player."

Two years ago, playing with a different partner, he finished ninth in Canada and fifth in Ontario. Last year, after changing partners, he moved up to fourth in Canada and second in Ontario.

This year meant another change. He teamed with Fenton, a longtime opponent, and the pair vaulted to the top ranking in Canada while also earning a spot on Ontario's under-21 squad. The June national tryout at Beach Blast marked the pair's first tournament together.

Schachter, who will attend Wilfrid Laurier University this fall, attributes his rise through the ranks to physical growth, "which helped," and because "I am smarter, a better attacker, [play] better defence and digging. My overall game improved."

He trains under Jason Hubbard at Beach Blast in Downsview, among other venues. Schachter's training regimen is gruelling, taking up to four or five hours a day, five days a week. Prior to tournaments, he trains seven days a week.

Shermer believes Schachter's potential is nearly unlimited. He could go as far as the Canadian Olympic team in 2016, when he should be near his peak, he said.

"His biggest asset is that he's extremely well co-ordinated, not his size," Shermer said. "He's good in all positions.

"His personality is that he's focused on all the things young people don't know about to be number one. He's got it all."

* * *

Schachter would be a shoo-in to make Maccabi Canada's court volleyball team at next summer's Maccabiah Games in Israel, if he chooses to play, Shermer said.

Even without him, the Canadian team should put a smile on Shermer's face. He's hopeful that all three of his sons – Joshua, who finished fourth in the national under-18 competition and second in Ontario, Eli and Daniel – will make the Canadian team in Israel.

In addition, Josh Binstock, a nationally ranked beach player, might be available.

There's also a good chance Maccabi Canada will field a women's team. It will likely be built around Rebecca Moskowitz, far and away the best Jewish female beach volleyballer, Shermer said.

Moskowitz recently teamed with Line Jomphe to win a bronze medal at the $10,000 Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) Beach Volleyball Women's Satellite event in Laredo, Spain.

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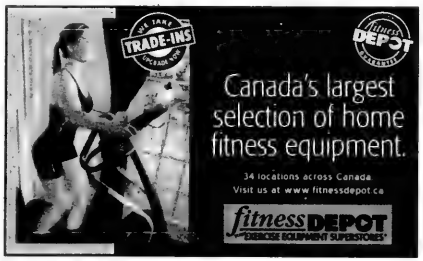

Upholding the contract

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

Writing in the *National Post* the day after it happened, Michael Oren offered what I consider to be the most rational explanation as to why the Israeli government was correct in deciding to swap nearly 200 dead terrorists and the very-much alive terrorist, Samir Kuntar, for the bodies of kidnapped Israeli soldiers, Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser.

"In return for their service in a citizen army, Israel guarantees that it will do everything to bring its soldiers home, should they fall into enemy hands," Oren wrote. "Regev and Goldwasser, reservists performing their annual duty, put on their uniforms confident of that pledge."

This is the root of the unwritten social contract between a country and its citizens. In implicitly agreeing to such an arrangement, each of the parties promises to protect the other and in return receives the promise of protection as well. Ultimately, the lives of Regev and Goldwasser could not be saved by the state. But Israel did the next-best thing (though to call it that seems rather crude) in returning Kuntar, a convicted murderer, to Lebanon so that Regev and Goldwasser could be properly buried in Israel, and so that their families and friends – who also entered into the same social contract as the two dead soldiers – could be freed from the purgatory that has held them for the past two years.

The main question that many have asked ever since the prisoner swap – did the negotiations with Hezbollah that led to the return of Regev and Goldwasser's bodies do more good or harm to Israel? – seems at best only of secondary importance, and at worst wholly irrelevant, given the circumstances. Israel, in the spirit of its social contract with Regev, Goldwasser, their families and, indeed, all its citizens, did what was required of it. That what the state needed to do resulted in the freeing of Kuntar is virtually meaningless by comparison.

But let's consider Kuntar anyway. Does freeing him, knowing that he brutally murdered three Israelis, including a four-year-old girl, weaken Israel and/or strengthen Hezbollah and other Islamist terror groups? In the latter's twisted minds, probably yes – they will see this as a major victory. Hezbollah kidnapped Regev and Goldwasser from Israeli territory, killed them and were handed back one of their own "heroes" for their efforts. If this operation proved so successful, the argument goes, there's no question they will try this again.

True, they will try to kidnap Israeli – and potentially American, Canadian and European – soldiers again, but this would have been the case anyway, regardless of whether they had captured Regev and Goldwasser and whether they had been able to negotiate Kuntar's freedom. Killing, kidnapping and ransoming have long been a major part of the jihadi way.

As for Kuntar, what does his freedom mean to Israel and the West? I would argue little or nothing. There are thousands of Kuntars out there who desire to kill innocent Israelis by any means available. What, in reality, is the significance of there being one more person of that ilk out there? The added threat to Israel of a free Kuntar is, in short, negligible, even if the reality of a convicted murderer of Israelis walking away is tragic.

In a situation such as the one Israel faced a few weeks ago, there is little room for rational decision-making, for the weighing of pros and cons. This was the sort of instance when emotion and instinct must lead the way. The repatriation of Regev and Goldwaseer, even in death, was the right thing for Israel to do, because it represented the vitality of the social contract between Israelis and Israel.

As for those who question Israel's decision from a rational perspective, I can only say that those of us who support the decision to give up Kuntar for the remains of Regev and Goldwasser hope, like you, that he, Hezbollah and all other jihadists receive their comeuppance.

GREEN BEANS WITH SESAME VINAIGRETTE

- 3 tblsp olive oil
- 1 tsp Asian sesame oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 tblsp white wine vinegar
- 2 tblsp sesame seeds, toasted
- 1 1/2 lb green beans, trimmed

Cook beans in boiling salted water, uncovered, until crisp-tender, 4-5 min. Drain in a colander; transfer to bowl of ice and cold water to stop cooking. When beans are cool, drain and pat dry.

In a large bowl, whisk together oils, vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper until combined, then add beans and sesame seeds and toss to coat.

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REMEMBERING OUR YESTERDAYS

By BILL GLADSTONE

Sammy Taft, the "mad hatter" of Spadina Avenue, poses with show-business legend Cab Calloway around 1940. Sammy welcomed many celebrities to his famous hat shop next to Shopsy's Delicatessen, including Louis Armstrong, Jack Benny, Victor Borge, Jack Dempsey, Woody Herman, Bob Hope, Phil Silvers, Rudy Vallee, Henny Youngman and many hockey pros. A huge hockey fan, he once gave a hat to a hockey player for scoring three goals in a single game, an achievement that was thereafter known as a "hat trick." When Sammy put a hat in his hands, it came alive – he could make it talk. Late in his life, around 1990, he was celebrated in a one-person theatrical show in Toronto.

Centenarian says she is 'young at heart'

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Sadie Shapiro's sparkling blue eyes are an expression of the positive outlook on life she has had for 100 years.

Interviewed at her residence at Cummer Lodge, Shapiro spoke of her eventful life and her philosophy that has kept her cheerful and optimistic despite many adversities.

Shapiro was born in Toronto on June 14, 1908. Her parents, Bessie and Maxwell Blumenthal, had come from Russia at the turn of the century. She attended Clinton Street Public School, Harbord Collegiate and Oakwood Collegiate and went on to study at the University of Toronto.

It was rare for females in the late 1920s to study in university, particularly Jewish females. Shapiro received a master's degree in child psychology.

She says she loved working with young children – she taught preschoolers at Hillcrest Progressive School, and later, as a volunteer, she was one of the founders of St. Christopher House, which started as a preschool facility for underprivileged children.

"I enjoyed these volunteer activities," says Shapiro. "I had many other volunteers who came to help at the school."

Sadie Shapiro celebrates her 100th birthday.

She does not like to look back at unpleasant events in her life, but speaks with pleasure about her devoted daughter, Joy Pass, and her late husband, pharmacist Harry Shapiro, whose landmark drug store was at Spadina Avenue and Dundas Street.

"We had a great marriage. I was divorced with my teenaged daughter when I met Harry, and after we married, we had a wonderful life." She says that in addition to her volunteer work, they travelled and she played golf. She was active in the Lillian Freiman chapter of Hadassah-WIZO and served as president.

Shapiro says she took many courses over the years, particularly in literature, because she enjoys reading.

With pride, she displays a book published by The Ryerson Press titled *Through My Eyes: An adventure in Art and Travel.*

"Harry and I went to Israel in the 1960s and we became fascinated with the country. Although Harry had never been involved with art, when he returned, he took crushed stones and created Israeli scenes, and together we created the text and included 16 reproductions of Harry's paintings, very reminiscence of Israel."

Looking back, she modestly says her greatest achievement in life "was having my daughter Joy, who gave me the most beautiful 100th birthday party. And I love my two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren dearly – they bring me a great deal of joy."

Shapiro has a joie de vivre despite being confined to a wheelchair after she had hip surgery. "But I go to many activities and enjoy the current events courses and discussions, and my favourite show is *Jeopardy*."

As we say goodbye, Shapiro says, "I'm suppose to get old at my age, but I am young at heart."

It is this philosophy that has made Sadie Shapiro a young 100 year old.

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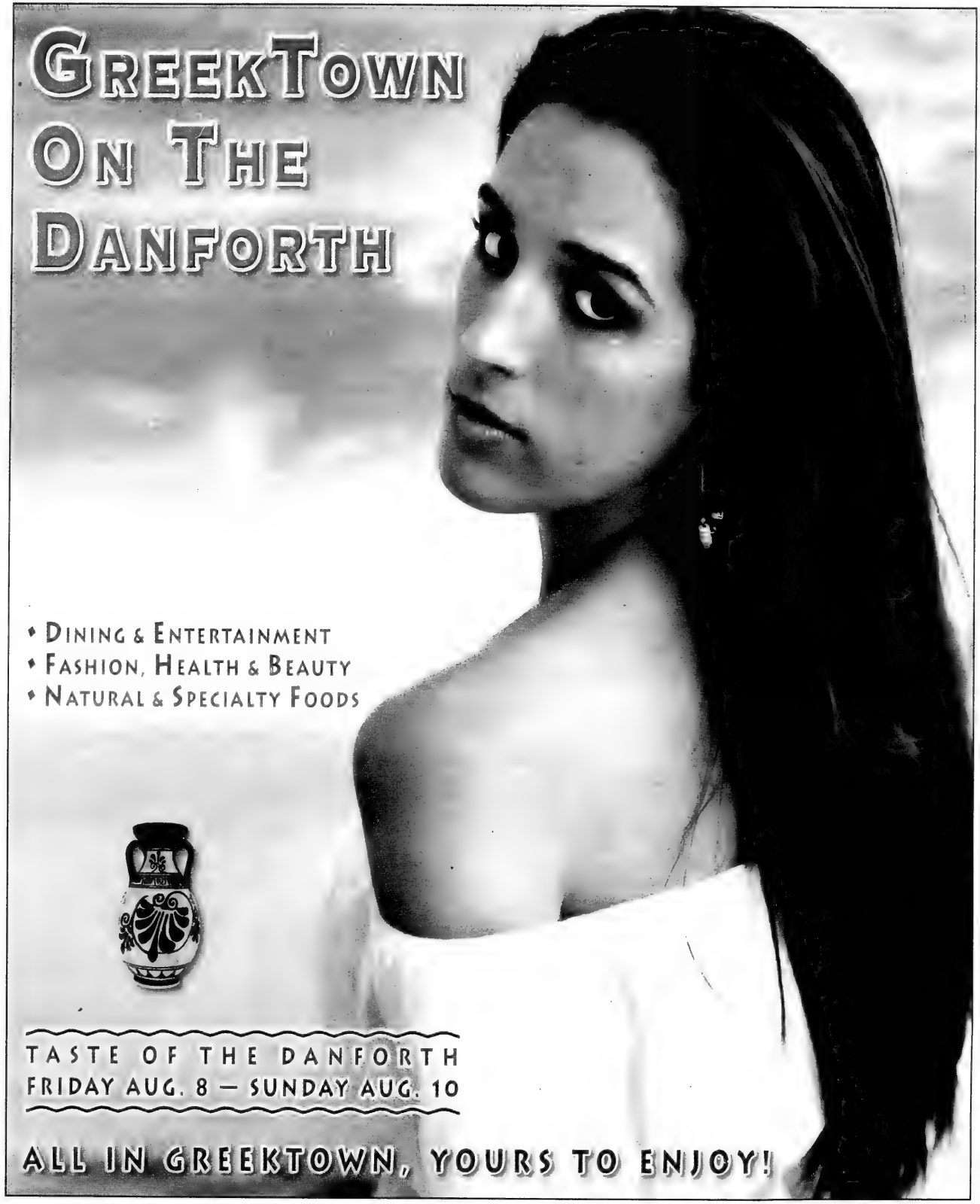
GreekTown On The Danforth



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TASTE OF THE DANFORTH
FRIDAY AUG. 8 — SUNDAY AUG. 10

ALL IN GREEKTOWN, YOURS TO ENJOY!

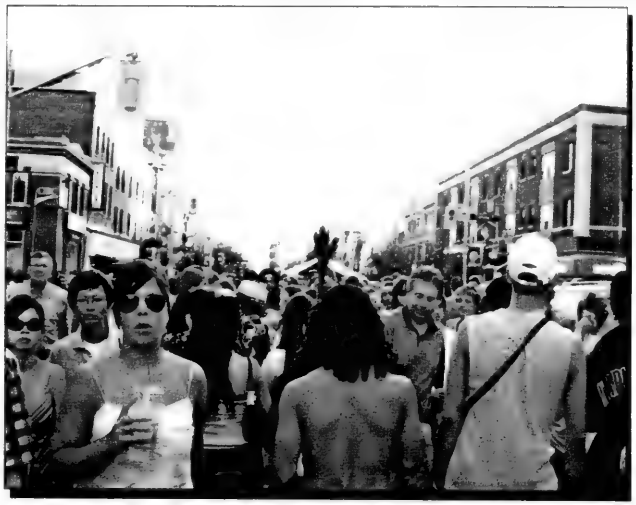
GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Taste Of The Danforth — how good things happen in GreekTown

What you can taste, see, and hear at the Taste Of The Danforth is good — very good. Wonderful food, festive music, and throngs of happy people caught up in three days of revelry.

But there's more at work here than meets the eye. How this event grew into North America's pre-eminent street festival is a success story of a different kind.

It's the story of energetic, forward-thinking people with a vision: how to celebrate and donate at the same time. How to live it up while giving.



If the Taste is the flower, GreekTown is the soil

It's the story of committed people too numerous to mention who have given generously of their time and financial resources to translate the vision into a reality: family fun with a cultural flair that benefits worthy causes like the Heart and Stroke Foundation (this year's charity designate).

Above all, it's the story of the people who enable it to happen: the family-minded, hard-working people of GreekTown. Because if the idea of the Taste was the seed and the Taste itself is the flower, GreekTown is the soil. It happened in GreekTown because the welcoming spirit of the dozen blocks from Broadview to Jones is precisely the kind of environment that allows such an undertaking to flourish.

GreekTown is so much more than Greek-Town. So when the Taste Of The Danforth bids you to "taste the world", they're not kidding. Implicit in this invitation is the opportunity to experience the warmth of an area that has historically embraced other cultures not only as clients, but also as entrepreneurs.

Take Saul Korman of Korry's for instance. Not many Jewish boys can say they're from Rouyn-Noranda, Québec, but Saul can. The gold mines' loss is our gain, as are Korman's many nicknames. Where does "SuperGreek" stash his Kryptonite? In GreekTown, of course.

The businesses featured in this section are owned not just by Greeks, but by people from all over the world. Even though the GTA has more than 200,000 residents of Greek ancestry — the third largest Hellenic community outside Greece — people of all ethnicities enjoy coming to the area. They don't just eat in its restaurants, they feed off its positive energy. Its sphere of influence extends beyond its borders into the surrounding residential and commercial areas.

Everyone gets to be Greek for a day — or longer

All roads, it seems, lead to GreekTown. And from August 8 to 10, everyone who comes to the Danforth gets to be Greek for the day. Try it. You might like it so much you'll want to be Greek on a regular basis.

It's a big world we live in. Whether you're 5 or 55, if you dropped everything right now and spent the rest of your days travelling this planet, you'd barely begin to cover it. Even if you confined your travels to a much smaller area — like Greece — you would experience a small part, at best, of its wonders.

You can't know the entire planet, but a visit to GreekTown will get you off to a running start.

Greeks with a Taste for building something bigger than themselves

Circa 447–432 B.C., the Greeks built the Parthenon. Today, the same tradition of architectural excellence is alive and well in GreekTown, under the watchful eyes of Takis Liris, Adonis Artemakis, and their dedicated crew. The showcase of their efforts is a small, nondescript storefront at 921 Danforth Avenue.

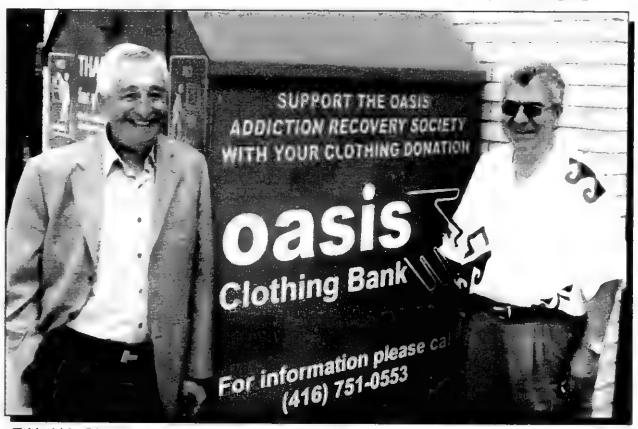
A storefront on Danforth Avenue? A showcase for architectural excellence?

No towering columns? No sculpted statues?

A different kind of architectural renaissance

If the venue seems odd, it's because this team of "architects" specializes in historical reconstruction — not of buildings, but of people. Under their direction, a team of volunteers helps those laid low by alcohol and drug addiction to rebuild their lives and self-esteem and become functioning members of society.

With financial assistance from Employment Ontario and the City of Toronto — as well as funds generated from the sale of clothing donations to the Oasis green bins throughout the GTA — the **Oasis Movement** acts as an umbrella organization for a myriad of programs designed to assist addicts every step of the way through the recovery process. There's an Employment Preparation Program, a Pre-Employment Personal Life Management Program, a Volunteer Program including participants from Toronto Social Services and the general public, a Job Development and Employment Placement Services Program, Casual Labour Placements, and the Oasis Employment Resource Centre.



Takis Liris (L) and Andonis Artemakis: providing a necessary Oasis for recovering addicts

Building is nothing new to Artemakis. A fireplug of a man, he has been instrumental in many important initiatives both inside and outside the Greek community. In 1993 he was involved in changing the name of the then Danforth Village to the current GreekTown On The Danforth. The following year, Artemakis and several other key players — including Stephane Abbat, Dr. Andy Syriopoulos, Sue Graham-Nuttier, and Saul Korman — spearheaded the creation of the Taste of the Danforth. With the financial support of Alex Alexakis of Krinos Foods and the ongoing contributions of many others, the Taste has grown from a small festival with a first-year attendance of some 6,000 to what today is North America's largest street festival with an annual attendance in excess of one million.

Despite his key role in heightening the profile of Toronto's Greek community and its important contributions to the GTA's culture and economy, Artemakis sees the Danforth as "a multicultural community with a Greek character. The beauty of a cultural mosaic is that each culture or "tile" enhances the others," he says. "We have here a dynamic of mutual enrichment that all communities should be proud to be part of."

If the growth of the Taste makes him smile, the work he and Takis Liris are involved in at Oasis makes him positively light up. Says Liris, who founded the Oasis Movement in 1992, "To assist someone who is already on an upcurve is nice. But to help someone who's down pick himself up — now *there's* an accomplishment. We may think we know what it's like to hit rock bottom, but unless we've experienced it ourselves or seen it first-hand, we really don't know what it's like. When we can reach out to someone in that position and help him or her regain the ability to function, be gainfully employed, mend broken relationships, restore their faith — that's a success story for everybody."

The birth of an area, the Taste, a movement

Continues Artemakis, who's been involved with Oasis since 1992 in a supportive and Advisory capacity, "There's no stage here, no award presentations, no trophies. Everyone who is here is part of something bigger than themselves. People talk of "relationship building". Here, we are helping people rebuild their relationship with themself. No office tower, theatre or concert hall is a greater monument to a person's accomplishment than helping another human being get back on his feet again."

For more information on the Oasis Movement, call 416-461-7739 or visit www.oasismovement.org

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Mezes the gold standard on Danforth

You can feel the positive energy as you approach the patio. You can hear the buzz as you enter. Your excitement builds as you're seated. Your taste buds dance with anticipation as you're handed a menu.

It's magic.

Most of the fine Greek restaurants on the Danforth will give you a pleasant dining experience. **Mezes** goes one step further by elevating even the most casual meal into a festive occasion. You'll experience such joie-de-vivre (the Greeks call it *kharisma*) that you'll find yourself wondering what special event you're celebrating.

Just another meal? At Mezes, there's no such thing.

Mezes makes every meal an event not by gimmickry or by song and dance, but simply by their approach to food. They treat it with such reverence that merely serving it is an occasion. And sharing isn't an option here, it's Plan A. The namesake, appetizer-sized *mezes* are meant to be ordered in multitudes and collectively enjoyed by the table. This communal style of dining – as authentically Greek as the gastronomy – isn't just sharing, it's a form of bonding.

"It makes for a convivial meal," says Mezes proprietor Sue Zindros. "It stimulates conversation, sharing good feelings as well as food, and it encourages people to try new things."

Most better restaurants now advertise their cuisine as "authentic" and "fresh from scratch", but Mezes has quietly been fulfilling both these mandates since Day 1. If anything, at Mezes these claims are *understated*. Their extra-virgin olive oil comes not from a local supplier but directly from their family-owned olive grove in Greece.

Authentic and fresh enough for you?

Mezes pays top dollar for all their ingredients to ensure you enjoy the best of everything. But that added expense is not reflected in their prices.

"Our customers can taste the difference freshness and quality make. We believe in rewarding them for that, not penalizing them," says Sue.

The consistent excellence menu-wide makes it difficult to pick favourites here, so most customers start by ordering a large assortment of appetizers. They're all first-rate, but don't just fall back on old favourites like hummous and tzatziki; no visit to GreekTown is complete without sampling Mezes' *Gigantes* and *Dolmades*. When it comes time to order your entrée – if you can manage to get through the cornucopia of mezes – there's an equally compelling array of home-cooked meat, poultry, fish and vegetarian specialties to tempt your palate.

Mezes offers one of the most extensive Greek wine portfolios not just in Toronto, but nationwide, and can recommend the ideal accompaniment to your meal.

You'll find shades of copper in the decor and silverware on the table, but on your plate everything served at Mezes is pure gold.

Mezes
AUTHENTIC GREEK CUISINE
456 DANFORTH AVENUE
416-778-5150
WWW.MEZES.CA

Christina's is all the right things

No restaurant can be all things to all people. But Christina's has a remarkable ability to be all the right things to those seeking a rewarding dining experience.

It starts with the food, of course, and Christina's has managed to regularly update its menu with a focus on refined, upscale dining while keeping portions large and prices reasonable.

If you're a lamb lover then chances are you've already enjoyed Christina's unparalleled Leg Of Lamb and Rack Of Lamb. If you're in the mood for chicken, however, don't overlook the *Kotopoulo Yemisto* – stuffed chicken breast with spinach, cheese, onions and peppers, spiced and grilled, served with rice, lemon roasted potatoes and vegetables.

There's a difference between being full and being *fully satisfied*; Christina's chefs grasp this distinction across the full spectrum of the menu, hence Christina's continuing popularity among young and old alike.

Satisfying your appetite for Mediterranean cuisine is only part of the dining-out equation, however. Whatever else you're looking for in a restaurant, Christina's has it. Extensive wine list? Check – Christina's includes many selections imported directly from Europe. Live music and belly dancing on Friday and Saturday? Check. Lively patio? Check – heated as needed for year-round enjoyment. Friendly service? Like family.

Star quality? How about Robert De Niro, Bette Midler, Elliott Gould, and Jim Carey for starters? To list all the celebrities who've graced Christina's with their presence would exceed the bounds of this space. If you find one seated next to you, it doesn't mean that you're on camera. It simply means that they share your good taste in Greek cuisine.

Private parties and special event catering? Check. Intimate gatherings like Bar / Bat Mitzvah parties, graduations, birthdays, and sweet 16s are a natural here. Offsite catering is accommodated with aplomb. Weekend brunch? Check; experience GreekTown at a slower, more relaxed pace.

Christina's has received many accolades over the years, including multiple "Best Greek Restaurant" ratings from *Where Toronto*. According to partners Bill, Kathy and Tony, however, the most important yardstick of their success is customer satisfaction. "We don't rest on our laurels," says Kathy. "We want every meal to be the best ever, and our entire team works towards that goal."

Christina's
On The Danforth
492 Danforth at Logan
416-463-4418 christinas.ca

BEST GREEK 2007, 2008 – *Where Toronto*
BEST GREEK 2008 – *dine.TO*

For Astoria, the future of Greek dining is now

If there's one word that's synonymous with "**GreekTown On The Danforth**", it's "Astoria." For well over 30 years, this venerable "institution of higher dining" has come to symbolize the culinary qualities the Danforth is known for: great food, great quality, and great value.

ASTORIA
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"The Future of Greek Dining"
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at Chester subway
416.463.2838
1970 Dundas St. East
Unit 1, Mississauga
905.615.1444
www.astoriashishkebobhouse.com

Building on and enhancing the Astoria brand

Astoria's recent major renovation has seen it emerge brighter and roomier than ever, without losing any of its intimacy. If it shone before, now it positively sparkles. A nouveau rustic take on traditional Greek motifs unfurls in rich golds and maroons, with elegant tile underfoot and soaring sky blue overhead.

Company Director Peter Kerasiotis undertook the renovation with a view to embracing the needs and tastes of a new generation of diners while remaining mindful of Astoria's long-standing clientele. "Many of our original guests are still regulars three decades later," he notes. "They rely on us for their family outings and special occasions, and it's their loyalty that has allowed us to grow. We took our time renovating our original location and building our new location in Mississauga because we wanted to ensure a seamless transition. The idea was to build on and enhance the Astoria brand, not dilute it. That is something our customers would never have accepted. They expect satisfaction, and we intend to give it to them."

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, says Kerasiotis. The essentials – freshness, quality, and friendly personal service – are still unfailingly apparent at both locations. Astoria still imports staples such as feta cheese, olive oil and olives in small quantities directly from Greece. Their staggering portions still quell the most outrageous appetites.

Astoria's now-famous "souvlaki window", always a beehive of activity, is an indelible image of Danforth life. Judged **"Best of the City"** by *Toronto Life* and **"Best of Toronto"** by *Now*, Astoria's souvlaki helped make it a multiple winner of the **Toronto Sun's Readers' Choice Award** as Toronto's favourite Greek restaurant. Astoria was also rated "Best Greek International Restaurant" by *Where*.

Other jewels on the menu include hearty moussaka, exquisite grilled sea bass and salmon steaks – and Greek appetizers like grilled calamari and creamy homemade tzatziki, if you can keep your souvlaki craving at bay long enough to sample them.

"Best of the City"
Toronto Life

Location and atmosphere are other Astoria assets. For a big restaurant, it's remarkably cozy, due to its corner location and dual outdoor patios (still the Danforth's largest, and now among its brightest as well!)

It's no accident that the first signs of an upcurve in the popularity of Greek cuisine coincided with Astoria's opening, nor is it coincidental that its continued growth in popularity parallels that of the Astoria we know today.

Heading eastbound on Bloor, you know you're on the Danforth once you hit Broadview; but you don't really *feel* it until Astoria leaps joyously into view, bidding you "Welcome to GreekTown" in words that the food lover in you understands so well.

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Pan's old-world mastery always up to date

Chris and Soula Christodoulou are a prime example of a restauranteur's anti-aging formula: never stop and never sit still. "We're too busy to get old," laughs Chris.

He may be right. Regular updates to both their menu and their decor, together with the hustle and bustle of running a busy dining establishment, have kept this dynamic duo hopping for decades.

Having achieved a measure of success and a loyal clientele in their quaint, intimate nook at Danforth and Ferrier, the Christodoulous could be forgiven for standing pat. Instead, they've done exactly the opposite – and have succeeded spectacularly on both the culinary and decor fronts.

If you've yet to encounter a worthy alternative to your mom's chicken, Pan's Caria Lemon Roasted Chicken may force you into a politically incorrect statement. Encrusted organic chicken supreme in herbs served over feta scalloped potatoes, topped with home-made onion rings and sweet pepper zucchini relish – chicken just never tasted better. If you're in the mood for fish, Pan's Chilean Sea Bass, grilled and topped with roasted garlic salsa and served with lemon cracked mini potatoes and baby spinach, is another reminder of why you come to GreekTown: for a taste that emanates from the culinary artistry of an individual, not from a formula.

Decor-wise, some intriguing interleaved brickwork ensconcing a massive wine rack has added cutting-edge modernity to the interior without diminishing the candlelit romanticism that is Pan's trademark. Big enough for your family events, yet small enough to cozy up in, Pan may represent the best use of a small space among Toronto restaurants.

Judged "one of the city's best" Greek restaurants by *Toronto Life*, Pan doesn't just serve Mediterranean food; it brings it to life.

PAN
Mediterranean Cuisine
516 Danforth Ave. 416-466-8158
www.panonthedanforth.com

"The greatest Greek Food Toronto has ever known" — *Globe & Mail*
"Freshness and textural detail of the essence" — *Toronto Life*

Pantheon: 10 years of excellence

In 10 short years, **Pantheon** has established an Olympian standard of excellence in GreekTown.

How does one carve a new culinary niche in an area already blessed with dozens of fine Greek restaurants? By serving food so fresh and brimming with flavour, you'd swear it was your own mother who'd cooked it. Just don't tell executive Chef Nick Paroussis; he never "fishes" for compliments. Just fish.

And what fish! So extensive is the selection — and so impeccable the preparation — that the name "Pantheon" has become synonymous with superb fish and seafood, not only in GreekTown but Toronto-wide.

Here, you'll find all the popular varieties you've come to expect in GreekTown — like red snapper, Atlantic salmon and sea bass — plus many other exotic selections you'd be hard-pressed to find elsewhere. Baby sea smelts and fresh anchovies are imported directly from Greece. Striped bass, orange roughy, black porgy, red mullet, sea smelts, and many others are music to a fish lover's ear. At Pantheon, you could dine on a different fresh fish every day for a fortnight without exhausting the possibilities.

Paroussis' partner John Troupis and his son Bobby Troupis understand that food is not merely sustenance, but art and soul. In that spirit, they do their utmost to ensure that each customer's visit is a sensory experience. Attesting to their success is the ongoing popularity that has allowed Pantheon to double in size since it opened. It now offers two bright, spacious dining rooms. Semi-private dining with a comforting fireplace is available in the east room.

In a business where turnover is the norm, Pantheon's continuity stands out. The same head chef and most of the same wait staff present when it opened are still in place. Clearly, people like working here, they like the clientele, and the clientele likes them. Continuity breeds loyalty, and vice versa.

The Olympic Pantheon was blessed with the opportunity to taste the Ambrosia and Nectar of the Gods. The Olympics happen every four years, but at Pantheon, in the heart of GreekTown, you can indulge in those same taste sensations whenever the mood strikes you.

Mouthwatering homemade desserts, surprisingly low prices and the freshest fish this side of Greece. Our ship has come in.

407 Danforth Avenue
ACROSS FROM CHESTER SUBWAY
416-778-1929
OPEN 11 AM – MIDNIGHT, 7 DAYS
www.pantheonrestaurant.com

" ... a winning charm ..."

"... fresh fish, care with good products and little razzmatazz nudges Pantheon ahead of most competitors ..."

"As golden and desirable as an Olympic medal"

Euro's elevating new take on crêpes

Crêpes have traditionally been associated with French cuisine, airy-light indulgence and high calorie intake. A visit to GreekTown's Euro Crêpe Café deliciously dispels two of those associations.

582 Danforth Avenue
416-462-2500

Euro's crêpes are indeed lighter than air. But this delicacy has long ceased to be a French-only, dessert-only high-calorie indulgence. Euro Crêpe does much more than reposition the crêpe; it revolutionizes it. From unidimensional beginnings, this wondrous wrap has evolved into a highly versatile, delicious and healthful meal that can be enjoyed at breakfast, lunch, and dinner in a multitude of varieties, including buckwheat and gluten-free. And virtually every crêpe on the menu can be ordered as a sandwich.

The crêpe's dramatic rise in popularity throughout Europe prompted restauranteur Tony Pavlis to fill a GreekTown niche in a casual dining environment with all the elegance of preparation but none of the pomp and circumstance often encountered at crêperies.

A create-your-own option allows you to build your crêpe from scratch with a tantalizing variety of ingredients, which Pavlis buys fresh daily from local purveyors. But there's so much variety on the menu, we'd rather let Euro do the choosing. Two examples: the Village ($8) combines Chicken Breast, Swiss Cheese, Organic Spring Greens, Tomatoes, Asparagus, Hummous, and Creamy House Sauce. The Euro Veggie ($7) features Spinach, Asparagus, Grated Mozzarella, Tomatoes, Green Peppers, Roasted Red Peppers, Mushrooms, Onions, Black Olives, Cucumbers, and Artichoke Spread.

The intermingled flavours produce a sensational taste, but equally gratifying are the portions. You're expecting snack size, but what you get is an entrée and then some. Few other places, if any, give you such food value so elegantly prepared for under ten bucks.

The beverages are top-drawer, including fair-trade conventional coffee, specialty coffees, and 26 varieties of loose-leaf tea.

The many dessert crêpes cater to any palate — even that of your difficult preteen still fixated on peanut butter. The Classic PB & J (Peanut Butter and Strawberry Jam topped with shredded coconut) will placate him or her long enough to forgive your onerous sophistication.

Long and pencil-thin, like an old, narrow, European street, Euro is lined with vintage prints of European street scenes and cityscapes. Invariably, says Pavlis, people who've travelled Europe find in this montage at least one place they've had the pleasure to visit.

Further enhancing the old-world-meets-new ambience are original hardwood floors complete with mild undulations and a fully open kitchen. There, the Euro team will turn your most fanciful vision into a lighter-than-air reality and whisk it fresh to your table.

Greek Grill epitomizes Danforth experience

It doesn't take 200 years of experience to cook a souvlaki. But it sure helps.

If an establishment run by seasoned veterans is your idea of a comfort zone, the newly-named **Greek Grill** at Danforth and Carlaw will gratify you as no other restaurant can. Directly across from Korry's, this Greek Grill is family dining at its best.

Peter Konidis, whose 45 years in the restaurant business began the moment he disembarked from Sparta in 1963, works hand in hand with four partners who collectively boast close to two centuries of expertise. Think they can handle your order?

Konidis enjoyed lengthy stints at the Royal York's Imperial Room, the Old Mill, the Windjammer and his own Court's Dining Lounge before dropping anchor in GreekTown. He and his irrepressible smile are as recognizable to customers as the street signs. "When people ask for directions, we tell them Danforth and Carlaw are at the corner of the Greek Grill," he jokes.

The decor is pleasingly traditional, with predominately blue tones and Greek motifs adorning three separate dining areas fronted by a friendly patio. The atmosphere is disarmingly simple and lacking in pretension. This is a place not for ostentation but for relaxation. And the more the merrier — the Greek Grill comfortably accommodates up to 100 guests for special occasions of all kinds, and is a favourite destination for birthday parties and other milestone events.

Whether your penchant is for souvlaki or fish, moussaka or seafood, the Greek Grill's palate-pleasing offerings overflow with goodness, exemplifying the value that has made GreekTown Canada's foremost dining destination. It's for its Kalamari, however, that the Greek Grill is truly renowned. Grilled or fried, theirs is legendary — so much so that if you merely like it, your server may be disappointed. A blissful moan is the appropriate reaction.

Like most Greek restauranteurs, Konidis is blessed with two families: his *mispocheh* on the home front, his GreekTown customers on the other. At age 62 and steaming forward at the helm of a Greek restaurant, he feels truly blessed. "Like any business, this one makes us a little crazy. But it has given me two wonderful families. What's not to love?"

THE greekgrill
568 Danforth Avenue
at Carlaw
416.461.5200

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Thuna Herbals' past a beacon for future

It's a delightful anachronism reminiscent of an old English apothecary shop. Fifteen hundred glass jars, each filled with a different herb or root, stacked high in orderly rows. The original creaking hardwood floor. And a proprietor who's all about knowledge and caring.

Established in 1888 (how's that for history?), this family business is now run by Evelyn Dorfman, the granddaughter of founder Dr. Max Harriman Thuna, and a staff of qualified herbalists on the original turn-of-the-century premises at 298 Danforth Avenue.

Over the years, the Thuna family has seen the use of herbal remedies — once the *de facto* method of treatment for most medical problems — lose ground to the synthetic drugs that have flooded the marketplace.

More recently, however, the pendulum has slowly but surely begun to swing back, as more and more people seek alternatives to mainstream medicine. Thuna's doesn't diagnose problems presented to them; rather, they advise customers seeking a diagnosis to obtain it from their medical practitioners. Some come with the blessing of their GP, but many are referred by naturopathic practitioners. Typically, clients come in on their own initiative.

Saul Pasen helped pioneer herbalism in Canada

THUNA HERBALS
298 Danforth Avenue
416-465-3366

Drawing on their schooling, Dorfman and staff choose from some 2,000 herbs, berries, roots, and leaves the precise combination most likely to alleviate an ailment presented to them. To cite but one example, a formula for bladder infection, or even interstitial cystitis, might include uva-ursi leaves, buchu leaves, parsley leaves, marshmallow root, corn silk, and goldenseal leaves.

Dr. Thuna and his children, including son-in-law Saul Pasen, pictured above, helped pioneer herbalism in Canada.

The current premises stand as a rich reminder of Canadian history. Even if you have only a passing interest in herbalism, you owe it to yourself to visit this Toronto landmark. And who knows — by asking a few questions, you might become further enlightened on this ancient practice.

Danforth's dynamic duo's 521 reasons to chill

Who decides to renovate only two short years after a previous successful renovation?

521 guesses.

Lambros and Frank Babatsikos' winning combination of chutzpah and vision — as translated by George Foussias of Hirshberg Design — has resulted in one of Toronto's most innovative restaurant redesigns in years. Cafe 521 is now a monument to cutting-edge chic.

"Don't repeat 521 too often," says Lambros. "Saul Korman has a worldwide copyright on the number 569. If I keep saying 521 I may have to pay him royalties. Or buy him a beer."

Okay, we won't. So here, in brief, is how the B. brothers transformed the L-shaped gem that wraps around the convenience store at the corner of Danforth and Fenwick ("I've been trying to get rid of the guy for years," says Lambros, "but I can't — he's my brother. Besides, I'd have no place to buy lottery tickets."

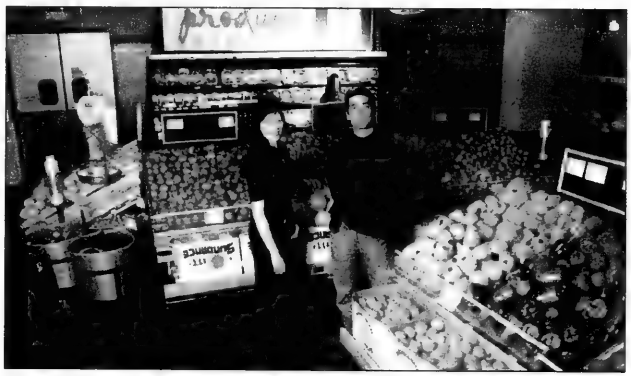
- The L shape stays. Where else can you find a dual-patio bar and restaurant fronting two different streets and connected by a martini-thin passageway? Call it the Suez Canal, GreekTown style.
- Three giant portals with ensconced fireplaces now connect the bar area to the adjacent dining area to the beautifully appointed private lounge situated behind the dining area. The resulting depth perspective affords guests a telescopic view of the sunswept street through three separate and distinct walls.
- Giving onto the Danforth at front, a long mango-yellow bar moonbeams through the lounge, topped by a sweeping curved ceiling. Giving onto Fenwick at rear, a tan-and-chocolate dining area oozes comfort.
- The spectacularly-tiled stairwell to the basement now ranks as the world's most elegant washroom entrance.

With digs like these in which to enjoy Toronto's finest scotches, martinis and specialty mixed beverages — as well as delicious light meals — it's no wonder the 521 buzz continues to swell. With seating that's easy on your backside, prices that are gentle on your pocketbook, and friendly service, there's no better place to kick back and relax. It's also a wonderful venue for a private party.

So if this finds you heading down to the Danforth for dinner, why not budget another hour or two and turn a relaxing dinner into a *very* relaxing evening? This hot spot will give you 521 good reasons to chill out.

521 DANFORTH AVENUE
416.463.3968

Big Carrot remains down to earth despite spectacular growth



Nowhere is the growing interest in products for healthy living better reflected than at **The Big Carrot**, where three major expansions in recent years have increased its floor space by a full 40 percent.

Many stores have attempted to cash in on the healthy living craze, but The Big Carrot has remained the leader in an increasingly crowded field not only by offering products that are as good for the environment as they are for its customers, but also by providing a level of expertise and personal service unmatched in the industry. As a worker-owned co-op, it has also managed to resist the negative changes that sometimes accompany growth. At The Big Carrot, bigger and more modern simply means more selection and more staff to assist you.

The Big Carrot's loyal clientele embraces both its ethos and its products: minimally processed, organically grown, cruelty free, environmentally safe and, increasingly, GMO-free. Many of these products are also Kosher-certified. From an environment friendliness standpoint, The Big Carrot walks the walk by heating its newly renovated juice bar entirely from solar panels.

Natural, Organic, GMO-free, Kosher-certified products

The Big Carrot is really three stores in one: a health food store and market, a wholistic dispensary, and an organic juice, coffee and sandwich bar.

You'll enjoy a produce department with over 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables at peak season, an unmatched selection of organic bulk foods, dairy products, frozen foods, and packaged goods, and a body care department with Canada's widest selection of personal care products for the entire family, including baby.

In terms of special dietary needs, if you require wheat-free, dairy free, or *anything*-free, the Big Carrot has both the products and the expertise to assist you with your purchase.

For natural and organic pastas, breads, buns, bagels, flatbreads, cookies, muffins, and other wholesome nosherie, no other store — or bakery, for that matter — even comes close. There are literally dozens of choices here. Their growing selection of in-house baked goods includes the best brownies you've ever tasted — period. The Big Carrot also has by far Toronto's largest selection of soy milks and other non-dairy beverages, both fresh and tetra pack.

Among many others, the Kosher-certified products include Crofter's Organic Premium Fruit Spreads from Ontario; tomato products from Utopia, also Ontario-grown; Imagine Foods Tetra Pack Dairy-Free Soups (the ultimate in convenience); Nature's Path Organic Cereals; Organic Meadow Yogurts & Pressed Cheese; Cold Mountain Miso; Soy Delicious Non-Dairy Frozen Desserts; selected products from Eden Foods; Kemach Organic Spelt Matzah; Amy's soups, pizzas and frozen entrées; Sol Cuisine falafel patties; Healthy Times baby foods; Suzie's Spelt or Kamut Breadsticks & Flatbreads; Mary's Gluten Free Organic Crackers; Whole Alternatives Organic Microwave Popcorn; Tofurky Vegan Slices & Sausages; Earth Balance Dairy Free Margarine & Shortening; Garden Fresh Salsas; and an immense variety of chips and other snack foods. Sunflower Kitchen dips, pesto and soups are popular mainstays, as are Bob's Red Mill packaged grains, cereals and baking goods. Beit-Yitzhak jams are Kosher and made in Israel.

The Deli counter offers more than 50 mouthwatering selections, both hot and cold. Toronto's only 100% organic juice bar features over 50 choices of juices, blender drinks, nutritional boosts, shakes, and fair-trade organic coffees, as well as sandwiches and other treats. Try the Grilled Tempeh sandwich with lettuce, tomato, red onion & honey mustard mayo. For a summer treat, enjoy Mapleton's organic ice cream, as well as Cool Hemp, a Kosher-certified, organic non-dairy dessert available in a cup or wholesome organic cone.

Through its ongoing expansion, The Big Carrot has retained the humility and friendliness of its early years, which explains the steadfast loyalty of its customer base. This is a store that's down to earth in every possible sense, and a real pleasure to visit. It's an oasis of calm amid the chaos of everyday life. A visit here isn't just grocery, supplement and cosmetics shopping; it's a balm to the spirit.

THE BIG CARROT
"SEARCHING FOR NATURE'S FINEST"
348 Danforth Ave. 416-466-2129
Wholistic Dispensary 416-466-8432
www.thebigcarrot.ca
Mon–Fri 9-9 • Sat 9–8 • Sun 11–6

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Dine like royalty. Because at the Palace Restaurant, you are.

There are many fine Greek restaurants on the Danforth, but there's only one PALACE.

Others may treat you like royalty; here, you *are* royalty. Serving you is not our first priority, it's our only priority.

If you haven't yet been to our cozy little Kingdom, ask someone who has.

Ask them what they saw when they blissfully closed their eyes after taking one bite of our Dolmades drizzled with lemon sauce. Did they see Athens? Thessaloniki? Larissa?

Ask them how they enjoyed our Hot Mezze Platter (Kalamari, Grilled Octopus, Loukaniko, and Bifteki). Perhaps they'll tell you they were so captivated by it, they forgot it was "just" an appetizer.

Ask them if they remembered to tell themselves to *Slow Down* as the Atlantic Salmon Steak melted in their mouth.

Ask them if the Avgolemono soup was delicate enough, or the Greek salad crisp enough.

THE PALACE RESTAURANT
722 Pape Avenue
416.462.1166
www.eatatpalace.com

Ask them if the olives that came with their meal weren't the perfect companion to everything they ate — in flavour, texture, and colour. (We Greeks have a love affair with olives — or didn't you notice?)

Ask them if the Lamb Kleftiko's divine combination of lamb, feta, sweet bell peppers, onions and mushrooms wasn't simply the most exquisite thing they'd ever tasted...

... until the Red Snapper arrived at their table. (Ask them if they enjoyed the salt spray on our boat that morning. After all, fresh-caught means fresh-caught).

Ask them if the assortment of homemade desserts they inhaled was truly the crowning glory.

And don't forget to ask them about the incredible birthday party they threw for Moishe in our private party room.

But no need to ask them if you can borrow their crown. Yours is waiting for you at reception.

We've Moved!
526 Danforth Ave.
Celebrating Our 20th Year!

MR. GREEK®
The One & ONLY on the Danforth

TORONTO SUN READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2007
GOLD WINNER
Best Greek Restaurant

Any oils used in our recipe are trans fat free.

With over 27 Locations in the GTA to serve you.
Visit us at www.mrgreek.com

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Historical flavours come alive at Messini

When visiting most websites, you're tempted to "Skip Intro" as prompted. You want to get to the heart of the matter ASAP.

Visit Messini's website, however, and you'll find yourself engrossed in the historical introduction: at Messini, history *is* at the heart of the matter.

A sequence of richly-textured, sepia-toned photographs of the southern Greek village of Messini, circa 1930, set the historical stage for the taste treat you'll experience at 445 Danforth.

After 23 years of restauranteuring in Europe, owner Marinos Dafnas opened Messini with the singular goal of elevating gyros preparation to the lofty level it enjoys in Greece. If you know gyros only as meat on a pita, Messini will open your eyes — and your taste buds — to an exciting new dining experience.

So how does the Messini version of gyros rise above the rest?

- **Meticulous preparation.** Roasted to perfection on a spit, the gyros (pronounced *yee'-ros*, from Modern Green *guros*, "turning") combines the finest marinated cuts of moist and dry meat to ensure that it retains its juiciness and tenderness throughout the cooking process. Unlike your typical fast-food gyros, Messini's are prepared fresh from scratch: no freezing, no precooking;
- **Quality and freshness of trimmings.** The tzatziki, red onions, parsely, spices, and French fries (as per Greek tradition), like the meat, are all up-to-the-minute fresh;
- **Pita made fresh daily on the premises.** As with any fresh homemade bread vs. mass-produced, there's simply no comparison.
- **Variety.** Messini caters to a wide range of palates and dietary preferences by offering chicken and vegetarian gyros in addition to the traditional meat.

MESSINI AUTHENTIC GYROS

445 DANFORTH
416-778-4861
WWW.MESSINI.CA

The result: a whole that's greater than the sum of its parts — a sandwich that melts in your mouth with a rich blend of subtly interwoven flavours.

The prices are more than reasonable, with gyros dinner entrées starting from $8.25, lunch specials from $6.50. The menu also includes mainstream Greek selections, but you'll do yourself a disservice if you don't at least try the gyros.

Messini's immaculate interior flanks an open kitchen. Pleasant brown and cream tones — gleaming ceramic tile floor, rich wood trim and comfortable seating — create an aura of casual dining elegance.

The beaches of Peloponessos may seem far away, but at Messini, some of southern Greece's best tradition and culture is right here for the sampling.

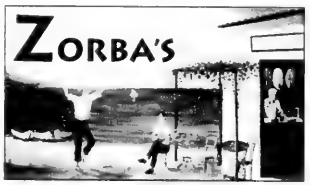
What's for dinner? Ask Zorba's.

Remember the last time you told Mom what you wanted for dinner and she replied, "What do you think this is, a restaurant?"

At Zorba's, the reverse is true; you think you're going to a restaurant, only to find yourself at home.

Maybe that's what we love about GreekTown: it's the one area in Toronto where you can dine out and eat in at the same time.

Nowhere is this more true than at **Zorba's**, where they do have menus, but you can do just as well without them.



681 Danforth Ave. at Pape
416-406-1212

Bring Mom if you can. She of all people will appreciate the role and the efforts of owner and chef Kosta Carasoulos, who cooks not according to a set menu but according to whatever stirs his imagination at the time — just like she does.

The result is Zorba's *katsarola* (Greek for "pot", a metaphor for home cooking). Always off the menu and priced from $8.50 to $12.00 for a huge portion complete with potatoes, rice and vegetables, these Greek specialties aren't just "like" home cooking — they *are* home cooking. Typically roasted or stewed — just like Mom's — they evoke a simpler, less complicated time.

That's the good news. The bad news is that once they're gone, they're gone, and with an eager clientele weaned on home cooking, you're advised to arrive early for best selection.

Remember your Mom's or your Bubbie's chicken fricassee? Zorba's lamb fricassee will melt in your mouth just as hers did. Remember how, in Mom's hands, something as simple as green beans or cauliflower took on a heavenly aura? Those memories, too, are rekindled at Zorba's. Here, the simple becomes the sublime.

Zorba's mainstream menu tends toward casual, and many entrées are offered in three sizes (small, regular and large). The medium Greek salad could easily pass for a large; the large is off the charts. As with the katsarola, the prices are exceptionally modest. For example, the Lamb Souvlaki is offered as a sandwich for $4.75, with fries for $6.25 or with salad for $7.45.

This is a family restaurant in the most literal sense. At any given time you'll find up to seven members of the Carasoulos family tending to your needs. Says Bobby, "We don't really know where home life ends and the business begins; they've become one and the same."

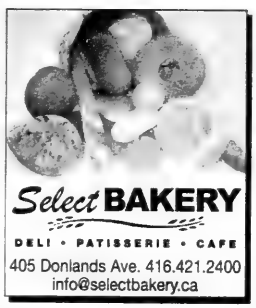
If you've never had the pleasure of dining in a Greek home, a visit to Zorba's will quickly fill that void in your life experience. It will also remind you of GreekTown's unique ability to enable you to dine out and eat in at one and the same time, with one important difference.

You won't have to do dishes.

Select Bakery evokes childhood memories

A bakery is not merely a place where bread is made. It's a symbol of sustenance that evokes treasured memories of still-warm goodies emerging from the oven with a maternal blessing and simultaneous admonishment not to overindulge.

Nowhere is this symbol better exemplified — and brought to life on a grand scale — than at **Select Bakery**. Huge (5,000 sq. ft.) yet intimate (GreekTown's only bakery with a dedicated seating area), its majestic array of baked bounty is to the palate what surround sound is to the ear. Enhancing its seductiveness is the colour scheme (tan on caramel on chocolate) and a refinement of presentation worthy of the illustrious cafés of Europe after which it's modelled.



The Katsamakis family — father Emmanuel, sons Kosta and Nick, and daughter Areti — lead a cheery staff of skilled bakers and pastry chefs. A full range of traditional Greek, European and continental pastries (baklava, *galaktoboureko*, petits fours et al) is complemented by exceptional European breads, specialty cakes of the highest order, and sublime specialty coffees.

For weddings and other events, Select's special occasion cakes score a 10 out of 10 for artistic merit. If a cake could be said to belong in the Louvre, it was likely conceived in their oven.

Further distinguishing Select is its prepared foods. No time to cook? Moussaka, *pastitsio*, and many other entrées — plus the full gamut of Greek dips and sauces — are prepared fresh daily for your dining pleasure. Many entrées are available fresh or frozen, and most are suitable for freezing. Need to entertain on short notice? Select is a one-stop destination for party trays, rolls, and related comestibles. And its ultraconvenient location on Donlands just south of O'Connor has ample, inexpensive meter parking at the front door.

But we digress from the baked temptations. Among the highlights at Select are:

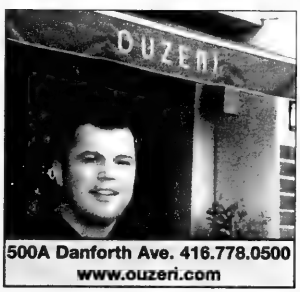
- European Village Bread: crusty on the outside, buttery soft on the inside;
- Kalamata Olive Bread: as good as it sounds. Buy two;
- Chocolate-covered baklava: a hybrid pioneered by Select, it picks up where "to die for" leaves off;
- Mille feuilles: Select's version makes a good run at the proverbial thousand sheets, each one shatteringly good.

Exquisite wedding and other special occasion cakes

Bakeries are the stuff of childhood longing; each is measured against our favourites of yesteryear. This bakery belongs in that Select group.

Ouzeri: Danforth's most relaxed dining

A splash of vibrant colour, sweeping sky-blue awnings, and a festive patio beckon you inside. It's as if you stepped straight off the sidewalk onto the beach. **Ouzeri** has the unique ability to relax you in seconds — a valuable asset when you consider that the enjoyment of any meal hinges first and foremost on the absence of stress. This is the one GreekTown restaurant that feels like one giant patio. Even when you're seated inside, the open, airy ambience gives you a sense of freedom, of letting go.



500A Danforth Ave. 416.778.0500
www.ouzeri.com

Like their pride and joy, brothers Chris and Alex Trahiotis are bright, cheery, welcoming people whose love of the restaurant business comes naturally, since they grew up in the business.

Marrying European fine dining with Greek cuisine, Ouzeri's eclectic menu is focused on quality, not volume. The kind of quality that will stir your fondest memories of home cooking. Sacrilegious though it sounds, Ouzeri's Avgolemono Soup will have you drawing favourable comparisons with your Bubie's chicken soup — high praise indeed.

Famed for their appetizers, Ouzeri also offers a number of intriguing entrées. *Strydia Ouzeri* is topped with spinach, tomato, kaseri cheese and Ouzeri's special sauce, then baked to perfection. Lamb rosemary pie, offered in your choice of lamb shank and feta or chicken with a rosemary and mushroom sauce enveloped in filo, is warmly recommended. The moussaka — both meat and vegetarian — is as good as it gets in GreekTown, and the seafood richly deserves the "authentically Greek" label you'll encounter everywhere on the Danforth. Fresh fish is available daily, and may feature Red Snapper, Sea Bass, Salmon, or whatever catch happens to be freshest on the day you visit.

Ouzeri's extensive Greek wine list has a selection that will perfectly complement any of the entrées, or stand on its own as an after-work or after-dinner libation.

The service is friendly and extremely thorough, with ample wait staff to keep pace with your needs. Like the awnings, they're dressed in an extremely comforting shade of blue.

Whether you're looking for a quick bite or a long, pleasurable meal, Ouzeri's three levels of dining all convey the same gentle message: Relax. Relax. *Relax*.

"One of my favourite summer patios" — *Saul Korman*

Menswear's Little Big Man take

Steps to Success

CAN a lonely jewish tailor find happiness and success at Danforth and Pape?

sure he can

'cause he's got the right stuff.
The stuff that's "in",
and his store is a regular social club.
You'll see all your old buddies there.
Remember Skinny Horowitz from grade 4?
You'll see him too.
(By the way, what the hell's he doing now?)
Can a lonely jewish tailor find happiness
and success at Danforth and Pape?
Now you know why.
From $70 to $200.

Goliath didn't stand a chance.

In a recent address to the Retail Advertising Council of Canada, Saul Korman expanded on the strategy that enabled one small man to tackle the giants of the retail industry and win.

The insights he elucidated could fill a book. The broad strokes are:

• **Creating a larger-than-life image on a small advertising budget.** Has a little guy ever had a bigger footprint? If you think Menswear, you think Korry's; if you think Korry's, you think 569 Danforth Avenue. That's no accident. It's the result of thousands of radio spots and print ads — "as many as I could afford to buy, and some I couldn't afford," admits Korman. Talk may be cheap, but airtime isn't; Korman's clever and judicious use of both on a budget would be the envy of any Madison Avenue ad agency. Some laughed at his schtick way back when, but no one's laughing now — not after 55 years of success. To the few naysayers who still insist on giving him low marks for artistic merit, Korman has a one-word answer: Scoreboard.

• **Thinking and merchandising outside the box** (before that phrase was even coined);

• **Breaking all the retail advertising moulds.** Korman believes in dressing for success, but dress rehearsals? Nada. He does every new Korry's radio commercial live on air. If you happen to be with him at airtime, you'd better bring your "A" game, because you're going on air whether you like it or not. Why? Because you're there, and because that makes you news. Reality TV may be all the rage today, but the fact is Korman's been doing Reality Radio for decades. If he didn't invent the genre, he's certainly one of its founding fathers;

Take your *business* seriously, not yourself

• **Poking fun at himself.** Unlike the self-caricaturization employed by some retailers for comedic effect, Korman's self-effacement is a straight-up factual admission of his flaws du jour. Recently, Korman was chided just before airtime for consistently mispronouncing the name of his Sales Manager, Franco Gagliardi. He then immediately told his audience that "I've just been informed that for the past 32 years, I've been mispronouncing Franco's last name." Still live on air, he asked the nitpicker who'd pointed out the error to repeat the correct pronunciation, then nailed it.

By choosing to expose rather than hide his little foibles and faux pas, Korman unabashedly shows the vulnerability we've been taught to suppress — and his listeners love him for it. Chest-pounding gets old fast, but what's not to like about a guy who takes himself with a grain of salt, casts his customers in starring roles, promotes his neighbourhood on his dime, and wears his heart on his impeccably tailored sleeve?

The only time Korman makes a straight-up sales pitch is when he's promoting a charity, like his annual golf tournament to raise funds for Toronto East General Hospital Foundation. This year, the event was held at Angus Glen.

Korman doesn't play up his Jewishness, but he doesn't hide it either. The early print ad depicted herein reflects a typical Korman mix of pride and irreverence.

"I think too many advertisers try too hard to tell everyone how great they are," he muses. "Taking your business seriously doesn't mean you have to take *yourself* seri-

KOR

569 Danfort

416-463

www.korr

es on industry giants and wins

ously. Your customers will decide how good or how bad you are. If you listen, they'll tell you."

The overwhelmingly positive feedback from both customers and the trade — including those he's sometimes one-upped — has been music to his ears. Last year, Fashion North, Canada's national menswear trade show, presented Korman with its inaugural Retailer Of The Year Award. This year, the prestigious New York-based menswear trade magazine *MR* presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

RY'S
h Avenue
-1115
ys.com

Despite vague rumblings of retirement some five years ago when Korry's celebrated its 50th anniversary, Korman skated through that milestone like it was no more than a speed bump. Doesn't want to retire? *Can't* is more like it. This isn't just what he does, it's *who he is*. "I really can't take a day off in the city," he shrugs, "or I find myself right back in the shop". However powerful Korry's magnetism for menswear afficionados, its strongest pull is on its founder. "I have to go out of country — usually to St. Maarten (where he's revered as the island's unofficial tourism ambassador). *Nu*? How about Greece? "I'm already *in* Greece," he chortles. "Look around you! If you walk more than 20 feet without someone offering you an ouzo, you need an image consultant or a new suit from Korry's — probably both."

The melting pot that is today's GreekTown is mirrored in Korry's staff, on which no fewer than a dozen ethnicities are represented. Many backgrounds, one language requirement: fluency in fashion and service. Known as a generous but demanding employer, Korman will tolerate the odd mistake but never complacency. "Customer loyalty and respect are earned, not granted," he says. "So don't ever *take* anything for granted — not one shirt, not one tie. A good waiter makes you feel like a king whether you're ordering a five-course meal or a cup of coffee. We're no different. If your customer is not important to you, why should you be important to him?"

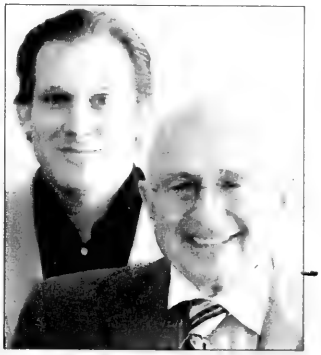
Lifetime Achievement Award from *MR*

Walk a single GreekTown block with Korman, and you quickly learn the degree to which he's esteemed by his fellow merchants. The outpouring of affection he receives is what you'd expect for a world-class celebrity. Korman's quick to downplay both the acclaim and his longevity, however. "There's always someone tougher, smarter, and quicker than you are. Take my cousin Esther. She's 99. I've had a good run, but compared to her, I'm a spring chicken." Her secret? "A vodka martini every day. Skyy Vodka, of course." He isn't joking — about the daily vodka martini at least. About the brand, who knows? Once a pitchman, always a pitchman — especially one who's loyal to his suppliers.

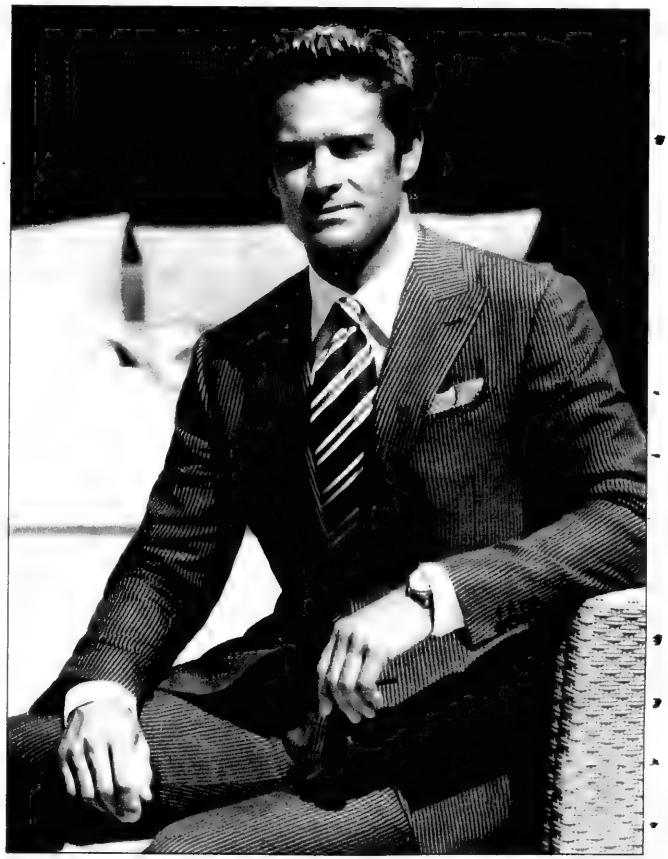
Boss, Canali and Pal Zileri continue to dominate the fashion conversation at Korry's, with two-button and flat-front constructions enjoying renewed popularity. In discussing what's hot for the season, Korman is quick to reference, in broader terms, the look-good-feel-good paradigm. "Look good, feel good. It may be a cliché, but it's true. What's the most common excuse for not looking our best? 'I don't have time. I'm running late.' But when you just throw something on, it shows. It tells whoever you meet on that day that you didn't care enough to make an impression. That *they just didn't matter enough to you.* That 15 minutes you saved could be the most expensive 15 minutes you *didn't* save when the deal you're working on goes south."

"Never take anything for granted — not one shirt"

And what of the notion that one's ability to present ourself with self-assurance shouldn't be contingent on one's appearance? "In a perfect world, no, it shouldn't. In the real world, where you and I live, 99 percent of us need that crutch and the other one percent are liars — unless they're Greek gods."



Given that Korry's clientele includes more than one Adonis, it would seem that even those celestial souls err on the side of sartorial splendour. That they choose to do so at 569 Danforth is no accident. With Saul Korman plying the airwaves 24/7, even those with their heads in the clouds eventually get the message.



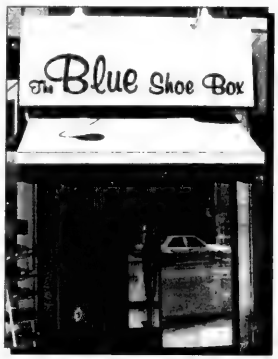
GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Blue Shoe Box still fits perfectly after five years

Long. Slender. Elegant. The picture of classicism. A perfect fit.

That's the *store* we're talking about; we haven't even slipped on a shoe yet!

Fortuitously, the shoes offered here are every bit the aesthetic equal of the shop that sells them. Recognizing a niche for upscale shoes in GreekTown, in 2002 proprietor Eliséo (Tony) Staffiere opened **The Blue Shoe Box** at 499 Danforth just west of Logan. In five short years, his small shop has made a big impact on the Toronto fashion footwear scene.



499 Danforth Ave. 416-289-6727
693 Queen St. W. 416-366-6727

The store occupies a diminutive space, but the design is magical. The elongated, reed-thin premises — conceivably a metaphor for a long, slender foot — have an architectural history. The intricately moulded 120-year-old copper ceiling still shows splendidly. Cappuccino-coloured spaccoed walls, exposed red brick and butterscotch-toned oak shelving frame a gleaming strip hardwood floor.

Shoe shoppers city-wide have taken so well to the Blue Shoe Box's quality footwear, expert fitting, and friendly service that Staffiere has opened a second shop on trendy Queen Street West to accommodate his growing clientele. Today's men and women, says Staffiere, want it all: quality, style, and comfort at reasonable prices. "You wear a pair of shoes more than any outfit. With the rising price of gas, many people are now putting more miles on their shoes than on their car," he smiles. "All the more reason to be good to your feet."

Staffiere has a history of treating feet with respect. His father and grandfather were both shoemakers in their native Italy, and he's carrying on the family tradition by putting quality first. One example is the made-in-Italy Johnston & Murphy shoes for men, featuring double leather soles and the finest quality leather uppers. The Blue Shoe Box also carries Kenneth Cole, Mephisto, Piccolinos, Arche, Birkenstock, Born, and other fine lines. But more than the merchandise itself, it's Staffiere's diligence in ensuring a perfect fit that keeps his customers coming back. "Every foot is a little bit different," says Staffiere. "The perfect shoe is the one that fits your feet perfectly — end of story."

If the shoe fits, wear it, goes the adage. More and more Torontonians are finding that fit in a Blue Shoe Box.

Eighth wonder of the fashion world

If your fashion shopping brings you to **Eight**, you've definitely arrived. The fashions are hot, the music is hip, the service warm and personal. Using a formula that's 20 parts Queen Street urban chic, 40 parts Bloor Street style and 100 parts fashion flair — at *très* friendly prices — Eight flat-out rocks.

541 Danforth Ave. 416•461•5339

Can a store be both teen-friendly and stroller-friendly? Eight is. Here, women and men of all ages coexist and co-shop not just peacefully, but *gleefully*. Seven short years after Eight's touchdown in GreekTown, fashion shoppers city-wide continue to feel its vibe.

Part of Eight's special energy emanates from owner Karin Kassabian, whose expertise and unassuming approach resonates with customers. "We operate on a 100 percent comfort zone, not 99 percent," she says.

This comfort level extends to fitting, where K's keen eyes ensure that you'll look great in whatever garment you try on — or it won't leave the shop with you.

Eight caters to women and men of almost all ages. "My customers are 16 to 66," says K, whose target market is "anyone who wants to look good and feel good".

Though Eight carries loads of hip denim, it's much more than a jeans store. From mainstream styles to beyond-the-edge, Eight carries the later-than-latest in casual clothing from Italy, Amsterdam and other European fashion hotbeds, as well as hand-picked domestic fashions from promising new designers like Mark Forman.

Because Kassabian's buying is intensely personal — "I wear what I sell" — you won't find Eight's pieces all over town. This suits K and her clientele just fine. "My taste may take me out on a limb, but lots of people have climbed onto that limb with me."

K buys with a view not only to style but also to transitional value. "If you really love a piece, you'd like it to carry from season to season insofar as possible," she says.

Obviously, Kassabian feeds off customer satisfaction. "I want you to leave smiling," she grins.

We are. Must have been something we *eight*.

Chacok's effusion of colour puts wings on your feet at Quasar Mode

This isn't just a "good" feeling — a pleasant sigh of satisfaction — that some outfits give you.

It's not just a "great" feeling — that extra skip in your step — that you get from your handful of favourite outfits.

This is the other-worldly feeling of an outfit that puts wings on your feet.

"Chacok speaks to you. She says "Let yourself go!"

The next time you see a woman walking on air, don't look for the lottery ticket in her hand; just look for the rainbow of colour that has "Chacok" written all over it.

Ginette Beauchamp, the effervescent owner of the **Quasar Mode** Boutique at Bellair and Cumberland — a scant five minutes from GreekTown — has spent the last 25 years helping fashion-conscious women prepare for liftoff in the handiwork of one of the boldest, most innovative designers of our times.

"She was a breath of fresh air the moment her work hit the runways of Paris in 1973, and she is equally uplifting today," says Beauchamp, referring to French designer Arlette Decok', the creator of the Chacok line. "Chacok speaks to you. She says "Go ahead — let yourself go!"

Rarely have whimsy and structural integrity coexisted so fortuitously in a women's garment. Unlike the designs of some avant-garde couturiers for whom outlandish statements are the rule, Chacok is disciplined. Within a framework of strong, flowing lines and exquisite easy-wearing fabrics, it's *colour* that sets her apart. Not dribs and drabs of it, but buckets — regardless of the season. Many designers unfurl their full colour palette in spring only to greatly narrow it in fall. Chacok, however, can be counted on to unleash an effusion of colour each and every season. Even her black and white groupings have the vibrancy of living colour.

Do you dare to dip into her palette?

"That's the only thing that gives some women pause," says Beauchamp. "My regulars who've been wearing Chacok for years have no hesitation. They can't wait for the new collections to see how she's outdone herself. If you've never worn Chacok before, however, you may hesitate. "Is this too spectacular for me? Is it overkill?"

Such fears, says Beauchamp, are understandable but groundless. "We're all spectacular inside, but some of us have trouble showing it. We feel we're not entitled to wear the colours of the rainbow. We're afraid people will think we're strutting like a peacock."

But the fact is, says Beauchamp, "Chacok has an innate ability to bring out the colourful personality that's in us all. The deeper you keep it submerged, the more she will reach down into your soul and pull it out. She's not adding; she's just projecting the beauty you already possess onto the big screen, in technicolour."

Beauchamp carries other leading French designers like Atika, Anne Fontaine, and Rodika Zanian, and as with Chacok, has played a leading role in sensitizing the Canadian market to these lines. Each line adds a layer of sophistication to Quasar Mode's overall collection, but Chacok clearly remains the leading light.

Of Toronto's many independent dress shops that opened in the late 1970s and early 1980s, Quasar Mode is one of the very few not only still in business, but thriving. Its success attests to Beauchamp's hard work, astute buying and exceptional customer service, but she's quick to deflect credit. "I have loyal customers with an incredible eye for colour and appreciation for design," she says. "It is uncanny how they see what I see in a garment. When I view the new collections I often see an outfit that's just begging to be bought for a particular customer. When I buy it and she loves it as much as I do, it's magic."

"It is uncanny how they see what I see"

Women walking on air is also magic — unless they're emerging from Quasar Mode in all the colours of the rainbow. Then it's just business as usual — and Chacok on the label.

CHACOK at QUASAR MODE

IMPORTED FASHIONS FROM FRANCE
Chacok
Anne Fontaine
Zapa
Rodika Zanian

1240 BAY ST. 416-964-1214
(on Bellair at Cumberland, adjacent to subway entrance)
www.quasarmode.com

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Ethiopian culinary munificence at Dukem

Too good to eat. Eye candy on a plate.

So spectacular is the Vegetarian Platter served up at **Dukem** that you're half inclined to frame it and put it in an art gallery. When appetite and better judgement kick in, you're treated to a rare gustatory pleasure.

This is one of Dukem's most popular entrées, for good reason. First, it's a visual delight. Second, it's a complete, incredibly satisfying meal in itself. Third, it combines an amazing variety of contrasting yet complimentary flavours. Fourth, it's too-good-to-be-true inexpensive: $12 for an individual portion, $24 for a double portion that will feed two ravenous teenagers. Most platters on the menu can be ordered in these two sizes, and spiced hot or mild according to your taste.

Majestically arrayed on a bed of *injera* — a naturally-leavened pancake-like round made from teff — are a rainbow of festive offerings. *Gomen* (boiled collard greens sautéed with red onions); *Yatakilt Wot* (carrots, potatoes and cabbage); *Yemsir Wot* (lentils with garlic, ginger, and onion sauce), *Yekik Alichat* (yellow split peas); beets, potatoes, and side salad. The synergy of textures and seasonings makes this unique among geoethnic dining experiences.

You're encouraged to explore the menu to discover other items like the *Doro Wot* (tender chicken leg or thigh marinated in lemon, sautéed in seasoned butter and stewed in red pepper sauce, flavoured with onion, garlic root and a pinch of cardamom). The combination platters, however, clearly hold sway here.

Quiet conviviality envelopes the proceedings, with no boisterous commotion or clinking of cutlery to break the spell. You eat by slowly tearing off a bit of the injera and pinching a morsel of food. This actually requires more precision and table manners than using cutlery, not less. Kids love the opportunity to eat with their hands, and the quickly-acquired skill of doing so with dignity is a good lesson in social graces. The familial ambience — coupled with the always-gracious service — fosters a sense of calm that does wonders for your digestion.

The Ethiopian coffee ceremony takes your dining experience to a whole new level.

Coffee was first cultivated in, and named after, the Ethiopian region of Kaffa. During the coffee ceremony the coffee is taken through its full life cycle of preparation in front of you. It's done in a reverential yet sociable and friendly manner, as your senses thrill to the aroma of freshly roasted coffee and fragrant incense.

Dukem, a small city south of Addis Ababa, evokes memories of holiday weekend travel to the Ethiopian capital. Since opening on the Danforth two years ago, Dukem Restaurant has stirred similar nascent memories. In addition to a loyal Ethiopian following, Dukem has attracted a growing clientele from all walks of life to sample the earthly delights of a world apart.

DUKEM Restaurant
950 Danforth Ave. at Donlands
416-406-6342
www.ethiopiandukemrestaurant.com

15 years of cellular excellence at BBI

In the ever-changing world of cellular service, longevity speaks volumes. As BBI Telecommunications enters its 15th year on the Danforth, it joins a select few dealerships that have endured a period of rapid evolution unparalleled in any other industry.

Unlike many dealers who are cell phone vendors and little more, BBI is a complete mobile solutions and telecommunications centre. Sotiris Buseas and his staff are thoroughly versed in the products they sell, and will take the time to explain all the features of the device you purchase. If you have questions, they have answers.

Buseas and BBI also have a distinguished track record of community service, including a founding sponsorship of the Taste Of The Danforth, which they helped grow from its infancy to its current stature as North America's largest street festival.

Now at a futuristic-looking new location at 209 Danforth Avenue, the newly-minted BBI with its exquisitely tiled floor looks as much art gallery as cell phone centre. The high-tech environment is fitting, says Buseas, because with technology changing so rapidly, "the future is yesterday already."

In the face of constant change, it becomes doubly important to ensure that customers get the right products and plans for their needs. "The number of choices has increased exponentially," says Buseas. "Staying on top of them is a full time job for us, let alone the consumer."

Savvy consumers and corporations alike seek out BBI for their knowledge and reliability — customers like Saul Korman of Korry's Clothiers, who often does live radio commercials from his cell phone. So you can thank (or blame) BBI for him never missing a radio spot.

And consider this: any carrier that can provide Korman with an unlimited minutes plan that can comfortably accommodate all the talk he throws at it — and any dealership that can support that volume — has a lot going for it.

CELLULAR, PAGING & PCS
BBI Computers Telecommunications
WE STAND BEHIND OUR SERVICE
209 Danforth Ave.
416•465•4342
Toll Free
1-800-230-8967
www.bbitel.com

Granite Club, Didcock capture the spirit of Mediterranean cuisine

For Granite Club Executive Chef Nigel Didcock, Mediterranean cuisine isn't just a genre.

It's where he lives.

How fitting, then, that his physical address should match his metaphorical one: Didcock resides on the Danforth. "I've always felt at home around food, and the Danforth is one of the most food-centric environments you'll find anywhere."

Those fortunate enough to attend a Granite Club wedding or Bar Mitzvah are the beneficiaries of Didcock's uncanny ability to translate his culinary passion into the most spectacular Mediterranean fare this side of southern Europe.

Didcock received his indoctrination into haute cuisine at the most prestigious establishments: the Connaught Hotel in London, England, Le Petit Nice in Marseille, and the Hotel Restaurant Troisgros in Roanne. It was in France, he says, that the importance of freshness and simplicity really hit home. "Mother Nature is the head chef, the rest of us are just sous-chefs," he grins. "This is true of any style of cuisine, but particularly Mediterranean. All the elements for perfect taste are present from the get-go. Sea, sun, and fertile soil. Take what they give you and get out of the way."

He's greatly diminishing his role, of course, but such is Didcock's facility in the kitchen that he makes the virtuoso appear mundane. Case in point: the food photographs in *Capturing The Spirit*. This recently-published, critically-acclaimed compilation of Didcock's 100 favourite recipes contains some 75 food shots. This in itself is not unusual. What *is* unusual — unheard of, in fact — is that the dishes were shot without styling. It's standard industry practise to have a food stylist slave over each dish for hours to produce the drool-worthy aura you see in better magazines and cookbooks. Instead, Didcock had each dish photographed straight off the line at an actual Granite Club event. No styling, no tweaking, just cook and shoot. Think Neil Armstrong on Apollo 11 without a dry run.

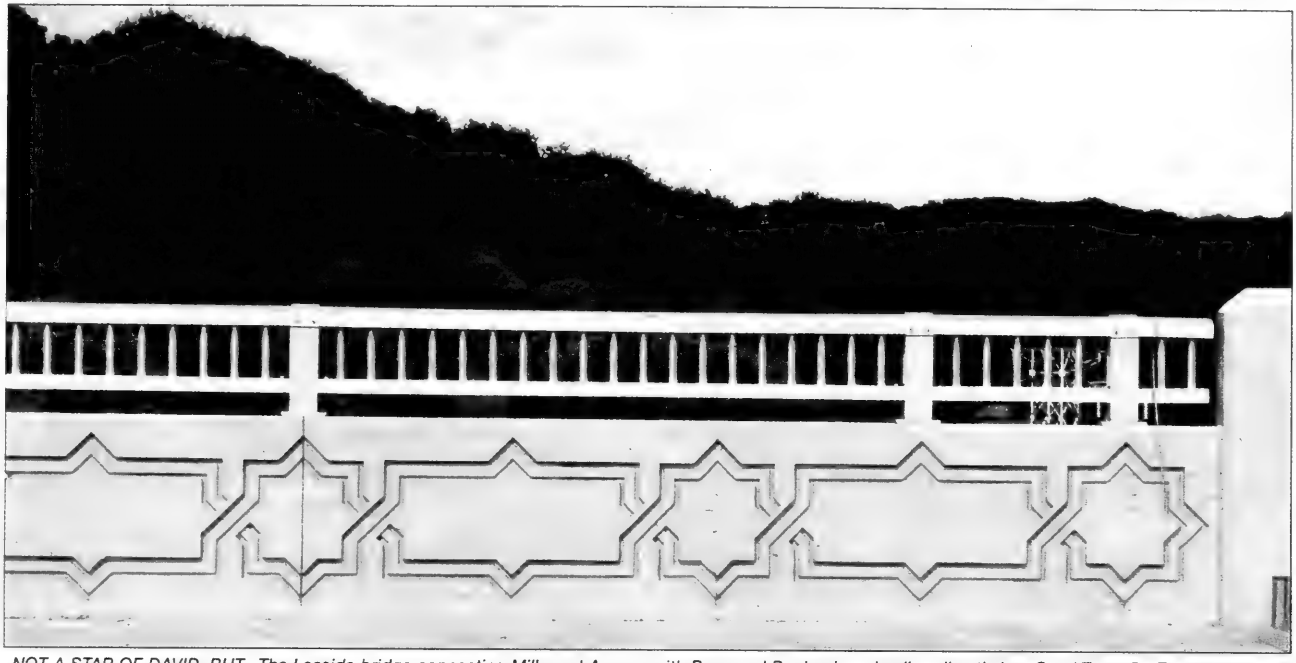
Underscoring Didcock's passion for Mediterranean cuisine, close to half the recipes in *Capturing The Spirit* are Mediterranean-influenced. So if you like the Danforth experience, you'll love the opportunity to enjoy the most exquisite Mediterranean fare on a grand scale at a Granite Club event.

The quickest, most efficient route to GreekTown is Bayview to Eglinton to Laird, which takes you right by the Granite Club at Lawrence. Resplendent with flowers at this time of year, it's a pleasant reminder that Mother Nature's easy-to-follow directions always lead to a venue that Captures The Spirit.

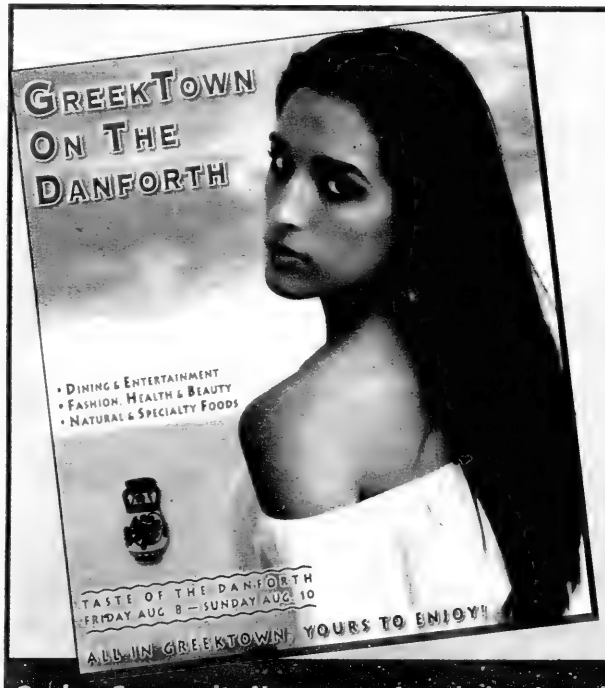
To purchase a copy of *Capturing The Spirit*, contact kitchen@graniteclub.com

www.graniteclub.com

Photos, L to R:
Executive Chef Nigel Didcock
Tian of Salmon Tartare
Seafood Salad
Tresse of Sole and Salmon



NOT A STAR OF DAVID, BUT...The Leaside bridge connecting Millwood Avenue with Pape and Donlands — leading directly into GreekTown On The Danforth — recently underwent major repairs and reconstruction, complete with new parapets. Purely by coincidence, the motif embossed on the parapets, designed to resemble the original tile pattern dating back to 1927 when the bridge first opened, is pleasingly reminiscent of a Magen David.



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The Canadian Jewish news

Mislaid your GreekTown supplement?
Your children "borrowed" it?
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Quebec Community Newspaper Association Award Winner **"BEST WEBSITE AWARD"**

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH

Athens Pastries redefines taste buds

When you see a name like **Athens Pastries**, it's natural to wonder whether their product really lives up to the back-home standard or whether it's just a good facsimile trading on the reputation of the namesake city.

Ask any Torontonian who's been to Athens Pastries and they'll invariably rave about the exquisite taste, texture, and freshness. Would an Athenian do the same?

George Tsioutsioulas breaks into a wide grin. "You wouldn't believe how many people from Greece tell us that our pies and pastries are the best they've ever tasted — *anywhere*," he beams. So if you're planning to hop a plane to Athens for a taste test, you might want to save yourself the airfare; Athens Pastries' 30-year reputation for quality already stretches across the pond.

Simply stated, comparing Athens' spanakopita (spinach pie), cheese pie, meat pie and bougatsa to any other brands is like comparing homemade fresh-baked bread to the store-bought variety. For freshness, crispness, and flavour, no comparison is even possible.

The Athens version will permanently redefine your taste buds. Baked continuously throughout the day from the purest ingredients, with no additives or preservatives, the pastries and pies served up at this little gem of a shop have made Athens a prime destination of Danforth-goers seeking a light meal or delicious dessert.

There's table seating at both locations, and ample free parking at the Victoria Park location, but you really have to see the take-out action to understand how seriously Greeks take their pastries — and how zeroed in they are on Athens. There are more whole pies leaving here in boxes than at some pizza take-outs.

Reminiscent of the French mille feuilles, or the English custard slice, Athens' rendition of bougatsa is as close to perfection as a dessert gets: ultracrisp, delicate crust outside, light, mildly sweet vanilla custard inside. And here's the best part: even with a liberal sprinkling of icing sugar and cinnamon, at no time does it taste too sweet, and the cloying aftertaste so common with commercial desserts is noticeably absent.

This second-generation family business (owner George Tsioutsioulas, father Evangelos and their dedicated staff) has probably rolled enough pastry dough to stretch from here to Greece, so the name "Athens" is perfectly apt. The fact that it's rolled lovingly, with constant attention to quality, is confirmed by your first bite.

ATHENS PASTRIES

509 Danforth Ave.
416-463-5144
(near Logan)

2567 Victoria Park
416-491-0095
(1 block South of Sheppard)

"Friendly Greek" more than a name

One visit to The Friendly Greek should be enough to convince you that the "Friendly" isn't just a buzzword.

It's "Friendly" as in the way you're greeted when you enter the restaurant. "Friendly" as in the courteous service you receive throughout your visit from servers who really know how to treat you and who understand the menu.

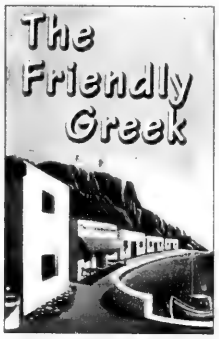
"Friendly" as in the large bowl of superb sesame seed garlic bread that's plunked on your table — no charge! — with your meal selection.

"Friendly" as in the relaxed atmosphere and inviting decor (a colourful panorama of white stuccoed walls painted with seascapes and other Greek scenes).

"Friendly" as in the huge outdoor patio that rubs shoulders with the Danforth.

Last but not least, "Friendly" as in prices. It's really quite incredible what you get here for your dining dollar. In the best Danforth tradition, portions are huge, yet many entrées are priced under $12. Many appetizers are still under $5, and you can order a bottle of wine from the extensive wine list for as little as $19.95. Side orders are so reasonably priced you'll think you're in a time warp.

The Friendly Greek exemplifies the qualities the Danforth has become famous for: traditional Greek food, huge portions, and people who serve you as if you were family — because, during your visit, you are.



551 Danforth Ave.
416.469.8422

Included among the entrées are authentic Greek recipes like *Loukaniko*, a delicious Homemade Wine Sausage (two pieces) served with Greek salad, rice, roast potatoes, tzatziki and garlic bread, all for only $11.95; *Ofto Kleftico* (roast lamb the Friendly Greek way), prepared oil-free and served with Greek salad, roast potatoes, rice and garlic bread, only $13.95.

For a heavy-duty feast, try another Friendly Greek house specialty: the *Hot Piklia For Two*, with two pieces of lamb chops, two pieces of quail, one chicken filet, roast lamb, two pieces of seftalia, two pieces of biftekia; served with Greek salad, side order of roast potatoes, rice and garlic bread, all for only $38.95. (Your odds of actually finishing this mammoth platter are about the same as the Maple Leafs going undefeated in 08-09).

You can't go wrong in life being friendly, and you can't go wrong in GreekTown at The Friendly Greek.

Danforth Jewish Circle: building community values

Some nine years ago, a handful of interested parents met in Debbie Plested's living room and decided to start a Jewish studies program in the Riverdale area.

They were all members of the newly formed **Danforth Jewish Circle** (DJC), a grassroots, liberal egalitarian congregation in Toronto's east end, established in 1996 and then chaired by Marlee Wyman.

Giving children a sense of community

At the time, Plested, co-chair of the DJC education committee, said children's education was a priority for many DJC members.

"We were really a community," she recently said. "We wanted our kids to learn and study within our community and feel a part of the community."

Plested said the group recognized the necessity of setting up a program that could meet the diverse educational needs of the children.

At that time, the local Hebrew heritage program, a school board program that had been operating in the neighbourhood for some 15 years, could only offer a basic introduction to Jewish studies, she said.

"The program was instrumental in creating a sense of Jewish identity and a sense of community," she said. "But [it] had trouble developing as a curriculum because it had to cater to a wide age group. What was happening was that our families had no choice but to look outside the community to further their child's Jewish education."

The group of parents met many times in the course of the year to establish a community-based supplementary school. They had to develop a curriculum, hire teachers and publicize the program to attract students, find funding and find a space to hold classes, Plested said.

Now in its 11th year, the DJC Children's Jewish Studies program runs weekly classes for elementary school students out of a local school. Through discussion, debate, music, drama and art, the children study Hebrew, Torah, Jewish history and current events, Jewish holidays and rituals, Plested said.

"Our program values Judaism as a dynamic, living religion. Our students learn to understand what it means to be a Jew and how being Jewish affects our values, beliefs and behaviour."

While the exploration of Jewish identity is a key component of the curriculum, Plested said that given the high proportion of interfaith families, there is also an emphasis on "respect for the broad spectrum of multiculturalism which exists within Judaism and in the neighbourhood."

The goal of the Hebrew language program is to help the children learn to read Hebrew, recite the basic prayers and gain familiarity with Hebrew songs, she said.

"We want the children to be able to decode Hebrew so that they'll be able to prepare for their Bat or Bar Mitzvah...If they have more of an interest in conversational Hebrew, we encourage and assist them [with] supplementing their studies by connecting them with a tutor."

DANFORTH JEWISH CIRCLE

416-825-7431
www.djctoronto.com

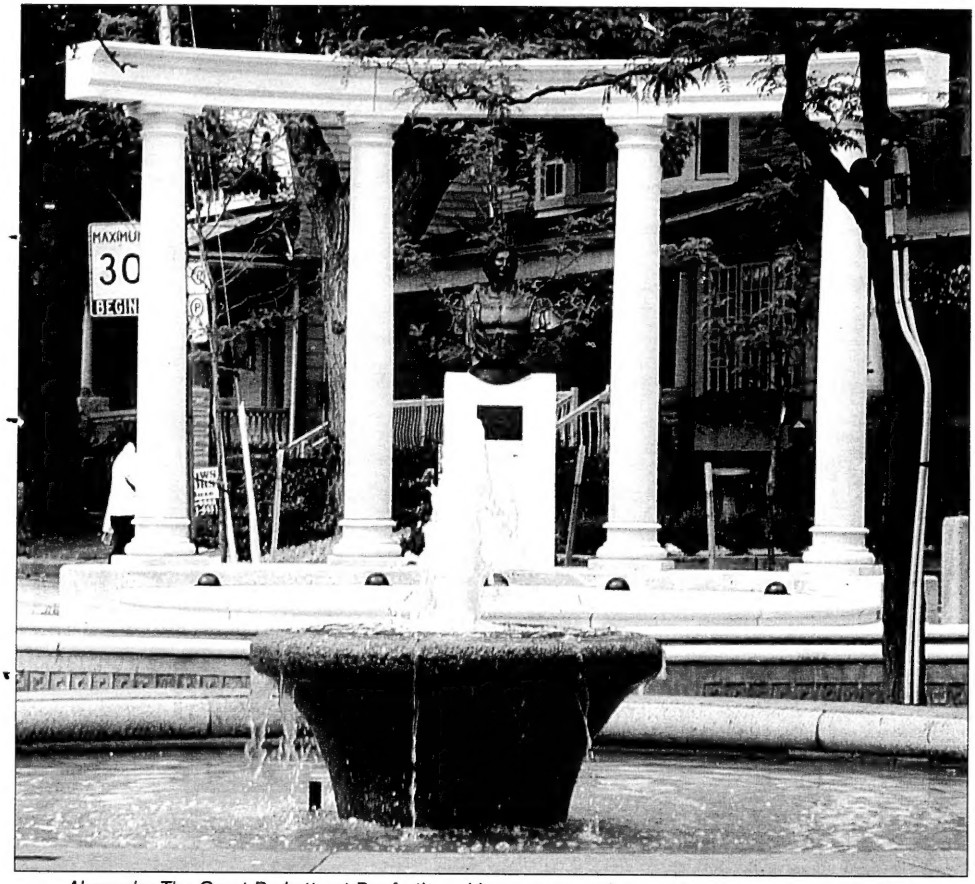
B'Nai Mitzvah program: building and bonding

In addition to the school, the DJC offers a B'nai Mitzvah program, which is run by parents and not funded by any group. "This group is the beginning of a connection to the community for the future because the kids are building friendships and bonding as a group," Wyman said.

Wyman said she marvels at the growth of the community education program. "It shows you what a group of dedicated volunteers can accomplish. They're incredibly motivated. That's the whole thing about volunteerism: action is taken because we want to see results."

Persons interested in learning more about the Danforth Jewish Circle may do so by calling 416-825-7431.

GreekTown on the Danforth: Canadian heritage in the making



Alexander The Great Parkette at Danforth and Logan: a popular spot to pause, relax, and reflect

More than a tourist area, GreekTown on the Danforth is a community. In the summer, when the trees reach their full green and Toronto's restauranteurs put out their patio tables, GreekTown puts on its Mediterranean face.

Plenty to woo your senses

Here, when friends and acquaintances greet, you are as likely to hear *"Kall' imera! Ti kanis?"* as "Hi! How are you?" In the restaurants and cafés, you hear patrons converse in every language of the world.

While the music of Greek polysyllables will appeal to your ears, the most important thing is not the language, but the fact that people do greet each other. Bustling and busy as the community is, everyone — not just tourists, but everyone who lives and works here — is as liable to stroll as to hurry.

There is plenty on the Danforth to woo your senses, and make you want to slow your steps: bright color and exotic decor; the sounds of the bouzouki; the aroma of lamb souvlaki wafting from a grill; and the tastes of exotic foods. It is the restaurants above all — and the atmosphere they help create, at once lively and relaxed — which draw people from all over the city and beyond.

Many restaurants capture, in their decor, the pleasing colours and terraced style associated with the Greek islands and mountainsides. And while souvlaki is everywhere on the Danforth, its dining establishments take pride in offering the full range and flavours of Greek and other Mediterranean cuisines.

But the Danforth boasts many other fine ethnic restaurants as well. To name but a few, Japanese, Italian, and East Indian cuisine are well represented. And its cafés and dessert houses are unparalleled, both in number and quality.

GreekTown is also home to Toronto's finest natural and specialty food stores and many alternative health practitioners. And it's become a leading fashion destination, with a host of fine specialty boutiques for men, women, and children, as well as European-quality beauty salons and spas.

A solid community with solid values

There is plenty of live entertainment here. At many establishments, audience participation is the rule, though after a fine, full meal, you may feel disinclined to dance on a tabletop.

There are a few other Toronto streets which are wider in actual metres, but the Danforth has an expansive feel about it which you don't find anywhere else. Majestic trees shade well-kept homes; here and there are streetside parks, where you can sit and rest your feet.

If you look closely, you see there is a solid community here. You see not only the tourists, but also the elderly and the children, as they shop, stroll or sit and chat in the cafés and parks. In the restaurants, waiters and bartenders offer everyone prompt, friendly service; there are plenty of regular guests whom they greet by name.

Nor is it just staff who do this. You will see the owners showing guests to their tables, greeting them warmly; in GreekTown, customers are family.

Also here are the institutions that belong in any healthy city neighborhood: schools, houses of worship, clubs, and community centres. People not only work here, they *live* here; and it is in great part because they keep GreekTown pleasant to live in, that it is pleasant to visit.

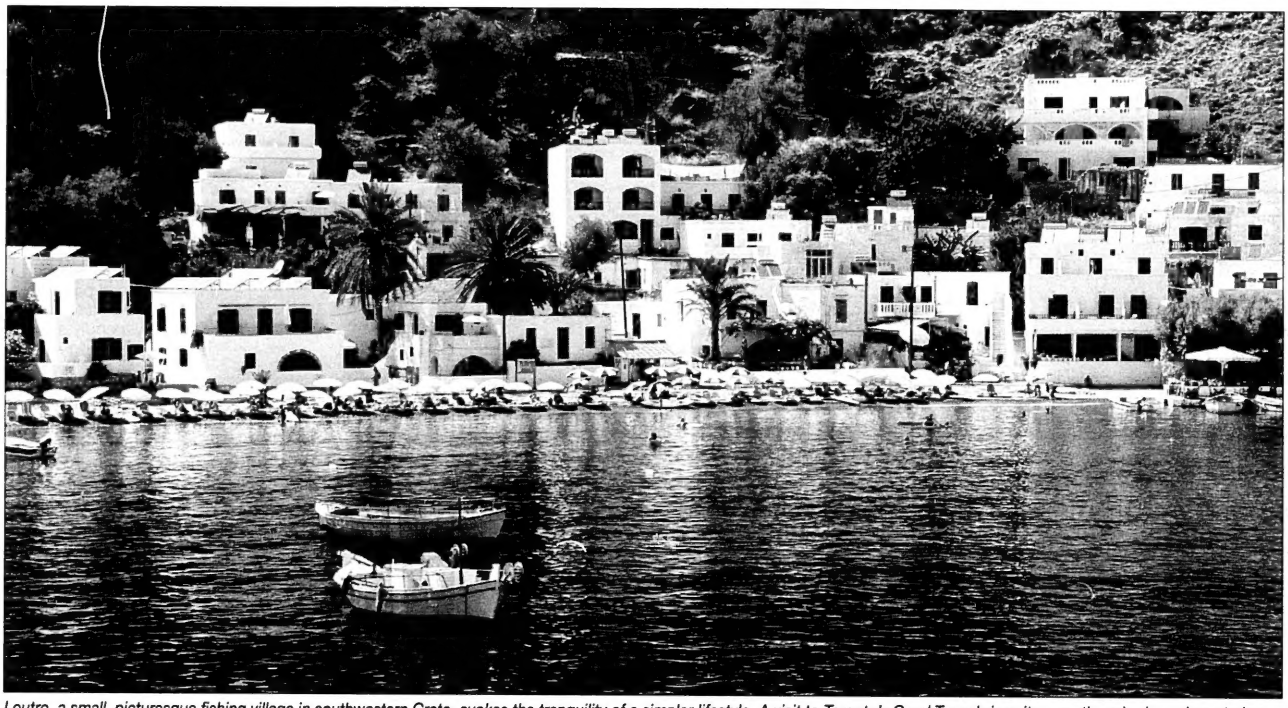
If you really want to get to know the community, chat a little with the staffs of different restaurants; you'll find that everyone knows everyone else. There is plenty of competition here, but it is friendly. To thrive, a restauranteur has to cherish the firm conviction that his or her establishment is the best; but in GreekTown, they do so without knocking the competition. If anything, the reverse is true.

It is from this wealth of restaurants that the "Taste of the Danforth" festival was born. This annual event has become so popular that GreekTown is closed to traffic for its duration. It's a great opportunity to sample the Danforth's culinary delights while enjoying its ambience, all in support of worthy charities like the Toronto East General Hospital Foundation.

While the Danforth is a community, it has never been a closed enclave. Saul Korman of Korry's Clothiers, an active member of the Jewish community, is also an enthusiastic promoter of GreekTown. Having been there for half a century — Korry's is now celebrating its 50th anniversary — Korman knows the people of this community, many of whom started as dishwashers and short-order cooks in the '50's and '60's, then opened the first modest Greek restaurants in the '70's. Many of them came here seeking both prosperity and freedom; the late Andreas Papandreou (a recent Prime Minister of Greece) lived in Canada from 1969 to 1974.

Korman shares with the people who live and work on the Danforth their joy in the prosperity and freedom of Canada. If you come to GreekTown, you are breathing, hearing and tasting Canadian heritage — not in a museum, but as contemporary history in the making.

GREEKTOWN ON THE DANFORTH



Loutro, a small, picturesque fishing village in southwestern Crete, evokes the tranquility of a simpler lifestyle. A visit to Toronto's GreekTown brings its warmth and values closer to home.

That family at 420 Danforth is so nice ...

It's often said that the only way to really experience authentic regional cuisine at its finest is to enjoy it in someone's home.

So if we gave you the address of a Greek family known for their great home cooking and told you to knock on their door at 7 o'clock tonight and invite yourself in for dinner — even though you'd never met them before — would you?

Relax. We've told them you're coming.

Now you not only have to show up, you have to eat everything they put on your plate, ask for seconds, ask for thirds — then eat the fourths after they ignore your protests that you can't eat another bite.

Then, of course, there's dessert.

Sound familiar?

Greek hospitality is such that if you knocked on a stranger's door in a Greek neighbourhood, their first inclination would be to invite you in for dinner — even today.

The family that lives at 420 Danforth Avenue goes one step further by dispensing with the formalities. You don't have to knock. Just walk in, sit down, and dinner will be on your table before you know it. They'll even ask you what you'd like for dinner. Just like in a restaurant.

The Tsafatinos family proves the old adage that there's no cooking like home cooking. While technically they reside offsite, if you count the hours they spend at 420 Danforth Avenue cooking up a storm for their extended family of customers, you'd be hard-pressed to prove that 420 is anything but home.

What comes out of their kitchen is further evidence of a home environment. Everything's made from scratch. How much better does this taste than prepared food? It's like comparing your mother's cooking to fast food: no comparison.

KALYVIA
420 DANFORTH AVE.
416 463-3333
WWW.KALYVIA.COM

Founders Mike and Peter Tsafatinos are both from the Greek town of Kalyvia; when you name your restaurant after your home town, you've got a culinary legacy to live up to. This is particularly true of Kalyvia, as no fewer than 10 villages in Greece bear that name. So in addition to the local food critics, the entire Tsafatinos family — including sons Jim and Jim — have to prove to anyone who's eaten in any of the 10 Kalyvias, or nearby, that their food measures up. That they're able to do so with flying colours allows them to relax for about five seconds — until the next Kalyvian comes in.

Kalyvia's homemade goodness can be enjoyed on the premises, or in the privacy of your home or office. Large enough for substantial gatherings, but configured for intimacy, Kalyvia is ideal for birthday parties, Bar Mitzvah parties, and other special events.

Kalyvia is one of a very few places in Toronto where you can still enjoy the tastes and trappings of home in a family restaurant environment. It has "Mom" written all over it.

Family planning

In GreekTown, you needn't go far to find family. *It finds you.* Walk into any restaurant, café, or shop, and odds are you'll find yourself in a family business. The old-fashioned kind: not just owned by family, but *worked* by it. Family out front, greeting the customers. Family serving. Family in the kitchen.

In GreekTown the family business finds you so often, in fact, that you wonder how there's any other kind.

Read or listen to the business news, and you'll learn about the latest corporate takeovers. About the big getting bigger — either on their own steam, or by swallowing up their competition. Or via a merger (a business euphemism for *loveless marriage*). But who needs love? Who needs a crush on each other when together, you can crush the competition?

But the folks in GreekTown just don't get it. They're stuck in a time warp of love, caring, and customer service. Get bigger? Hell, they're having way too much fun being small.

It gets worse. They're more interested in *supporting* their neighbours than competing with them. The owners of restaurant A have dinner at restaurant B. Corporate takeovers? They haven't a clue. Loveless marriage? Ditto. *Their* marriage — their family business union — is so full of love, the whole family feels compelled to share.

Of the businesses featured in this section, virtually all are family businesses, generally run by multiple family members. Father-son. Mother-daughter. Husband-wife. Brother-sister. Uncle-nephew. Aunt-niece. Cousins. In-laws? Elsewhere, pariahs; in GreekTown, family, or *oikogeneia* (pronounced ee-ko-***yen***-ya). Everyone pulls the oars together, and the only fish that get swallowed up are the mussels.

This family dynamic works so well, you'd assume it was meticulously planned. And perhaps, in some instances, it is.

In the majority of cases, however, this perfect harmony — plates sailing from kitchen to table like baton passes — just happens. *It comes naturally.* It comes from younger generations seeing and hearing and feeling the resonance between their elders, and wanting to be part of it.

Nor does it stop there. Because when you work in GreekTown, even when you're not family, you're *oikogeneia*. When your chef of 25 years dies at age 63 of prostate cancer — the man you worked side by side with every day for a quarter century, *not including* the time you worked together in Athens before you crossed the pond — when he dies, does it hurt any less that he's not your "flesh and blood"?

Oikogeneia.

It's customary to thank your host for a great meal, your shopkeeper for great service. The merchants of GreekTown, however, are due another thank you. Thank You for putting the ***family*** in family business. For showing us that when you're family, everything goes according to plan — even when there isn't a plan. For reminding us that family isn't just the most important thing we've got.

It's *all* we've got.

Sholom Wargon
swargon@cjnews.com

Really? A private party in a beautifully reconstructed theatre? With amazing food and a vibrant ambience? Is that true or is it an urban

myth

Photos courtesy of dineTO

Reality dictates that you can't have your cake and eat it too? We're sorry reality isn't able to accommodate you, but at **Myth**, we can.

We have everything you could possibly want in a party venue, and we're committed to making your event "Special". That's why you call it a "Party."

AMBIENCE. As a restored theatre with palatially-high ceilings and a loft-style mezzanine, we offer a spectacular setting with a variety of seating arrangements ideal for both casual and formal events. When we invite you to "stage" your event at Myth, we mean it literally.

SIZE. We're large enough to host major functions like wedding receptions, Bar / Bat Mitzvahs, and corporate events, yet small enough to ensure intimacy for family milestones.

CUISINE. Our extensive Mediterranean menu is only a hint of the dining opportunities that await you. Our culinary team will be pleased to create complete custom menus to suit your taste and budget.

SERVICE. Happening parties don't just "happen"... they are the result of meticulous planning by both the event planner and the staff of the venue they choose. We're proud to be one of Toronto's leading venues for private parties and special events. Whether your party is large or small, you can count on us for the attentive personal service you need. You want to be free to mingle with your guests and enjoy their company, not have to deal with details every five minutes. We will spare no pains to ensure that you have that freedom.

Having our professionals at Myth host your event is the easiest way we know to transform question marks into an exclamation mark...as in "Opa!"

George Kapassouris and Staff

417 Danforth Avenue 416.461.8383
www.myth.to

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